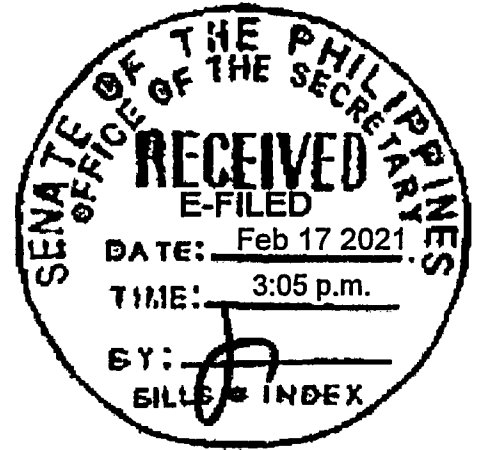


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 653

Introduced by Senator Richard Gordon

RESOLUTION
EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND GRATITUDE OF THE SENATE OF THE
PHILIPPINES FOR THE RETURN BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OF
THE BALANGIGA BELLS AND RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF THOSE WHO
FACILITATED ITS RETURN

WHEREAS, in September 28, 1901 after the Balangiga massacre, Americans took three bells with Franciscan emblems dated 1863, 1889, and 1896 from the town of Balangiga, Eastern Samar to serve as war trophies;

WHEREAS, two of the three Balangiga bells were displayed in the Trophy Park of the F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming while the third is at the 9th US Infantry Regiment in Camp Red Cloud Korea;

WHEREAS, the Balangiga bells are of historical and cultural significance not just to the people of Balangiga but to the country as well, with one having been used to signal the surprise attack that handed the Americans one of its biggest defeats at the time, and serving as a memento of Filipino courage and of our indomitable spirit;

WHEREAS, over the decades the country has made efforts for the return of the Balangiga bells to its rightful place and rectify the wrong that has been done to the country;

WHEREAS, on December 15, 2018 the Balangiga bells finally returned to its home in San Lorenzo de Martir Parish Church in the town of Balangiga, Eastern Samar, marking the end of the hundred seventeen (117) years of its absence, and signifying a stronger friendship and bond between the Philippines and the United States;

WHEREAS, the return of the bells would not have been possible without the help of the pious Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, and three retired US Navy Officers, also known as "tres marineros", composed of Rear Admiral Daniel W. McKinnon, Jr., Captain Dennis

L. Wright, and Captain Brian V. Buzzell, who led the initiative and provided the Department of Defense, Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and the Congress of the United States accurate information on the law and history related to the bells' presence in Wyoming and South Korea and engaged the international law firm of Squire Patton Boggs (SPB U.S. LLC) to serve as Pro-bono counsel, assist in the development of strategy, and to advocate and educate members of Congress and their professional staffs;

WHEREAS, the US-Philippine Society through Mr. Edwin Mason (Hank) Henderson, Dr. Henry B. Howard, and Ms. Ludmilla L. Kasulke, Esq. also played a key role in the return of the bells by sponsoring the SQB LLC pro-bono engagement, advocating for return within the US Administration and Congress, engaging additional firms to lobby Congress and the administration, arranging the refurbishment and transportation of the Bells, and providing duplicate Bells to honor the 9th Infantry Regiment;

WHEREAS, the US Department of Defense through the efforts of Lieutenant Colonel Theodore T. Liebreich of the United States Army, Dr. Joseph H. Felter, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, returned the Bells of Balangiga to the people of Balangiga.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES, to express, as it hereby expresses, its profound gratitude to the United States Government for the return of the Balangiga bells, and recognizes the gargantuan efforts of those who facilitated its return.

Adopted,


RICHARD J. GORDON
Senator