



UPDATES

31 January 2008

HOUSE - H.R. 760

Sponsor:
Bob Filner [D-CA]

- Co-Sponsors (108):*
 Neil Abercrombie [D-HI]
 Robert Andrews [D-NJ]
 Joe Baca [D-CA]
 Brian Baird [D-WA]
 Tammy Baldwin [D-WI]
 Melissa Bean [D-IL]
 Xavier Becerra [D-CA]
 Shelley Berkley [D-NV]
 Howard Berman [D-CA]
 Brian Bilbray [R-CA]
 Madeleine Bordallo [D-GU]
 Robert Brady [D-PA]
 Corrine Brown [D-FL]
 Ken Calvert [R-CA]
 Lois Capps [D-CA]
 Julia Carson [D-IN]
 Jerry Costello [D-IL]
 Joseph Crowley [D-NY]
 Danny Davis [D-IL]
 Susan Davis [D-CA]
 Michael Doyle [D-PA]
 Thelma Drake [R-VA]
 Rahm Emanuel [D-IL]
 Philip English [R-PA]
 Anna Eshoo [D-CA]
 Eni Faleomavaega [D-AS]
 Sam Farr [D-CA]
 Chaka Fattah [D-PA]
 Scott Garrett [R-NJ]
 Charles Gonzalez [D-TX]
 Al Green [D-TX]
 Raul Grijalva [D-AZ]
 Luis Gutiérrez [D-IL]
 Phil Hare [D-IL]
 Jane Harman [D-CA]
 Alcee Hastings [D-FL]
 Maurice Hinchey [D-NY]
 Mazie Hirono [D-HI]
 Michael Honda [D-CA]
 Jay Inslee [D-WA]
 Darrell Issa [R-CA]
 Jesse Jackson [D-IL]
 Eddie Johnson [D-TX]
 Henry Johnson [D-GA]
 Marcy Kaptur [D-OH]
 Carolyn Kilpatrick [D-MI]
 Nicholas Lampson [D-TX]
 Tom Lantos [D-CA]
 Rick Larsen [D-WA]
 John Larson [D-CT]
 Barbara Lee [D-CA]
 John Lewis [D-GA]
 Daniel Lipinski [D-IL]
 Zoe Lofgren [D-CA]
 Stephen Lynch [D-MA]
 Carolyn Maloney [D-NY]
 Doris Matsui [D-CA]
 Carolyn McCarthy [D-NY]
 Betty McCollum [D-MN]
 Thaddeus McCotter [R-MI]
 James McDermott [D-WA]
 Jerry McNerney [D-CA]
 Kendrick Meek [D-FL]
 George Miller [D-CA]
 Jeff Miller [R-FL]
 Alan Mollohan [D-WV]
 Grace Napolitano [D-CA]
 Eleanor Norton [D-DC]
 William Pascrell [D-NJ]
 Edward Pastor [D-AZ]

THE VETERANS EQUITY BILL – CONTINUING THE FIGHT TO CORRECT A GRAVE INJUSTICE

TWO SENIOR U.S. SENATORS REAFFIRM COMMITMENT TO PURSUING VETERANS EQUITY BILL

During their recent visit to the Philippines, Senator Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) gave their personal commitment to President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to continue pushing strongly, and on a bipartisan basis, for the early passage of the Filipino Veterans Equity Bill. Senator Inouye, himself a WWII veteran, sponsored the Filipino Veterans Equity Bill to acknowledge the significant contributions of Filipino veterans who helped ensure the victory of US forces in the Pacific during World War II. President Arroyo thanked the two senators not



Senator Inouye and President Arroyo face the media after their meeting at the Presidential Palace on 17 January 2008

only for their support for Filipino World War II veterans but also for leading efforts in Congress to increase assistance levels to the Philippines. "Thank you for what you have done for the Filipino people," the President said.

Senator Inouye, himself a WWII veteran, sponsored the Filipino Veterans Equity Bill to acknowledge the significant contributions of Filipino veterans who helped ensure the victory of US forces in the Pacific during World War II. Senator Stevens, a senior member of Alaska's

STATUS OF VETERANS EQUITY BILLS

	HOUSE	SENATE
Title	H.R.760 - Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007 - To amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain service in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for purposes of benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.	S.57 - Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007 - A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain service in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for purposes of benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
Status	1 Jan 07 : Introduced by Rep Filner 15 Feb 07 : Heard and Considered by the Full House VA Committee 17 Jul 07 : Voted and Passed the House VA Committee Mark-up Session 21 Aug 07 : Reported-out by the Congressional Budget Office for Budget Estimate 2008 : Expected to be brought to US House for Floor vote when the House reconvenes.	4 Jan 07 : Introduced by Sen. Inouye 12 Apr 07 : Heard and Considered by the Full Senate VA Committee Hearing 27 Jun 07 : Voted and Passed the Senate VA Mark-up Session July 07 : Became part of S.1315 - Disabled Veterans Insurance Improvement Act of 2007 28 Aug 07 : Reported-out by the Congressional Budget Office for Budget Estimate 8 Nov 07 : Opposed by Sen Craig (R-Idaho) when presented for unanimous consent 12 Dec 07 : Again opposed by Senator Craig when presented for another unanimous consent
Benefits		
w/dependent	\$700/month \$8,400/yr	\$375/month \$4,500/yr
w/o dependent	\$500/month \$6,000/yr	\$300/month \$3,600/yr
Widow	\$300/month \$3,600/yr	\$200/month \$2,400/yr
Medical	\$142/month \$1,704/yr	\$142/month \$1,704/yr
Estimated Congressional Outlay	\$90M/yr; \$900M/ten yrs.	\$45M/yr; 450M/ten yrs.

