

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN CHANDLER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Vote No. 75, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe Distribution of Judgment Funds Act, I placed my card in the machine and for some reason my vote was not registered. Had my vote been recorded, I would have voted "yes."

ORGAN DONATION AND RECOVERY IMPROVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 2004

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act (H.R. 3926).

With the number of individuals who need organ donations far exceeding the number of available donors, it is imperative that we address this situation. This bill will help increase organ donations and recovery rates by providing grants for organ donation projects. This bill also improves and strengthens the organ procurement process. In addition, it supports individuals who make living donations by reimbursing expenses incurred when making their donation.

The United Network of Organ Sharing (UNOS) is based in Richmond, Virginia and serves as the clearinghouse for organ donations. On a daily basis, those who work at UNOS perform crucial work that helps save lives. They help give the gift of life. I am grateful to them and all they do.

This bill gives hope to those who desperately need new organs. I believe that hope goes a long way when you are facing tough situations. I admire the courage of those patiently waiting for organ donations. They are an inspiration to us all.

I thank my friend MICHAEL BILIRAKIS for his leadership on this important legislation, and I urge its passage.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR OUR FILIPINO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY AND FOR FILIPINO VETERANS ON FILIPINO VETERANS ACTION DAY

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, good evening, aloha and mabuhay! I rise tonight, on this occasion of national Filipino Veterans Action Day, to express my strong and affectionate support for our great Filipino-American community, as well as for our honored Filipino veterans, both here and in the Philippines, who are so well represented by the American Council on Filipino Veterans, and to highlight just some of the challenges

these communities still face and the opportunities we have to address them.

First let us remember that the relationship between the Philippines and our United States has never been stronger. Our modern-day bond began after the 1898 Spanish American War, continued through the commonwealth period into 1946, and strengthened when the independent Republic of the Philippines came into existence on July 4th of that year. For nearly 40 years, from 1907 to 1946, the Philippines in fact was represented in the U.S. Congress through nearly 15 different resident commissioners. Currently, we have a Filipino-American, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, representing the 3rd District of Virginia. And one year ago, I was proud to be a charter member of the Congressional Philippines Caucus, which today boasts over seventy members.

Apart from the Philippines' continuing vital role in U.S. national security and economic interests in the Asia-Pacific region, our country also has a special relationship with the people of the Philippines. Many have migrated to the United States, in particular my home state of Hawaii, which commemorates the 100th anniversary of our first Filipino immigrants in 2006.

In fact, there are now nearly 2.5 million Filipino-Americans, with significant populations in California, Hawaii, Illinois, New York, New Jersey, Washington, Texas, and Florida. In Hawaii alone there are nearly 300,000 Filipino-Americans, including roughly 140,000 in my Second Congressional District, the largest number of any congressional district in our country.

This community's contributions just in Hawaii are notable, in all facets of our society, from politics to business, from teaching to sports and movie stars, you name it. Former Hawaii Governor Ben Cayetano was the first Filipino-American governor ever elected in the United States; our state legislature today has 12 members: 6 senators and 6 representatives. Angela Baraquio became Miss America in 2001. We had Ben Agbayani in professional baseball and Tia Carrera in Hollywood. And let us not forget native daughters Jasmine Trias and Camile Velasco, two of just twelve of 2004's American Idol final contestants.

But perhaps the most vital and painful contribution of Filipinos to our country was the service, and sacrifice, of our Filipino veterans, who fought alongside our troops in World War II. Their heroic efforts were indispensable to the liberation of the Philippines led by General MacArthur and thus to Allied success in that great conflagration, and earned them a place in legend at the same table as, for example, our Japanese-Americans' 100th Infantry Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Therefore, the contribution of the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans to designate today as Filipino Veterans Action Day is invaluable to assuring that we never forget. There have been similar efforts in Hawaii from community leaders like Hawaii State Representative Jun Abinsay, Joe Gonzales and Artemio Caleda, former and new presidents, respectively, of the World War II Fil-Am Vets and Ladies Auxilliary Hawaii Chapter, and Domingo Los Banos, a Sergeant with the 1st Filipino Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army, who later worked collaboratively with many others in Hawaii and the mainland in molding that great documentary on the Filipino veterans: "An Untold Triumph."

Let me turn now from what has been to what needs to be. Specifically, there are two

issues which I believe Congress must address for both Filipino veterans and our Filipino-American community at large. One is veterans' benefits and the other is immigration.

VETERANS BENEFITS

We know that in 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt made a promise to the members of the Philippine Army and the Philippine Scouts who had fought and would fight for the Allies in World War II. Because they had made and would make the same sacrifices as U.S. servicemembers, President Roosevelt promised that they would receive the same veteran's benefits as those received by American veterans.

However, in the spring of 1946, just one year after the death of our 32nd President, the United States Congress went back on its promise. And that injustice stands uncorrected from that day to this, as these veterans pass increasingly from this earth along with their comrades-in-arms.

Last year, we did make some measure of progress by enacting into law H.R. 2297, legislation increasing VA benefits for U.S. resident Filipino veterans and making New Philippine Scouts living in the U.S. eligible for burial in VA national cemeteries. The House also passed H.R. 2357, which would provide VA nursing home and medical services to Commonwealth Army veterans and New Philippine Scouts residing in the U.S., assuming they meet the same eligibility requirements as U.S. veterans.

But this is clearly not enough. That is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 677, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which will deem all members of the Philippine Scouts and Philippine Army as qualified to receive the full benefits denied them nearly six decades ago.

