

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

Committee Report: Favorable
House action: Adopted
Read second time: March 14, 2002

RESOLUTION NO. _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

17 WHEREAS, In the words of a Washington Post editorial printed on December
18 13, 1997, "it's demeaning to Americans as well as Filipinos for the United States to
19 continue denying benefits that were pledged at the highest level then abundantly
20 earned on the battlefield, then denied, then withheld through decades of Filipino
21 entreaty"; now, therefore, be it

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

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

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

30 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
31 Legislative Services to President George W. Bush, the White House, Washington, D.C.
32 20500 and to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Paul S. Sarbanes and
33 Barbara A. Mikulski, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and
34 Representatives Wayne T. Gilchrest, Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Benjamin L. Cardin,
35 Albert R. Wynn, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, Roscoe G. Bartlett, Elijah E. Cummings, and
36 Constance A. Morella, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

