

WHEREAS, It has been 56 years since about 142,000 Filipino veterans fought in World War II after President Franklin Roosevelt called them into active service under the United States flag; and

WHEREAS, The Philippines is strategically located and thus was vital to the defense of the United States during World War II; and

WHEREAS, The military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were called into the United States armed forces during World War II by Executive Order and were put under the command of General MacArthur by General Marshall; and

WHEREAS, Filipino World War II veterans were American nationals when called into the United States armed forces; and

WHEREAS, The participation of the military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor and in other smaller skirmishes delayed and disrupted the initial Japanese effort to conquer the Western Pacific; and

WHEREAS, That delay and disruption allowed the United States the vital time to prepare the forces which were needed to drive the Japanese from the Western Pacific and to defeat Japan; and

WHEREAS, After the recovery of the Philippine Islands from Japan, the United States was able to use the strategically located Commonwealth of the Philippines as a base from which to launch the final efforts to defeat Japan; and

WHEREAS, President Truman in 1946 promised veterans benefits to Filipino veterans; however, the 79th Congress passed the Recision Act, which drastically limited veterans benefits for Filipino American veterans but which did not limit benefits for any other allied national who served under the American flag; and

WHEREAS, Based on their military service, Filipino veterans were given the right to become United States citizens under 1942 and 1960 immigration laws; and

WHEREAS, Many of the surviving 28,000 Filipino veterans of the United States armed forces are disabled and live in poverty; and

WHEREAS, Every American should know about the important contribution that military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines made to the outcome of World War II; and

WHEREAS, The Filipino World War II veterans deserve recognition and honor for their important contribution to the outcome of World War II; and

WHEREAS, In the words of a Washington Post editorial printed on December 13, 1997, "it's demeaning to Americans as well as Filipinos for the United States to continue denying benefits that were pledged at the highest level then abundantly earned on the battlefield, then denied, then withheld through decades of Filipino entreaty"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General Assembly acknowledges and appreciates the important role played by Filipino veterans in World War II; and be it further