

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 26

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2002 Regular Session
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By: **Delegate Valderrama**

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2002

Assigned to: Commerce and Government Matters

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Filipino World War II Veterans**

3 FOR the purpose of urging the U.S. Congress to pass the Filipino Veterans Equity
4 Act; and acknowledging the important role played by Filipino veterans in World
5 War II.

6 WHEREAS, It has been 56 years since about 142,000 Filipino veterans fought in
7 World War II after President Franklin Roosevelt called them into active service under
8 the United States flag; and

9 WHEREAS, The Philippines is strategically located and thus was vital to the
10 defense of the United States during World War II; and

11 WHEREAS, The military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were
12 called into the United States armed forces during World War II by Executive Order
13 and were put under the command of General MacArthur by General Marshall; and

14 WHEREAS, Filipino World War II veterans were American nationals when
15 called into the United States armed forces; and

16 WHEREAS, The participation of the military forces of the Commonwealth of the
17 Philippines in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor and in other smaller skirmishes
18 delayed and disrupted the initial Japanese effort to conquer the Western Pacific; and

19 WHEREAS, That delay and disruption allowed the United States the vital time
20 to prepare the forces which were needed to drive the Japanese from the Western
21 Pacific and to defeat Japan; and

22 WHEREAS, After the recovery of the Philippine Islands from Japan, the United
23 States was able to use the strategically located Commonwealth of the Philippines as
24 a base from which to launch the final efforts to defeat Japan; and

25 WHEREAS, President Truman in 1946 promised veterans benefits to Filipino
26 veterans; however, the 79th Congress passed the Recision Act, which drastically
27 limited veterans benefits for Filipino American veterans but which did not limit
28 benefits for any other allied national who served under the American flag; and

1 WHEREAS, Based on their military service, Filipino veterans were given the
2 right to become United States citizens under 1942 and 1960 immigration laws; and

3 WHEREAS, Many of the surviving 28,000 Filipino veterans of the United States
4 armed forces are disabled and live in poverty; and

5 WHEREAS, Every American should know about the important contribution that
6 military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines made to the outcome of World
7 War II; and

8 WHEREAS, The Filipino World War II veterans deserve recognition and honor
9 for their important contribution to the outcome of World War II; and

10 WHEREAS, In the words of a Washington Post editorial printed on December
11 13, 1997, "it's demeaning to Americans as well as Filipinos for the United States to
12 continue denying benefits that were pledged at the highest level then abundantly
13 earned on the battlefield, then denied, then withheld through decades of Filipino
14 entreaty"; now, therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
16 General Assembly acknowledges and appreciates the important role played by
17 Filipino veterans in World War II; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly urges the United States Congress to
19 pass the Filipino Veterans Equity Act without delay; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly urges President Bush to take a more
21 active role in calling for the passage of the Filipino Veterans Equity Act; and be it
22 further

23 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
24 Legislative Services to President George W. Bush, the White House, Washington, D.C.
25 20500 and to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Paul S. Sarbanes and
26 Barbara A. Mikulski, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and
27 Representatives Wayne T. Gilchrest, Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Benjamin L. Cardin,
28 Albert R. Wynn, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, Roscoe G. Bartlett, Elijah E. Cummings, and
29 Constance A. Morella, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.