

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 25

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 113

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 25—Relative to Filipino World War II veterans.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 30, 2010.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 25, Furutani. Filipino veterans: family reunification.

This measure would have the Legislature join the Congress of the United States in further acknowledging the service of Filipino World War II veterans in the Armed Forces of the United States by recognizing that these veterans should be reunited with their children during their golden years, and would request that the President and the Congress of the United States pass S. 1337 and H.R. 2412, which would exempt children of certain Filipino World War II veterans from the numerical limitations on immigrant visas, thus allowing for family reunification.

WHEREAS, Filipinos honorably served in the Armed Forces of the United States and aided the United States during World War II; and

WHEREAS, On April 9, 1942, after surrendering in the Battle of Bataan, 75,000 Filipino and United States prisoners of war force marched a treacherous 60 miles in the Bataan Death March; and

WHEREAS, Some soldiers did not surrender and created anti-Japanese guerilla units that were comprised of United States and Filipino officers who continued to fight underground to help the United States in their war victory; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed legislation that discriminated against Filipino World War II veterans by denying them veterans benefits. Filipino World War II veterans are the only group of veterans negatively impacted by this legislation; and

WHEREAS, The Supplemental Surplus Appropriations Rescission Act of 1946 denied the service of Filipino veterans in the Armed Forces of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 authorized payments to Filipino World War II veterans, thereby finally recognizing their service in the Armed Forces of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1990 offered Filipino World War II veterans who had not been naturalized pursuant to the Nationality Act of 1940 the opportunity to obtain United States citizenship, however, those veterans were still not eligible for most of the benefits provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Many Filipino World War II veterans filed for visa petitions for their children shortly after passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1990, however, our current immigration structure limits the chance for these families to reunite; and

WHEREAS, Many Filipino World War II veterans are now in their 80s and 90s and they continue to wait for their children, who languish on the visa waiting list, to join them; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That veterans of the United States Armed Forces should not be separated from their children; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of the State of California joins the Congress of the United States in further acknowledging the service of Filipino World War II veterans in the Armed Forces of the United States by recognizing that these veterans should be reunited with their children during their golden years; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully requests the President and the Congress of the United States to pass S. 1337 authored by Senator Akaka and H.R. 2412 authored by Congresswoman Hirono, which would exempt the children of certain Filipino World War II veterans from the numerical limitations on immigrant visas, thus allowing for family reunification; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the Senate, and each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.