

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines

Senate

Manila City

Fourteenth Congress

Second Regular Session



RESOLUTION No. 162

RESOLUTION URGING THE RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, SUCH AS THE PHILIPPINE VETERANS' AFFAIRS OFFICE, TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF ELIGIBLE FILIPINO VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM FIXERS WHO MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM IN AVAILING OF BENEFITS UNDER THE PROPOSED AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ECONOMIC STIMULUS BILL OF THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, the General Provisions of the Constitution, under Article XVI Section 7, state among others that the State shall provide immediate and adequate care, benefits, and other forms of assistance to war veterans and veterans of military campaigns, their surviving spouses and orphans;

WHEREAS, on 13 February 2009, both Houses of the United States Congress approved the Conference Report on the proposed American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, otherwise known as the Economic Stimulus Bill;

WHEREAS, under the Economic Stimulus Bill, eligible veterans who are Filipino citizens are each entitled to claim Nine thousand dollars (USD 9,000) from the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund;

WHEREAS, with the recent turn of events, opportunities may present themselves to unscrupulous individuals who will exploit our veterans eager to avail of the meager benefits which they have long been waiting for, in recognition of their valiant and invaluable contribution in defense of the country and of our allies during World War II;

WHEREAS, in particular, unwitting beneficiaries may be lured by fixers who employ extraordinary and illegal methods for the immediate processing and issuance of required documents and who make false assurances to these hapless individuals in exchange for money or other consideration;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9485, otherwise known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, declares it the policy of the State "to promote integrity, accountability, proper management of public affairs and public property as well as to establish effective practices aimed at the prevention of graft and corruption in government";

WHEREAS, it further provides that "the State shall maintain honesty and responsibility among its public officials and employees, and shall take appropriate measures to promote transparency in each agency with regard to the manner of transacting with the public, which shall encompass a program for the adoption of simplified procedures that will reduce red tape and expedite transactions in government;

WHEREAS, in consonance with these pronouncements, it is therefore imperative that the relevant government agencies remain vigilant and steadfast in their commitment to public service, especially in the service of our veterans who have risked their lives so that we may now bask in the light of freedom and democracy;

WHEREAS, these agencies, including the Philippine Veterans' Affairs Office, must take a proactive stance, not only in seeking out all beneficiaries so that they may avail of this long overdue benefit, but more importantly, in protecting our veterans, who suffer a high degree of vulnerability primarily because of their advanced years, such that they would want to receive the benefit at the soonest possible time, lest they miss, yet again, the opportunity to be compensated, regardless of how inadequately, for their service to the country and to our allies;

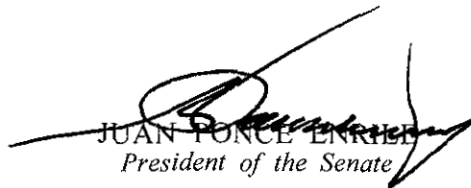
WHEREAS, constituting a helpdesk and a hotline and launching an intensive information campaign may be effective and efficient means through which our veterans may be informed of the procedure for obtaining the grant from the United States government, through which they may be

forewarned of improper and illegal practices of fixers, and through which they may lodge their complaints should they be unfortunate victims thereof;

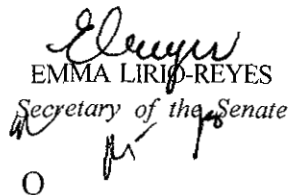
WHEREAS, the government must do everything in its power to prevent these ruthless and unprincipled characters from taking away the long-awaited realization of the dreams of our veterans, to be recognized for their honorable and gallant role in World War II and to be restored in their dignity as heroic women and men of the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines, To urge the relevant government agencies, such as the Philippine Veterans' Affairs Office, to ensure the protection of eligible Filipino veterans and their families from fixers who may take advantage of them in availing of benefits under the proposed American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, otherwise known as the Economic Stimulus Bill of the United States.

Adopted,


 JUAN PONCE ENRILE
 President of the Senate

This Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 18, 2009.


 EMMA LIRIO-REYES
 Secretary of the Senate
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