A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. For four long years in some of the bloodiest and deadliest battles of World War II, nearly one hundred thousand soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army responded to President Roosevelt's call to arms, fighting alongside and serving as an integral part of the United States Armed Forces. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Filipinos residing in the United States and the Territory of Hawaii also responded to President Roosevelt's call to arms. Despite being initially rejected because they were not United States citizens, they remained undaunted and volunteered for the draft after enactment of the Selective Training and Service Amendments Act, which allowed Filipinos in the United States to enlist in the United States Armed Forces, and enactment of the Second War Powers Act, which authorized naturalization for Filipinos who served in the United States Armed Forces. As a result, more than seven thousand Filipinos and Filipino Americans fought in
the 1st and 2nd Filipino Regiments of the United States Army in
World War II.

During this period of time, the Allied forces experienced,
among other tragedies:

(1) The fall of the Bataan Peninsula, wherein over
seventy-eight thousand members of the United States
Armed Forces were captured and nearly seven hundred
United States service members and from six thousand to
ten thousand Filipinos perished in the Bataan Death
March; and

(2) The fall of Corregidor, wherein eight hundred United
States and Filipino service members were killed and
eleven thousand were captured and distributed to
prisoner of war camps.

Persevering against all odds, guerrilla armies comprising
Filipino soldiers were vital in turning the tide to end the war.
They fought in bloody combat against foreign aggression and
assisted in intelligence missions and mop-up operations. They
were integral to the freeing of prisoners of war, including from
the Cabanatuan death camp and the Santo Tomas prisoner of war
camp. An estimated fifty-seven thousand Filipino soldiers died
in this courageous effort to reclaim the Philippines, fight
fascism, and protect the free world.

The legislature finds that a Filipino Veterans Legacy
Exhibit would preserve, perpetuate, and share the legacy of the
Filipino veterans, including those from the Philippines, United
States, and Territory of Hawaii, who served loyally alongside
the Allied forces in World War II. Such an exhibit would
recognize and honor their uncommon commitment, valor, and
sacrifice, and develop a deeper understanding of their unique
place in American and global history.

The legislature further finds that there is broad support
in Hawaii for the recognition of veterans in general and
Filipino veterans of World War II in particular. There is also
national support, as evidenced by President Obama signing into
law a measure that awards those Filipino veterans the
Congressional Gold Medal.

The purpose of this Act is to make a one-time appropriation
of moneys for the planning, design, and establishment of a
Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit as a permanent exhibit at the
Daniel K. Inouye International Airport; provided that volunteers
shall maintain the Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit.
SECTION 2. The office of veterans' services, with the assistance of the department of transportation and the department of defense, shall plan, design, and establish a Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit as a permanent exhibit at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport; provided that volunteers shall maintain the Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit. The purpose of the Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit shall be to preserve, perpetuate, and share the legacy of the Filipino veterans, including those from the Philippines, United States, and Territory of Hawaii, who served loyally alongside the Allied forces in World War II.

SECTION 3. The office of veterans' services shall report to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2020 on the status of the establishment of a Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for the plans, design, and establishment of a Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit in accordance with this Act.
The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of veterans' services for the purpose of this Act.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

INTRODUCED BY:
Report Title:
Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit; Daniel K. Inouye International Airport; Appropriation

Description:
Requires and funds the Office of Veterans' Services to establish a Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.