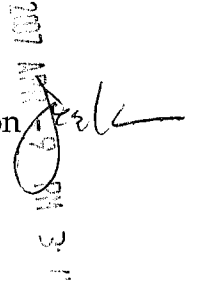


MINA BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2007 (First) Regular Session

Resolution No. 24 (LS)

Introduced by:

James V. Espaldon
A. R. Unpingco
J. T. Won Pat

2007 MAR 19 PM 3:11


Relative to recognizing the heroic efforts of Filipino-American Veterans of World War II (WWII), and to supporting the passage of the "Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007," and to petitioning the 110th United States Congress to ensure passage of the Act introduced on January 31, 2007, along with a companion measure introduced as Senate Bill 66 on January 4, 2007. House Resolution 760 seeks "To amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain service in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for purposes of benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs."

1 **Be it Resolved by I Mina Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guåhan:**

2 **Whereas,** the "Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007" was introduced in
3 the 110th Congress as Senate Bill No. 66, submitted on January 4, 2007, and
4 House Resolution No. 760 submitted on January 31, 2007; and

5 **Whereas,** HR No. 760, along with its companion Bill, S. 66 essentially
6 seeks, "To amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain service in the
7 organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the
8 Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for purposes of
9 benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs"; and

10 **Whereas,** the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the
11 Philippine Government have estimated, with current mortality rates taken into
12 account as recent as January of 2007, that there are an estimated 5,000 Filipino

1 World War II (WWII) veterans living throughout the United States and on Guam,
2 and approximately 15,000 in their homeland of the Philippines; and

3 **Whereas,** these veterans, though soldiers of the Philippine
4 Commonwealth Army during the outbreak of WWII, were American Nationals
5 and drafted as directed by then-President Franklin Roosevelt, as soldiers into the
6 United States Military service effective July 26, 1941; and

7 **Whereas,** before the Rescission Act (Public Law 79-301 now U.S. Code
8 Title 38, Sec. 107) was enacted on February 18, 1946, Filipino veterans were
9 considered U.S. Veterans with active service by the US Veterans Administration
10 by virtue of their status as nationals of the United States who fought shoulder to
11 shoulder with American soldiers as American nationals, under the flag of the
12 United States of America, and were under the direction of US military leaders
13 through July 4, 1946, upon the inauguration of the Republic of the Philippines;
14 and

15 **Whereas,** despite signing the Rescission Act then-President Harry S.
16 Truman expressed his displeasure with provisions of the measure, attached as a
17 rider, which limited veterans' benefits available to soldiers of the Philippine
18 Army who were drafted by the United States, Truman stated at the signing,
19 "Enactment of (the) legislation (does) not release the United States from its moral
20 obligation to provide for the heroic Philippine Army veterans who sacrificed so
21 much for the common cause during the war"; and

22 **Whereas,** President Truman reiterated his sentiments a few months later
23 on May 18, 1946 by transmitting to Congress a draft Bill that sought to restore
24 and provide veterans' benefits to the affected Filipino soldiers, the legislation
25 was passed by the Senate but failed of enactment in the closing days of the
26 Seventy-ninth (79th) Congress, the president resubmitted the measure a year
27 later on July 1, 1947 to no avail; and

1 **Whereas**, sixty-one (61) years have passed since the recognized injustice
2 affected the Filipino soldiers and stripped them of their rightfully earned
3 benefits; and

4 **Whereas**, in 1990, as a result of their individual military service with the
5 United States during WWII, some 24,000 Filipino-American Veterans were
6 naturalized as U.S. citizens under Section 405 of the "Immigration & Nationality
7 Act of 1990"; and

8 **Whereas**, in the year 2000, via US Public Law 106-419, Filipino-American
9 Veterans of WWII were made eligible upon their passing, for burial benefits with
10 full military honors in national cemeteries and recognized as veterans of the
11 United States; and

12 **Whereas**, US Public Law 108-170 affords Filipino-American Veterans the
13 opportunity to receive patient care in hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes
14 administered by the US Veterans Administration; and

