



May 24, 2024

The Honorable Mike Bost
Chairman
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
364 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20003

RE: H.R. 6121 The Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2023

Dear Chairman Bost,

It has been 78 years since World War II ended. Over 260,000 Filipino soldiers fought in battles where they played a vital role in the outcome of the war. The courageous efforts of Filipino soldiers were central to allied victory in the Philippines and in the Pacific theater.

Despite their sacrifices and loyal service to the United States, the Rescission Acts of 1946 denied benefits to the majority of Filipino Veterans while providing some benefit for service-connected disability and death.

In recent years, eligibility to VA benefits may be established upon verification of valid military service by the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), located in St. Louis, Missouri. However, a catastrophic fire on July 12, 1973 destroyed between 16 to 18 million military personnel records at the NPRC which partly causes the difficulty of veterans to successfully secure documents to prove their military service for the purpose of applying for benefits.

On November 9, 2023, Rep. Kevin Mullin introduced H.R. 6121 – the Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2023. The pending legislation will “improve the benefits furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to certain individuals who served in the forces of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts.”

In determining eligibility of an individual’s service, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs “shall take into account any alternative documentation regarding such service, including documentation other than the recognized guerrilla rosters stored at the National Personnel Records Center, that the Secretary determines relevant.”

Today, an estimate of less than two thousand soldiers remains alive and living in the United States, many of whom are in their 90s. On behalf of the Filipino World War II Veterans, the

San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission strongly requests your support and co-sponsorship of H.R. 6121: The Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2023.

We are grateful to the members of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs for their work to improve the health and well-being of our country's veterans. And we thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

The San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission
City & County of San Francisco