

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 104

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 74

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 104—Relative to Philippine immigration.

[Filed with Secretary of State June 30, 2006.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 104, Chesbro. Filipino Americans.

This measure would recognize the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States, and acknowledge the achievements and contributions of Filipino Americans over the past century. It would request the Governor to issue a proclamation in this regard.

WHEREAS, The people 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; and

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 of postindependence 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; and

WHEREAS, The bonds between our two countries have been strengthened through sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States; and

WHEREAS, The 2000 United States 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 Filipino Americans; and

WHEREAS, The complex and long history of Filipinos in California starts with the first recorded landing of Filipinos in America on October 18, 1587, in Morro Bay, where a commemorative historical marker now stands, to their participation in the building of California's missions, agricultural industry, and shipyards, as domestic workers, in the military, and in the medical and other professions; and

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; and

WHEREAS, 1906 also saw the first class of 200 “pensionados” arrive from the Philippines to obtain a United States education with the intent of returning, although many later became United States citizens and helped form the foundation of today’s Filipino American community; and

WHEREAS, Many Filipinos were true American pioneers, including Antonio Miranda Rodriguez, one of the 46 founders of Los Angeles; Philip Vera Cruz, a labor leader who helped organize the United Farm Workers Union; and Dado Banatao, who invented high-speed computer chips for graphics and Ethernet; and

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

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; and

WHEREAS, Within the United States, Filipino Americans retain many of their country’s proud cultural traditions and contribute immeasurably to the diverse tapestry of today’s American experience; and

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 United States-Philippines relationship; and

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; and

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

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature of the State of California recognizes the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States, and acknowledges the achievements and contributions of Filipino Americans over the past century; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature requests the Governor to issue a proclamation calling on the people of California to observe this milestone

with appropriate celebratory and educational programs, ceremonies, and other activities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Governor, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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