

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2725



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**  
**HON. GARY C. ALEJANO**

**Explanatory Note**

As of April 2015, the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office or PVAO is managing 142,044 pensioners which are receiving old age monthly pension amounting to Php 5,000. Of that number, 12,297 are World War II veterans. Furthermore, the US Department of Veterans Affairs provide additional regular benefits to Filipinos who served during WWII.

Although the veterans are receiving compensation for their service, they are yet to enjoy their full and complete benefits and privileges from the American government with whom they fought for to serve its cause, defend its territory and secure peace in the Asia-Pacific region. The Rescission Act of 1946 of the United States stripped some Filipino WWII veterans of full benefits as that of American veterans, despite being one of the allied nationalities who fought for the US during the war. The Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act also waived the right of Filipino veterans to receive lifetime monthly pension. It seems that the struggle of the veterans, now, for due benefits, is not yet over.

This bill mandates the establishment and maintenance of an Office of Veterans Affairs in the Philippine Embassy based in the United States of America to ensure that the benefits and privileges due to our Filipino veterans be provided and received accordingly. The said office will represent, negotiate and lobby for the rights of the Filipino veterans with the appropriate US offices and agencies concerned with veterans' affairs.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

  
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

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AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING THE OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN  
THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
PRESCRIBING ITS FUNCTIONS AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1       **SEC. 1 Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the  
2 government to pursue the claims of Filipino veterans of World War II and work for  
3 the full restoration of their rights, privileges and benefits from the United States  
4 government.

5  
6       **SEC. 2 Establishment of an Office of Veterans Affairs.**– For the attainment  
7 of this policy, there is hereby created an Office of Veterans Affairs in the Philippine  
8 Embassy in the United States of America mandated with the task of making formal  
9 representations, consultations and negotiations or otherwise cause the conduct of  
10 sustained and effective lobbying with appropriate offices of the legislative and  
11 executive branches of the United States government and other agencies and entities  
12 which can enhance the favorable consideration of the claims of Filipino veterans. The  
13 official shall be in existence for five (5) years from the date of approval of this Act or  
14 until the Filipino veterans shall be availed of their legitimate claims, the time of  
15 which shall not exceed another five (5) years.

16  
17       **SEC. 3 Staffing.** – The office of Veterans Affairs shall have a staff consisting  
18 of a head of office appointed by the President of the Philippines, two (2)  
19 administrative assistants assigned by the Secretary of the Department of National  
20 Defense and such other locally hired personnel as the head of office may find  
21 necessary. The Veterans Federation of Philippines shall submit a list of five (5) years  
22 persons who could head of the Office of the Veterans Affairs and one of whom shall  
23 be appointed by the President of the Philippines as a special presidential  
24 representative who shall have a comparable diplomatic rank.

1           **SEC. 4. *Appropriations.*** - The amount necessary for the initial  
2 implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations  
3 for the operational requirements of the Ad Hoc Veterans Affairs Office in  
4 Washington D. C. authorized under the budget of the Philippine Veterans Affairs  
5 Office. Thereafter, such as sums may be necessary for the continued implementation  
6 of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

7

8           **SEC. 5 *Effectivity*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
9 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*