

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, On the 60th anniversary of the Fall of Bataan,
3 the U.S. Congress is considering the Filipino Veterans Equity
4 Act, H.R. 491, and the Filipino Veterans Benefit Improvement
5 Act, S. 1042; and

6 WHEREAS, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, on July 26,
7 1941, called into military service 140,000 Filipino World War
8 II soldiers to serve under the command of American officers
9 to defend the U.S. territory of the Philippines; and

10 WHEREAS, American and Filipino forces under the command
11 of Lt. Gen. Douglas MacArthur fought valiantly with great
12 sacrifice against an overwhelming Japanese invading force,
13 delaying the invaders' timetable by four months, thus
14 allowing U.S. forces to regain their military strength after
15 the Pearl Harbor attack; and

16 WHEREAS, American and Filipino forces surrendered after
17 the Battles for Bataan and Corregidor on April 9 and May 6,
18 1942, respectively, and suffered a horrible number of
19 casualties in the Bataan Death March, in the POW camps, and
20 in the liberation campaign where 10,000 U.S. soldiers
21 perished and 250,000 Filipino soldiers and civilians were
22 casualties; and

23 WHEREAS, On February 18, 1946, the U.S. Congress passed
24 the Rescission Act, which withdrew the U.S. veterans' status
25 of Filipino World War II soldiers and their eligibility for
26 veterans' benefits that were promised to them by President
27 Harry Truman and Gen. Douglas MacArthur; and

28 WHEREAS, In 1990, Congress passed legislation that
29 allowed Filipino World War II veterans who proved their
30 honorable military service to become naturalized U.S.
31 citizens; and

1 WHEREAS, The majority of the 12,000 surviving Filipino
2 veterans who are U.S. citizens live in poverty, receive
3 minimum benefits (SSI and medical), and die at a 57% higher
4 rate than their American comrades because of the lack of
5 access to V.A. medical facilities; and

6 WHEREAS, The majority of Filipino veterans are denied
7 eligibility for medical care and disability pensions provided
8 by the V.A. department to their fellow U.S. comrades; and

9 WHEREAS, Rep. Benjamin Gilman and Rep. Bob Fliner have
10 sponsored the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, H.R. 491, and
11 Senator Daniel Inouye has introduced S. 1042, the Filipino
12 Veterans Benefits Improvement Act, which would restore full
13 official recognition of surviving Filipino World War II
14 veterans; therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
16 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
17 we honor the 60th anniversary of the fall of Bataan and
18 recognize the sacrifices of Filipino World War II veterans by
19 declaring April 9, 2002, the Bataan Day of Valor; and be it
20 further

21 RESOLVED, That we urge Congress to pass and President
22 George W. Bush to sign the Filipino veterans' bills H.R. 491
23 and S. 1042, which would provide for the just and equitable
24 treatment of Filipino World War II veterans as Americans; and
25 be it further

26 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be sent
27 to President George W. Bush and each member of the Illinois
28 Congressional delegation.