As Secretary of Veterans' Affairs Anthony J. Principi wrote: "The United States is indebted to Filipino veterans, whose heroism and self-sacrifice helped allies emerge victorious from World War II." As we all know, our Filipino World War II veterans are entering the sunset years of their lives. I implore my colleagues to get this bill out of committee and bring it to the floor for a vote this year.

IMMIGRATION

Our country has benefited from the fruits of a century-plus influx of Filipinos as new and productive citizens, and we can and should continue this rich heritage. However, our overall immigration policy has fallen particularly harshly and unfairly on legitimate Filipino immigration of late.

For example, in 1990, we provided a waiver from certain naturalization requirements for Filipino veterans, and many thereafter became proud citizens our country. But a huge gap was created when we did not also permit naturalization of the sons and daughters of these same veterans.

These are real-life issues, for the stories of families who have waited years to be reunited are heartbreaking. For example, a veteran and his wife living in Hawaii filed immigration petitions for two of their six adult children; they have waited over ten years for a visa to be issued to either. Another veteran petitioned successfully for his wife's immigration visa, but has not been as successful with the applications for their five adult children. Again, this family has been holding on for ten years with the hope that they will one day live in the U.S. as a complete family.

H.R. 3587, a bill I introduced in November of last year, would provide these sons and

daughters with priority in their respective immigration categories. I urge its passage.

Two other bills I have introduced also would correct deficiencies in our immigration system which impact Filipino-Americans disproportionately. H.R. 3306, The Compassionate Visitor Visa Act, would facilitate the temporary admission of nonimmigrant aliens in circumstances of family emergency of U.S. citizens or permanent residents. H.R. 4018, introduced yesterday, would ensure that family members who have petitioned to immigrate into the United States are not penalized as a result of an award of citizenship to a sponsoring parent or spouse.

Both bills recognize the basic concept that our country can ensure our national security, while providing flexibility for immigrants from certain countries that have longstanding close relationships with our country. The Philippines is certainly very high on that list.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, both Filipino veterans and our larger Filipino-American community have contributed immensely to our country, and I believe that the best is yet to come. On this Filipino Veterans Action Day, let us recognize that we do what is right for both the past and the future by acknowledging their contributions and committing ourselves to the unfinished business at hand.

Mahalo!

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 25, 2004 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 29

3 p.m.

Armed Services

Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee

To hold a closed briefing on defense science and technology programs and capabilities.

S-407, Capitol

MARCH 30

9 a.m.

Indian Affairs

To hold oversight hearings to examine Inter-Tribal Timber Council's Indian Forest Management Assessment Team report.

SR-485

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

To hold closed hearings to examine the second interim report of the Iraq Survey Group.

S-407, Capitol

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Aviation Subcommittee

To hold closed hearings to examine aviation security.

SR-253

Appropriations

District of Columbia Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the deficiencies at the District of Columbia's Youth Services Administration.

SD-192

10 a.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the implementation of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000.

SD-366

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of John J. Danilovich, of California, to be Ambassador to Brazil, and Craig A. Kelly, of California, to be Ambassador to Chile.

SD-419

Appropriations

Homeland Security Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2005 for border security and enforcement and immigration services.

SD-124

Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 868, to amend the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Restoration Act to provide for the cultural restoration and economic self-sufficiency of the Confederation Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians of Oregon.

SR-485

Appropriations

Military Construction Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2005 for Defense-wide and Air Force military construction programs.

SD-138

2 p.m.

Armed Services

Airland Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the proposed Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2005 and the Future Years Defense Program, focusing on Army aviation programs.

SR-232A

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Theodore William Kassinger, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce, Deborah Hersman, of Virginia, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board, Thomas Hill Moore, of Florida, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, A. Paul Anderson, of Florida, and Joseph E. Brennan, of Maine, both to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner, and Jack Edwin McGregor, of Connecticut, to be a Member of the Advisory Board of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.

SR-253

Governmental Affairs

Financial Management, the Budget, and International Security Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the Federal government's role in empowering

Americans to make informed financial decisions.

SD-342

Energy and Natural Resources

National Parks Subcommittee

To hold oversight hearings to examine National Heritage Areas, including findings and recommendations of the General Accounting Office, the definition of a National Heritage Area, the definition of national significance as it relates to National Heritage Areas, recommendations for establishing National Heritage Areas as units of the National Park System, recommendations for prioritizing proposed studies and designations, and options for developing a National Heritage Area Program within the National Park Service.

SD-366

4:30 p.m.

Armed Services

To receive a closed briefing on operations and intelligence.

SR-222

MARCH 31

9:30 a.m.

Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Stephen L. Johnson, of Maryland, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Ann R. Klee, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator, Charles Johnson, of Utah, to be Chief Financial Officer, Benjamin Grumbles, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Gary Lee Visscher, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board.

SD-406

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Paul V. Applegarth, of Connecticut, to be Chief Executive Officer, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Department of State.

SD-419

Armed Services

Personnel Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2005, focusing on active and Reserve military and civilian personnel programs.

SR-232A

10 a.m.

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To resume hearings to examine the current investigations and regulatory actions regarding the mutual fund industry focusing on soft-dollar practices.

SD-538

Appropriations

Defense Subcommittee

To hold a closed hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2005 for intelligence and world wide threat assessment.

S-407, Capitol

Appropriations

Energy and Water Development Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2005 for the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, and Office of Environment, Safety and Health.

SD-138

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD-430