

REMARKS OF AMB. JOSE L. CUISIA - MabuhayRadio

Written by Philippine Consulate General of Los Angeles
Monday, 16 May 2011 14:26 - Last Updated Monday, 16 May 2011 18:41

REMARKS OF H. E. AMB. JOSE L. CUISIA

AT THE FILIPINO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY EVENT

Las Vegas, 14 May 2011

First of all, let me thank the members of the organizing committee who helped put together this gathering of Filipino Community and media in this great City of Las Vegas – Dr Noel Fajardo of UPMASA Nevada Chapter, Dr Romualdo Aragon and Mr Sid dela Cruz of UPAAN, Ms Rozita Lee, Ms Gloria Caolie, Ms Amie Belmonte of NaFFAA Nevada, and others.

I am pleased to note that according to the figures of the 2005-2009 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau, the Filipinos are now the largest Asian ethnic group in Las Vegas and in the state of Nevada with 15,596 Filipinos in the City of Las Vegas and 80,981 Filipinos in the State of Nevada. Perhaps the actual number of Filipinos in Las Vegas and in Nevada may even be higher than what the survey says and hopefully the 2010 US Census will produce higher figures.

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The same survey highlights the predominance of Filipinos in Las Vegas and Nevada particularly in the areas of healthcare, medical, entertainment and hospitality services, where almost one-fourth of our kababayans hold managerial and professional positions.

I am pleased to see that Filipino entrepreneurs have made their mark around the Las Vegas area, particularly Filipino-owned shops, restaurants, and remittance offices – a living and dynamic testament to the growing entrepreneurial bents of Filipinos given the social and economic opportunity.

I understand that we have a very active Filipino Community in Southern Nevada with about thirty-seven Filipino American organizations. We value your contributions to our country. We commend you for sharing the blessings of your success among our compatriots back home in the Philippines, through scholarships, emergency relief drives, medical and dental missions and other humanitarian endeavors.

Clearly, we have a very big economic footprint in the US. What I look forward to however, is seeing that the very valuable contributions we are making to the fabric of American society, by way of the recognition of the Filipino Americans as a vibrant and potent political force. This can be demonstrated in many ways. Ultimately, we want to see more Filipino Americans in elective office, here in Nevada and all over the US. For now, we want to see US policy makers and elected officials hear the voice and recognize the power of a united Filipino American community.

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A concrete way by which we can be seen and heard is through our support for specific programs which will benefit our community and our country. By showing our undivided support for key advocacies, we are not only supporting our kababayans, but are also making it known, that we the Filipino community, have a voice and a vote.

As you may be aware, H.R. 3039 or the SAVE Our Industries Act, was introduced on June 25, 2009 by Congressman Jim McDermott and Brian Bilbray, to help revitalize the United States textile and Philippine apparel industries.

SAVE has the potential to create demand in the Philippines for hundreds of millions of additional U.S. fabric exports, which could in turn sustain thousands of U.S. jobs over the length of the program. A reasonable forecast suggests that during the duration of SAVE, demand in the Philippines for U.S. fabrics could grow to some \$500 million supporting about 2,000 additional direct jobs in the U.S. textile mill sector (which currently provides below 60,000 jobs).

While this was not given due attention in the 111th Congress, we are hopeful that this will soon be refilled. With your support, we can make legislators pay attention to this legislation.

I invite all of you to visit the SAVE website at saveourindustriesact.org which has been retrofitted to serve as an online portal for the SAVE campaign. It acts as a US-wide bulletin board on campaign activities being conducted at the local Fil-Am community level, and as a web place where visitors can instantaneously post emails to seek support for SAVE from

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respective US legislators. We urge our communities to utilize the SAVE website, and its Facebook and Twitter interfaces. For in so doing, we can dramatically extend our reach to as many of our Fil-Am kababayans as possible.

In closing, I wish to congratulate the leaders of the Filipino organizations in Las Vegas and Nevada for having brought the Community this far. I know that the torch of leadership is fraught with daunting tasks and the road is rough and long ahead of you; but I am confident that with the full support of the Filipino community, you would rise to master the challenges that duty lay before you.

Let me wish you continued success in your community endeavors and individual vocations. May you shine more in the service of the Filipino community in Las Vegas and may you stand firm as worthy guardians of Filipino welfare in America.

At this point, I will be happy to respond to your questions.

Maraming Salamat po and Mabuhay po kayo! # # #

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