

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1806

To authorize the payment of a gratuity to certain members of the Armed Forces who served at Bataan and Corregidor during World War II, or the surviving spouses of such members, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 27, 1999

Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself, Mr. COVERDELL, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. HOLLINGS, and Mr. CLELAND) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the payment of a gratuity to certain members of the Armed Forces who served at Bataan and Corregidor during World War II, or the surviving spouses of such members, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. AUTHORITY TO PAY GRATUITY TO CERTAIN**
4 **VETERANS OF BATAAN AND CORREGIDOR.**

5 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
6 ings:

7 (1) From December 1941 to April 1942, mem-
8 bers of the Armed Forces fought valiantly against

1 overwhelming Japanese military forces on the Ba-
2 taan peninsula in the Philippines, thereby preventing
3 Japan from accomplishing strategic objectives nec-
4 essary for early military victory in the Pacific during
5 World War II.

6 (2) After receiving orders to surrender on April
7 9, 1942, many such members were taken prisoner of
8 war by Japan and forced to march 85 miles from
9 the Bataan peninsula to a prisoner of war camp at
10 former Camp O'Donnell. That march resulted in
11 more than 10,000 deaths by reason of starvation,
12 disease, and executions.

13 (3) In June 1942, the United States personnel
14 at former Camp O'Donnell were joined with mem-
15 bers of the Armed Forces who had been captured at
16 Corregidor in the Philippines and transferred to the
17 Cabanatuan prisoner of war camp where many were
18 held through the remainder of World War II.

19 (4) In autumn 1944, Japanese authorities or-
20 dered more than 1,600 United States personnel who
21 were prisoners of war at the Cabanatuan camp to
22 provide slave labor in support of the war effort in
23 Japan.

24 (5) Many of the United States personnel who
25 were prisoners of war were transferred to Japan on

1 unmarked vessels, some of which were attacked and
2 sunk by United States military aircraft.

3 (6) Units of the Armed Forces which served at
4 Bataan have received numerous citations, including
5 3 Presidential Unit Citations and the Philippine
6 Presidential Unit Citation for heroism, but reparations
7 to individual members of the Armed Forces
8 who were taken prisoner of war at Bataan were limited
9 by a treaty governing the postwar reparations
10 for which the Government of Japan was liable.

11 (7) The amount of reparations paid to members
12 of the Armed Forces held as prisoner of war by
13 Japan during World War II were based on time
14 served as prisoner of war, but did not take into account
15 slave labor performed while prisoner of war.

16 (8) The Government of Japan has concluded
17 through judicial proceedings that liability for compensation
18 payments expired in 1952.

19 (9) The Government of Canada authorized the
20 payment of compensation to veterans of the armed
21 forces of Canada who performed slave labor during
22 World War II but were not paid compensation for
23 the performance of such labor after the war.

24 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to recognize
25 the heroic contributions of the members of the

1 Armed Forces who served in the Philippines at Bataan
2 and Corregidor during World War II, were required to
3 perform slave labor by the Government of Japan to sup-
4 port the war effort of Japan during that war, and have
5 not been fully compensated for their contributions to and
6 sacrifices for United States victory in that war.

7 (c) PAYMENT OF GRATUITY AUTHORIZED.—The Sec-
8 retary of Veterans Affairs may pay a gratuity to a covered
9 veteran, or to the surviving spouse of a covered veteran,
10 in the amount of \$20,000.

11 (d) COVERED VETERAN DEFINED.—For purposes of
12 this section, the term “covered veteran” means any vet-
13 eran of the Armed Forces who—

14 (1) served at Bataan or Corregidor in the Phil-
15ippines during World War II;

16 (2) was captured and held as a prisoner of war
17 by Japan as a result of such service; and

18 (3) was required by Japan to perform slave
19 labor in Japan during World War II.

20 (e) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PAYMENTS.—Any
21 amount paid a person under this section for activity de-
22 scribed in subsection (d) is in addition to any other
23 amount paid such person for such activity under any other
24 provision of law.

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