

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 27, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 10, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 37

Introduced by Assembly Member Bonta

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Travis Allen, Arambula, Baker, Bigelow, Bloom, Bonilla, Brough, Brown, Burke, Calderon, Campos, Chang, Chau, Chávez, Chiu, Chu, Cooley, Cooper, Dababneh, Dahle, Daly, Dodd, Eggman, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gipson, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gray, Grove, Hadley, Roger Hernández, Holden, Irwin, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Kim, Lackey, Levine, Linder, Lopez, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, McCarty, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, Obernolte, O'Donnell, Olsen, Patterson, Quirk, Rodriguez, Salas, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Ting, Wagner, Waldron, Weber, Wilk, Williams, and Wood)

April 21, 2016

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 37—Relative to Filipino veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 37, as amended, Bonta. Filipino veterans.

This measure would request that the Congress of the United States pass H.R. 2737 and Sen. 1555.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The Legislature has always properly recognized
2 the service and sacrifice of all veterans and, in August 2011, passed
3 Assembly Bill 199 to encourage the inclusion of the role of

1 Filipinos during World War II in the social sciences curriculum
2 for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, in California; and
3 WHEREAS, On July 26, 1941, the United States Army Forces
4 in the Far East (USAFFE) was created by a military order by the
5 United States War Department and signed by President Franklin
6 D. Roosevelt, which federalized all military units in the United
7 States Commonwealth of the Philippines into the service of the
8 United States Army under the command of General Douglas
9 MacArthur; and

10 WHEREAS, On December 8, 1941, just six hours after the
11 bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Philippines was invaded by Japan.
12 On December 24, 1941, in accordance with War Plan Orange 3
13 (WPO3), the USAFFE made a strategic retreat to the Bataan
14 Peninsula which guarded the entrance of Manila Bay. Filipino
15 soldiers of the USAFFE made up seven-eighths of the main line
16 of resistance in the Battle of Bataan. Despite the lack of training
17 and equipment and fighting without any air support, the Filipino
18 and American soldiers of the USAFFE fought with great distinction
19 and inflicted heavy losses on the Japanese Army in the Battle of
20 Abucay, Battle of the Points, and Battle of the Pockets in January
21 and February 1942. Because of the Europe First Policy, the
22 USAFFE troops were unable to receive necessary reinforcement,
23 which led to massive disease and starvation. However, they
24 performed a delaying action that disrupted the timetable of the
25 Japanese Army of 52 days, defending the Bataan Peninsula for 99
26 days; and

27 WHEREAS, On April 9, 1942, General Edward P. King, Jr.,
28 Commanding General of the Luzon Forces, was forced to surrender
29 75,000 USAFFE troops consisting of 63,000 Filipino and 12,000
30 American soldiers, most suffering from disease and starvation.
31 Those soldiers were forced to march some 60 miles to their prison
32 camp at Camp O'Donnell in searing heat with barely any provisions
33 for food, water, shelter, or medicine. Those who could no longer
34 go on were beaten, bayoneted, shot, and some even beheaded by
35 their captors. Approximately 10,000 Filipino and 750 American
36 soldiers died along the way in what became known as the Bataan
37 Death March. Once inside Camp O'Donnell, another 20,000
38 Filipino and 1,600 American soldiers died. On May 6, 1942, Lt.
39 General Jonathan Wainwright, Commanding General of the United
40 States Forces in the Philippines, surrendered Corregidor and the

1 rest of the Philippines to General Masaharu Homma of the Japanese
2 Army; and

3 WHEREAS, From 1942 until 1945, Filipinos made up a majority
4 of the Guerrilla groups which laid the groundwork for the eventual
5 liberation of the Philippines which started in October 1944 with
6 the Leyte Landing and the Battle of Leyte Gulf and ended on
7 September 3, 1945, with the surrender of General Tomoyuki
8 Yamashita of the Japanese Army to the Allied Forces; and

9 WHEREAS, The Philippine nation suffered heavy casualties
10 from December 8, 1941, until September 3, 1945. Beginning in
11 1944, a systematic extermination of civilians (Zonas) and prisoners
12 of war took place all over the Philippines. During the Battle of
13 Manila between February and March 1945, approximately 100,000
14 civilians perished in Manila, many by massacres. By the end of
15 the war, approximately 1,000,000 civilians had perished in the
16 Philippines and Manila, once called the Pearl of the Orient, became
17 the second most devastated city during World War II after Warsaw,
18 Poland; and

19 WHEREAS, The men and women of the Philippines and United
20 States performed an invaluable service in defense of the United
21 States and the Philippines from July 26, 1941, to December 31,
22 1946. In the Philippines it consisted of the Philippine Scouts (part
23 of the Philippine Department), the Philippine Commonwealth
24 Army, Recognized Guerrillas, and the New Philippine Scouts. In
25 the United States, the First Filipino Infantry Regiment, 2nd Filipino
26 Infantry Battalion (Separate), and First Reconnaissance Battalion
27 were activated between July and October 1942, in California; and

28 WHEREAS, In February and May 1946, a great injustice was
29 inflicted on the Filipino soldiers with the passage of the First and
30 Second Surplus Rescission Acts, which deemed the service of the
31 organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth
32 of the Philippines including organized guerrilla forces, while such
33 forces were in the service of the United States Armed Forces
34 pursuant to the military order of the President dated July 26, 1941,
35 as not to have been active military, naval, or air service for the
36 purposes of any law of the United States conferring rights,
37 privileges, or benefits upon any person by reason of the service of
38 such person or the service of any other person in the United States
39 Armed Forces; now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
2 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature requests that the Congress
3 of the United States pass H.R. 2737 and Sen. 1555 in recognition
4 of the loyal and selfless duty of Filipino veterans of World War II
5 to the Philippines and to the United States; and be it further
6 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
7 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
8 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
9 Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative
10 from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the
11 author for appropriate distribution.

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