

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 218

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States and acknowledging the contributions of our Filipino-American community to our country over the last century.

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Whereas the peoples of the Philippine archipelago have a long and proud history, and today, as the Republic of the Philippines, embrace democracy, occupy a central strategic position in Asia and the Pacific, and nurture a rich and diverse cultural heritage;

Whereas the United States and the Philippines have enjoyed a long and productive relationship, including the period

of United States governance between 1898 and 1946, and the period post-independence starting in 1946, during which the Philippines has taken its place among the community of nations and has been one of our country's most loyal and reliable allies internationally;

Whereas the bonds between our two countries have been strengthened through sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States;

Whereas the 2000 census counted almost 2.4 million Americans of Filipino ancestry living in all parts of our country, including the top two States: California, with almost 1.1 million Filipino Americans, and Hawaii, with some 275,000;

Whereas the contributions of Filipino Americans to the United States include achievement in all segments of our society, including, to name a few, labor, business, politics, medicine, media and the arts;

Whereas Filipino Americans have especially served with distinction in the Armed Forces of the United States throughout the history of our long relationship, from World Wars I and II through the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and today in Afghanistan and Iraq;

Whereas within the United States, Filipino Americans retained many of their country's proud cultural traditions and contribute immeasurably to the diverse tapestry of today's American experience;

Whereas Filipino Americans have also maintained close ties to their friends and relatives in the Philippines and in doing so play an indispensable role in maintaining the strength and vitality of the U.S.-Philippines relationship;

Whereas both the Filipino experience in the United States and the resultant ties between our two great countries began in earnest in 1906, when 15 Filipino contract laborers arrived in the then-Territory of Hawaii to work on the islands' sugar plantations, the beginnings of an emigration from the Philippines to Hawaii which, during the subsequent century, has sometimes exceeded 60,000 a year, making Filipinos the largest immigrant group from the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas 1906 also saw the first class of two hundred "pensionados" arrive from the Philippines to obtain United States educations with the intent of returning, although many later became United States citizens and helped form the foundation of today's Filipino-American community;

Whereas the story of America's Filipino-American community is little known and rarely told, yet is the quintessential immigrant story of early struggle, pain, sacrifice, and broken dreams, leading eventually to success in overcoming ethnic, social, economic, political, and legal barriers to win a well-deserved place in American society;

Whereas our Filipino-American community will recognize a century of achievement in the United States in 2006 through a series of nationwide celebrations and memorials honoring the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines; and

Whereas this centennial is for all Americans of whatever ethnic origin to celebrate both with and in order to understand and appreciate our Filipino-American community, but also as a remembrance of the struggles and triumphs of all of our predecessors and in honor of our common national experience: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That the Congress—*

3 (1) recognizes the centennial of sustained immi-
4 gration from the Philippines to the United States;

5 (2) acknowledges the achievements and con-
6 tributions of Filipino Americans over the past cen-
7 tury; and

8 (3) requests that the President issue a procla-
9 mation calling on the people of the United States to
10 observe this milestone with appropriate celebratory
11 and educational programs, ceremonies and other ac-
12 tivities.

Passed the House of Representatives December 13,
2005.

Attest:

Clerk.