

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 18, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 169

Introduced by Assembly Member Bonta

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Chau, Fong, Muratsuchi, Pan, Quirk, Ting, Weber, Williams, ~~and Yamada~~ *Yamada, Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Bigelow, Bloom, Bocanegra, Bradford, Brown, Buchanan, Campos, Chávez, Chesbro, Conway, Cooley, Dababneh, Dahle, Daly, Donnelly, Eggman, Fox, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Garcia, Gatto, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gorell, Gray, Grove, Hagman, Hall, Harkey, Roger Hernández, Holden, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Levine, Linder, Logue, Lowenthal, Maienschein, Medina, Mullin, Nazarian, Nestande, Olsen, Patterson, Perea, V. Manuel Pérez, Quirk-Silva, Rendon, Ridley-Thomas, Salas, Skinner, Stone, Wagner, Waldron, Wieckowski, and Wilk*)

(Coauthors: Senators Block, Corbett, Lara, Leno, Lieu, Liu, and Padilla)

August 4, 2014

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 169—Relative to Filipino American History Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 169, as amended, Bonta. Filipino American History Month.

This measure would recognize the month of October 2014 as Filipino American History Month and the 427th anniversary of the first presence of Filipinos in the continental United States.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Filipinos and Filipino Americans have been
- 2 contributing to California and the United States for hundreds of

1 years, ever since October 18, 1587, when the first “Luzones Indios”
2 set foot in Morro Bay, California, on board the Nuestra Señora de
3 Esperanza, a Manila-built galleon ship captained by Pedro de
4 Unamuno of Spain; and

5 WHEREAS, In the late 1700s and early 1800s, Filipinos helped
6 Father Junípero Serra establish the California mission system; and

7 WHEREAS, Since the late 1800s, Filipino communities have
8 existed in southern Louisiana, according to oral histories recorded
9 by Rhonda Richoux Fox; and

10 WHEREAS, After the Philippines was colonized, Filipinos
11 began immigrating to San Francisco, where they contributed to
12 the city both as military personnel and as service sector workers
13 such as bellhops, dishwashers, servants, and cooks; established,
14 by the 1920s, a thriving community around Kearny and Jackson
15 Streets, which became known as “Manilatown”; and settled, during
16 the post World War II era, into the Fillmore, South of Market, and
17 Excelsior districts; and

18 WHEREAS, Between 1906 and 1935, the first large wave of
19 Filipino immigration to the United States began, as Filipinos were
20 recruited to California, Alaska, and Hawaii to work in the
21 agricultural industries, canneries, and sugarcane plantations,
22 respectively; and

23 WHEREAS, The Filipino contract workers in Hawaii, or
24 “Sakadas,” became the largest group of Asians on the sugarcane
25 plantations by the 1920s; and

26 WHEREAS, At the turn of the 20th century, Filipino students,
27 or “pensionados,” farm workers, and laborers in manufacturing
28 and in the service sector began settling in Stockton and the
29 surrounding San Joaquin Delta area, where they built a community
30 that became the largest concentration of Filipinos outside of the
31 Philippines and established a thriving six-block ethnic
32 neighborhood that became known as “Little Manila”; and

33 WHEREAS, In 2000, the Stockton City Council designated this
34 area, in downtown Stockton at the intersection of Lafayette and
35 El Dorado Streets, as the “Little Manila Historical Site,” the first
36 designation of this kind in the country; and

37 WHEREAS, In the first decades of the 20th century, thousands
38 of Filipinos in California worked in agricultural fields throughout
39 the state, in cities and regions such as the Sacramento-San Joaquin
40 Delta, the central coast, Imperial Valley, Orange County, the Inland

1 Empire, Delano, Bakersfield, Coachella Valley, and the San
2 Francisco Bay area, and became a critical element in the growth
3 and political economy of the state, often enduring harsh labor
4 conditions and poor wages, but persevering and creating a strong
5 legacy of mutual support, strikes, and organization for farm labor
6 unionization; and

7 WHEREAS, In the 1920s, Filipinos in California also worked
8 as laborers in the shipyards of Vallejo, where they established a
9 Filipino American community and business center, and became
10 so successful that there were thousands of Filipinos working as
11 shipbuilders by the start of World War II; and

12 WHEREAS, During World War II, approximately 200,000
13 Filipino soldiers battled under the command of the United States
14 to preserve the liberty of our country and win back the liberty of
15 the Philippines from the Japanese occupation; and

16 WHEREAS, Thousands of these Filipino soldiers came from
17 California, served in the First and Second Filipino Infantry
18 Regiments, underwent training at Salinas and at Fort Ord,
19 California, and were stationed at Camp Beale near Sacramento
20 and Camp Cooke near Santa Maria; and

21 WHEREAS, After World War II ended, many Filipinos who
22 had served in the United States Navy settled in National City and
23 elsewhere in the County of San Diego, as well as in the Cities of
24 West Long Beach and Wilmington, where they worked in the Long
25 Beach shipyards and Terminal Island canneries, served in the
26 harbor area as nurses and medical workers, and created flourishing
27 Filipino American communities numbering in the tens of
28 thousands; and

