



1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, On July 26, 1941, when the Philippines were under
3 the sovereignty of the United States, President Franklin D.
4 Roosevelt, pursuant to the Philippines' Independence Act,
5 issued an executive order that called all organized military
6 forces of the Philippines into the service of the United
7 States; and

8 WHEREAS, President Roosevelt's executive order enabled
9 over 200,000 Filipino soldiers to be inducted into the United
10 States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE); and

11 WHEREAS, On December 8, 1941, just 10 hours after Japan
12 attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor, Japan bombed United
13 States military bases located in the Philippines and
14 consequently brought the Filipino people into World War II; and

15 WHEREAS, On March 27, 1942, the United States Congress
16 passed Title 8 of the Second War Powers Act, which granted
17 non-citizens who served in the United States Armed Forces
18 during the war United States citizenship status and
19 subsequently provided every member of the USAFFE, certain
20 individuals who served in the Commonwealth Army of the
21 Philippines, and certain Philippine Scouts equal treatment
22 under the law as provided by the Fourteenth Amendment to the
23 United States Constitution; and

24 WHEREAS, On April 9, 1942, the United States surrendered
25 the Philippines to Japan which led 75,000 USAFFE, Commonwealth
26 Army of the Philippines, Philippine scouts, and other soldiers
27 on the Bataan Death March, whereby nearly 10,000 Filipino
28 soldiers perished in route to internment; and

29 WHEREAS, On September 2, 1945, Japan surrendered the
30 Philippines back to the United States and effectively ended

1 World War II on the islands of the Philippines; and

2 WHEREAS, Despite the promise to provide citizenship status
3 and equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment, in
4 November 1945, the United States State Department and the
5 United States Immigration and Naturalization Services placed a
6 moratorium on all applications for naturalization by Filipino
7 war veterans; and

8 WHEREAS, One month after the start of the moratorium,
9 Congress passed the Rescissions Act of 1946, which proclaimed
10 that the service of the Filipino veterans in World War II who
11 served under President Roosevelt's Executive Order were no
12 longer deemed to have been active military, naval, or air
13 service for the purposes of any law of the United States; and

14 WHEREAS, In October 1990, nearly 45 years after the passage
15 of the Rescissions Act, the Congress passed and President
16 George H.W. Bush signed into law, the 1990 Immigration and
17 Naturalization Act which finally granted United States
18 citizenship status to all Filipino veterans; and

19 WHEREAS, Despite being granted citizenship status,
20 surviving Filipino-American veterans have not been provided
21 equal treatment, recognition, or benefits for their service;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, As of September 2004, the number of surviving
24 Filipino-American veterans was approximately 28,000 (8,000 of
25 whom live in the United States); however, this total is less
26 than one-half of Filipino-American veterans estimated to be
27 living just four years ago and the numbers continue to decline
28 rapidly as nearly all of the veterans are in their 70s and 80s;
29 and

30 WHEREAS, Many of these veterans are disabled, low income,

1 and in desperate need of existing services available to other
2 veterans and that were promised to them approximately 60 years
3 ago; and

4 WHEREAS, These Filipino-American veterans served the
5 United States during World War II and came to our aid in a time
6 of need and the failure to pay these benefits reflects poorly
7 on the honor of our country; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
9 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
10 we urge the President and the Congress of the United States to
11 honor the contributions of our Filipino-American veterans and
12 direct the federal government to immediately pay them the
13 veteran's benefits as promised; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be presented to
15 the President of the United States, to the Speaker of the
16 United States House of Representatives, to the President Pro
17 Tempore of the Senate, and to each member of the Illinois
18 Congressional Delegation.