15 **Whereas**, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, originally introduced in 1993,
16 in the 103rd Congress by the Honorable Daniel K. Inouye, US Senator, D, Hawaii,
17 in the Senate and the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Congresswoman, D, California in
18 the House, has been reintroduced, with slight variations, in each Congress
19 thereafter, through the current 110th Congress; and

20 **Whereas**, members of the veteran class affected by the Rescission Act,
21 estimated at 120,000, were Filipino-American heroes of WWII, who had endured
22 the atrocities that often come with occupied forces, such as the storied Bataan
23 March whilst maintaining their loyalty to the United States; and

24 **Whereas**, surviving members of these men of valor of World War II, are
25 today, well into their eighties and the number of living Filipino-American
26 Veterans of WWII is declining on a monthly and yearly basis as each
27 individually fall to the march of time; and

28 **Whereas**, the palpable fact that there are fewer and fewer surviving
29 Filipino veterans of the Second World War with each passing year, since the

1 Truman Administration, some 61 years ago, the recognized need to take notice of
2 and provide for the Filipino-American Veterans of WWII who gallantly fought
3 for American interest; and

4 **Whereas**, in recent years, members of Congress have clearly validated
5 the need to make right the inequality, with the continual reintroduction of the
6 Filipino Veterans Equity Act, beginning with the 103rd and each succeeding
7 Congress through the current 110th Congress; the inclusion of Section 405 of the
8 "Immigration & Nationality Act of 1990; the passage of PL 106-419 which
9 includes provisions that allow for burial with military honors upon their death
10 and the passing of PL 108-170 that affords Filipino-American Veterans care in VA
11 hospitals; illustrates the need and obligation for Congress to honor the long
12 unsettled promise by the Unites States of America to these loyal and honorable
13 veterans; now therefore, be it

14 **Resolved**, that *I Mina Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan* Guåhan does hereby, on
15 behalf of the people of Guam, recognize the heroic efforts of Filipino-American
16 Veterans of World War II"; and be it further

17 **Resolved**, that *I Mina Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan* Guåhan does hereby, on
18 behalf of the people of Guam, express its wholehearted support towards the
19 passage of the "Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007"; and be it further

20 **Resolved**, that *I Mina Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan* Guåhan does hereby, on
21 behalf of the people of Guam, petition the 110th United States Congress to ensure
22 passage of the House Resolution 760, introduced on January 31, 2007, along with
23 its companion measure introduced as Senate Bill 66 on January 4, 2007. House
24 Resolution 760 seeks: "To amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain
25 service in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth
26 of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for
27 purposes of benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans
28 Affairs"; and be it further

1 **Resolved**, that the Speaker certify to and the Legislative Secretary attest to
2 the adoption hereof and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the
3 to the Honorable Congressman Bob Filner, (D, California) Chairman, US House
4 of Representatives Veterans Affairs' Committee and Sponsor of HR 760; to the
5 Honorable Sen. Daniel Inouye, (D-Hawaii), member, Senate Veterans' Affairs
6 Committee and Sponsor of S. 66; to the Honorable Congressman Steve Buyer, (R,
7 Indiana) Ranking member, House Veterans' Affairs Committee; to the Honorable
8 Senator Daniel K. Akaka, (D, Hawaii) Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on
9 Veterans' Affairs; to the Honorable Senator Larry Craig; (R, Idaho) Ranking
10 member, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee; to the Honorable Nancy Pelosi,
11 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Robert
12 C. Byrd, President Pro Tempore, United States Senate; to the Honorable R. James
13 Nicholson, US Secretary of Veterans Affairs; to the Honorable George W. Bush,
14 President of the United States of America; to the Honorable Madeleine Z.
15 Bordallo, Guam's Delegate to the United States Congress; and to the Honorable
16 Felix P. Camacho, *I Mago Lahen Guåhan*

17 **Duly and regularly adopted on the _____ of _____, 2007.**

18 _____
19 Mark Forbes
20 Speaker

Ray Tenorio
Senator and Secretary of the Legislature