29 WHEREAS, Between 1941 and 1959, the second wave of
30 Filipino immigration to the United States began, as nurses, students,
31 “war brides” and fiancées of World War II military personnel and
32 veterans, tourists, and Filipino members of the United States Navy
33 came to the United States; and

34 WHEREAS, In 1965, the third wave of Filipino immigration to
35 the United States began, as the passing of the Immigration and
36 Nationality Act abolished “national origins” as the basis for
37 immigration, allowing for more immigration from Asia and Latin
38 America and for much-needed Filipino medical professionals to
39 come to the United States to fill United States labor shortages; and

1 WHEREAS, On September 8, 1965, Filipino American
2 agricultural labor leaders, including Larry Itliong and Philip Vera
3 Cruz, organized more than 1,500 farm workers from the
4 Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee in the Delano Grape
5 Strike of 1965, in partnership with César Chávez, Dolores Huerta,
6 and other Mexican American labor leaders of the National Farm
7 Workers Association, sparking one of the greatest social, economic,
8 and racial justice movements in the history of California and the
9 United States, and led to the establishment of the United Farm
10 Workers of America; and

11 WHEREAS, These agricultural workers, along with other
12 volunteers, also built Agbayani Village, a retirement facility for
13 elderly Filipino farmworkers, or “Manongs,” located at Forty Acres
14 in Delano in the County of Kern; and

15 WHEREAS, In 1968, Filipino student organizers were
16 instrumental in the leadership of the Third World Liberation Front
17 that led to the founding of our nation’s first Third World College
18 at the University of California, Berkeley, and the first College of
19 Ethnic Studies, at California State University, San Francisco, that
20 was part of the larger effort to democratize higher education for
21 all; and

22 WHEREAS, From 1968 to 1977, Filipino American activists
23 and residents of San Francisco’s International Hotel organized a
24 popular, multiracial campaign that challenged local authorities and
25 private development to place people and the public good ahead of
26 profit, and support affordable housing for Filipino and Chinese
27 immigrants and community members; and

28 WHEREAS, From 1972 to 1986, Filipino American activists
29 organized massive educational and political campaigns to restore
30 civil liberties in the Philippines during the period of martial law
31 in that country, creating dynamic local responses to international
32 politics and placing pressure on the United States government to
33 end its support of the Marcos dictatorship; and

34 WHEREAS, In 1973, the fourth wave of Filipino immigration
35 to the United States began, as political exiles and refugees from
36 the Marcos era, intellectuals, tourists, students, student activists,
37 professionals, semiprofessionals, and families came to the United
38 States; and

39 WHEREAS, In 2002, the City of Los Angeles, home to over
40 120,000 Filipinos, designated part of the city as the “Historic

1 Filipinotown” district, the largest designation of this kind in the
2 country; and

3 WHEREAS, The Filipino Community Center of the Los Angeles
4 Harbor area in the City of Wilmington continues to serve as a
5 model organization, facilitating community events such as
6 weddings, baptisms, pageants, and fiestas; and

7 WHEREAS, On November 8, 2013, Super Typhoon
8 Haiyan/Yolanda, one of the strongest storms ever recorded in
9 human history, struck the Philippines and devastated the lives of
10 millions of people throughout the Philippines and the world; and

11 WHEREAS, Today, numerous other community-based
12 institutions that take responsibility for the services, advocacy, and
13 civic engagement needs of the Filipino American community exist
14 throughout the state; and

15 WHEREAS, The Filipino American population is currently the
16 largest Asian American and Pacific Islander group in California
17 and the third largest Asian American and Pacific Islander group
18 in the United States; and

19 WHEREAS, Nine Filipino Americans have received the
20 Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor in
21 action against an enemy force that can be bestowed upon an
22 individual serving in the United States Armed Forces; and

23 WHEREAS, Filipino Americans have served the public in a
24 wide range of capacities, including, but not limited to, Chief Justice
25 of the California Supreme Court, representatives to the United
26 States Congress, legislators in the state legislatures of California
27 and other states, and other city, state, and federal leaders of the
28 United States; and

29 WHEREAS, Throughout the history of the United States,
30 Filipino Americans have made cultural, economic, political, social,
31 and other contributions to our country that have become a vital
32 part of the rich, diverse, and vibrant tapestry of our nation; and

33 WHEREAS, Since World War II, federal, state, and local
34 redevelopment projects, freeway and highway construction, urban
35 decay, private development, demographic shifts, and poor city
36 planning have destroyed a significant number of Filipino American
37 historic sites and ethnic neighborhoods, and many of the remaining
38 Filipino American communities and historic sites are in danger of
39 being lost; and

1 WHEREAS, Preserving our Filipino communities throughout
2 California and the United States is critical to the preservation of
3 Filipino culture, history, traditions, and heritage and to the
4 preservation of our state and national history as well as our state
5 and national future; now, therefore, be it

6 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
7 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the month of
8 October 2014 as Filipino American History Month and the 427th
9 anniversary of the first presence of Filipinos in the continental
10 United States; and be it further

11 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
12 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.