

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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**CONGRESSWOMAN MAZIE K. HIRONO INTRODUCES FILIPINO WORLD
WAR II VETERANS FAMILY REUNIFICATION ACT TODAY**

Washington, D.C. – Following up on her promise to help Filipino World War II veterans reunite with their families, Congresswoman Mazie K. Hirono (D-Hawaii) today introduced H.R. 1287, the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Act proposes to exempt the sons and daughters of Filipino World War II from immigration quotas that have delayed for up to 20 years their receipt of immigrant visas to the United States. The bill is a companion measure to S. 671, introduced by Hawaii Senator Daniel K. Akaka in February. Hirono met with a large delegation of Filipino veterans in Hawaii three days before introducing the bill.

“Taking care of the brave men and women who fight for our country should be a priority for Congress. As our Filipino veterans are entering the sunset years of their lives, we’re running out of time to fulfill our obligations to them,” Hirono said. “These veterans fought shoulder to shoulder with American servicemen during

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Page 2: Hirono introduces Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Bill

World War II and sacrificed for the same just cause as our troops. Our government made a promise to provide them full veterans' benefits, and we have waited too long to achieve the full equity they deserve. I look forward to working with my colleagues to bring together the families of our Filipino World War II veterans.”

About 200,000 Filipinos served with American troops in World War II. Today, some 25,000 are still alive, with an estimated 7,000 residing in the United States; about 2,000 of these veterans live in Hawaii.

Co-sponsoring the bill with Hirono are Reps. Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), Bob Filner (D-CA), Michael M. Honda (D-CA), Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU), Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (D-VA), Jim McDermott (D-WA), Darrell Issa (R-CA) Sam Farr (D-CA), Al Green (D-TX), Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ), and Phil Hare (D-IL).

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Photo caption: Congresswoman Mazie K. Hirono and Art A. Caleda, president of the Hawaii chapter of the WWII Fil-Am Veterans, discuss the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act at a meeting in Honolulu on Feb. 26, 2007.