

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
*First Regular Session*

}

SENATE

S. No. 647

---

---

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR JR.

---

---

#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our veterans who fought valiantly and with honor alongside the American Forces during World War II should given adequate support in their battle for legitimate claims against the United States government.

Filipino veterans of the World War II have outstanding claims against the United States government for the restoration of their honor, dignity, rights, benefits and privileges as members of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE). They felt they were deprived of these benefits by the enactment of the United States Rescission Act of 1946. These claims remain unsettled even after the American panel of the 1966 Joint RP-US Commission for the Study of the Philippine Veterans Problems referred them to the appropriate United States government agencies concerned more than twenty-five years ago.

On June 21, 1990, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs established an ad hoc Office of Veterans Affairs at the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D. C. to address the settlement of these claims. This office was funded through the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office of the Department of National Defense. During the past years, the Office of Veterans Affairs marshaled and coordinated all efforts by both the Philippine government and the veterans' organizations in the Philippines and the United States to pursue these claims. Several items of proposed legislation favorable to Filipino veterans of World War II have been introduced in the United States Congress but these have to be monitored and guided to successful completion.

This Bill seeks to formally institutionalize the Office of Veterans Affairs in the Philippine Embassy in the United States, to fix its term of existence and appropriate funds for its administration and operation.

With the onset of a new administration in Washington D.C. and the corresponding euphoria of ascendancy and confidence, it is timely to pursue these claims vigorously and finally convince the United States government to address our veterans' unresolved claims conclusively.

For these reasons, we earnestly request approval of this Bill.

  
MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
*First Regular Session*

}

SENATE

S. No. 647

*Jala*

---

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

---

**AN ACT TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN  
THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
PRESCRIBING ITS FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR  
OTHER PURPOSES**

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

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

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

SEC. 3. *Staffing.* - The office of Veterans Affairs shall have a staff consisting of a head of  
office appointed by the President of the Philippines, two (2) administrative assistants  
assigned by the Secretary of National Defense, and such other locally hired personnel as  
the head of office may find necessary. The Veterans Federation of the Philippines shall

submit a list of five (5) persons who could head the office of Veterans Affairs and one of whom shall be appointed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines as a special presidential representative who shall have a comparable diplomatic rank.

SEC. 4. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations for the operational requirements of the Veterans Affairs Office in Washington D.C. authorized under the budget of the Department of Foreign Affairs and thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 5. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,