

Written by Arturo P. Garcia
Saturday, 20 August 2011 18:17 -

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{xtypo_quote} They served, they deserve recognition and benefits!
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Filipino WW II veterans from the Justice for Filipino American Veterans (JFAV), other veterans, widows and their families will troop the local offices of their representatives in key cities on Aug. 24th to demand full equity and the preservation of Social Security and Medicare in a nationwide mass actions for equity and justice.

“Enough with 65 years without full recognition as American veterans and enough with the budget cuts that threaten our survival,” says Regalado Baldonado, Commissioner of Veterans Affairs of the City and County of San Francisco

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Baldonado will lead a delegation of 50 veterans and widows to Rep. Pelosi's office at the Federal Building, 10 AM at Mission and 7th Street. "We do not seek entitlements, just benefits that we earned through our labor and sacrifice defending this nation."

No Equality in Benefits for Fil-Am Veterans

Filipino veterans have been deprived of \$1,500 average monthly pension provided to other American vets. Recently, they have noticed deductions in their SSI from \$20-\$40. They also complained of increased Medicare co-pay from \$1-\$2 to \$3.20.

"We were deprived of lump sum compensation before. We never received any monthly pension as widows of vets, and our current benefits are under attack. Does the government expect us to remain silent?" asked Flor Delos Santos.

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Recently, the US Congress voted to raise the debt ceiling and cut \$2.4-trillion in budget, which many seniors and veterans fear would directly impact their current Social Security and Medicare. Most Republicans and half of the Democrats voted for the bill including Pelosi.

Nationwide Campaign

The Justice for Filipino-American Veterans (JFAV) and all equity advocates in other cities like Honolulu, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Diego, Sacramento

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San Jose

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Houston

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Las Vegas

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Chicago

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New York

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Baltimore

,
Fairfax

, and

Tampa

will hold nationwide meetings and protests. The group hopes to create public support for the next Congressional lobby on Sept. 12-13 in

Washington

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DC

JFAV-Los Angeles held their rally/picket against federal and state budget cuts last August 11 at the Reagan Federal Building in downtown

Los Angeles

. They were supported by ANSWER-LA, KmB, SPACE and Bantay Pilipinas-LA. They will also visit Senator Gil Cedillo and Rep. Xavier Becerra of California to follow up on their legislative agendas.

Equity advocates have gathered 50 co-sponsors for HR 210, "The Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011," introduced by Rep. Jackie Speier, CA-12th district. If enacted, the bill would provide equal benefits to all Filipino WW II veterans and families as their American counterparts.

Rep. Pelosi , the top Democrat leader , despite endorsement from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and from Assemblywoman Fiona Ma and CA Senator Leland Yee, has not agreed to co-sponsor HR 210.

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The Rescission Act of 1946 took away the full recognition and full benefits of 250,000 Filipinos who served in the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) under Gen. Douglas MacArthur. US President Roosevelt commissioned the Filipinos through an Executive Order with a promise that they would be provided with full benefits. After the war, the Filipinos were singled out not to be treated as full Americans out of the 66 allied nationalities mostly Caucasians who served the US. # # #

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