TWO SENIOR U.S. SENATORS . . .

congressional delegation and the longest-serving senator in the history of the Republican Party, is the chief Republican supporter of the Equity Bill in the US Senate.

After the courtesy call, the President also conferred the Order of the Golden Heart with the Rank of Grand Cross on Senator Stevens for rendering distinguished services and assistance "for the amelioration and improvement of the moral, social, and economic conditions of the Filipino people."



Senator Stevens (4th from left) Ambassador Kristie Kenney (5th from left) and Senator Inouye join Filipino World War II veterans at a reception hosted by the US Embassy in Manila for the two senior senators.

VETERANS ISSUE TOP AGENDA OF NEW CONSULTANTS

On 30 January 2008, Ambassador Gaa announced the signing of a new contract of consultancy with a member of a top Washington law firm.

Ambassador Gaa said that the consultancy services to be provided by Ambassador Stuart E. Eizenstat, Partner and Chair of the International Practice of Covington & Burling LLP, one of the leading law firms in Washington DC, will be welcome support to the efforts of the Philippines in pursuing its interests in the United States.

"Ambassador Eizenstat and his team in Covington & Burling will provide welcome support to our efforts here in Washington," Ambassador Gaa said. "Our consultant and his excellent team will work broadly on a bipartisan basis, particularly in

Congress," he added.

"Most importantly," Ambassador Gaa emphasized, "our work priority and that of Ambassador Eizenstat and his team remains that of correcting the grave injustice that was done to our World War II veterans."

Ambassador Gaa said that the Philippine Government remains committed and determined to win for "Filipino veterans the benefits, dignity and recognition that they truly deserve."

"In carrying out his task, Ambassador Eizenstat will have the support of the top tier of the government affairs and international practice groups of Covington & Burling LLP," Ambassador Gaa explained.

- Donald Payne [D-NJ]
- Jon Porter [R-NV]
- Charles Rangel [D-NY]
- Silvestre Reyes [D-TX]
- Ciro Rodriguez [D-TX]
- Dana Rohrabacher [R-CA]
- Peter Roskam [R-IL]
- Steven Rothman [D-NJ]
- Lucille Roybal-Allard [D-CA]
- Edward Royce [R-CA]
- Dutch Ruppersberger [D-MD]
- Bobby Rush [D-IL]
- John Salazar [D-CO]
- Linda Sánchez [D-CA]
- John Sarbanes [D-MD]
- Janice Schakowsky [D-IL]
- Adam Schiff [D-CA]
- Robert Scott [D-VA]
- Carol Shea-Porter [D-NH]
- Brad Sherman [D-CA]
- Heath Shuler [D-NC]
- Albio Sires [D-NJ]
- Adam Smith [D-WA]
- Hilda Solis [D-CA]
- Zackary Space [D-OH]
- Fortney Stark [D-CA]
- Ellen Tauscher [D-CA]
- Michael Thompson [D-CA]
- Christopher Van Hollen [D-MD]
- Timothy Walz [D-MN]
- Maxine Waters [D-CA]
- Diane Watson [D-CA]
- Henry Waxman [D-CA]
- Peter Welch [D-VT]
- Frank Wolf [R-VA]
- Lynn Woolsey [D-CA]
- David Wu [D-OR]
- Shelley Capito [R-WV]

SENATE - S.1315

Sponsor:

Daniel Inouye [D-HI]

Co-Sponsors (15):

- Daniel Akaka [D-HI]
- Barbara Boxer [D-CA]
- Sherrod Brown [D-OH]
- Maria Cantwell [D-WA]
- Benjamin Cardin [D-MD]
- Hillary Clinton [D-NY]
- Dianne Feinstein [D-CA]
- Frank Lautenberg [D-NJ]
- Robert Menéndez [D-NJ]
- Barbara Mikulski [D-MD]
- Patty Murray [D-WA]
- Barack Obama [D-IL]
- Harry Reid [D-NV]
- Charles Schumer [D-NY]
- Ted Stevens [R-AK]



Ambassador Willy C. Gaa
FROM THE CORNER OF
BATAAN AND MASSACHUSETTS

Correcting a grave and historic injustice and giving our veterans the dignity and recognition they so truly deserve remain key priorities of the Philippine Government.

This quest is at the forefront of the work of the Philippine Embassy.

In 2007, we came close to realizing our collective dream. Bills granting equity to Filipino World War II veterans had been approved by the Veterans' Committees of both Houses of Congress.

This is the farthest that we have reached on our long road towards equity.

Together with our Veterans and the many Filipino-American groups solidly behind them, we hurdled every obstacle and overcame every challenge to win over the Veterans' Committees of both Houses of Congress.

Sadly, when presented for unanimous consent in the Senate, equity for our veterans was blocked twice.

We view this as a minor setback. We are aware of the concerns that led a few US legislators to stand in the way of equity for our veterans.

We are addressing these concerns and engaging these legislators in meaningful dialogue.

At the same time, we are moving vigorously to further strengthen and broaden the wide support that have been key factors in moving the equity bills forward. We are determined to win the day for our veterans and for our

country.

We are confident in the justness of our cause.

We are committed to pursuing this to the end.

We are inspired by the unequalled unity of the Filipino-American community in pursuing equity for our veterans.

In World War II, the bayonets, bullets, and bombs of the enemy decimated the ranks of our brave soldiers.

Today, age, disease and indifference are the ones thinning their ranks.

But in their quest for equity, our veterans continue to show the courage and determination and helped turn the tides of war.

Those of us who live in liberty and freedom because of the sacrifices of these brave men and women can do no less than to continue the noble quest of correcting a grave injustice and in restoring their honor and their dignity.

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