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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Councilmember Huizar Celebrates Equal Rights Victory with Filipino American Veterans**

*Councilmember joined by veterans and supporters to celebrate the signing of stimulus bill by President Obama that included \$198 million in restitution payments for Filipino veterans*

**LOS ANGELES (March 21, 2009)** – Councilmember José Huizar joined WWII Filipino veterans, their families and supporters Saturday in Eagle Rock to celebrate Congress' decision to provide restitution payments to the veterans, benefits the servicemen have been pursuing for 63 years.

The \$15,000 one-time payments to Filipino veterans who are U.S. citizens and \$9,000 for non-U.S. citizens, amounts to \$198 million set aside by Congress and signed into law recently by President Barack Obama as part of the federal stimulus bill.

“With the same tenacity and courage they displayed on the battlefield, Filipino veterans never gave up in their battle for restitution, asking only to be treated like every other U.S. veteran,” said Councilmember José Huizar. “While this outcome isn’t perfect, it goes a long way in telling the whole world that our country recognizes and values our Filipino veterans and we are forever indebted to them for their exemplary service.”

After being called into service during WWII by Executive Order by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, more than 260,000 Filipinos joined the U.S. Armed Forces in the Philippines, which was then a U.S. territory. In 1946, Congress passed the Rescission Act, stripping Filipino veterans of the same benefits available to other U.S. Veterans.

There are an estimated 15,000 to 18,000 Filipino WWII veterans still living in the U.S. and abroad who are eligible to receive the payments.

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