

# Dan Inouye

U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII



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**SENATOR INOUE HAILS INCLUSION OF COMPENSATION FOR  
FILIPINO VETERANS IN HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE  
REPORT ON H.R. 1, THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND  
REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Washington, DC – With language included in the Conference Report for H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, World War II Filipino veterans are one significant step closer to securing a long-delayed victory. The authorization included in the Report will allow the release of previously appropriated funds, enabling one-time payments of \$15,000 to veterans who are U.S. citizens and \$9,000 to non-citizens. Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee and the leading force behind the measure, issued the following statement:

“On February 5, 2009, I made my case to my Senate colleagues on behalf of Filipino World War II veterans. (See full floor statement below.) The provision included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which authorizes a one-time payment to eligible Filipino veterans who served honorably during World War II, is a matter of honor,” said Senator Inouye. “As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am pleased to have had an opportunity to shepherd this provision through the legislative process, and to finally recognize these brave men for their service to our country. The \$198 million for payments to eligible Filipino World War II veterans was previously appropriated under the 2009 Continuing Resolution. Following passage in the House and the Senate, and upon the President’s signature, Filipino veterans will have won a victory delayed too long.”

Floor Statement by Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii)  
World War II Filipino Veterans  
February 5, 2009

*Mr. President, in the presentation of the bill before us, the Senator from Arizona singled out one group—Filipino war veterans—and suggested that these were men from foreign countries and that we were providing funds for them. If I may, I would like to spend a few moments discussing this matter.*

*On January 26, 1941, the President of the United States, Mr. Roosevelt, issued a military order through General MacArthur calling upon Filipinos to volunteer to serve in the Army, to serve in the Navy, to serve in the Air Force, because the President sensed, correctly, that there was much instability and much violence in Asia. He felt the time had come for the United States to be prepared for any eventuality. As a result of that call, 470,000 Filipinos stepped forward and volunteered to serve in the military, under the command of General MacArthur.*

*As we all know, on December 7, 1941, war came to our shores, to my State of Hawaii. Pearl Harbor was bombed, and then the forces of Japan began advancing toward the Philippines. The first major target was the Bataan Peninsula. The 14th Japanese Army surrounded the peninsula. That peninsula contained at that moment 80,000 troops. We all assumed that the 80,000 were American troops. No. About 18,000 were American troops; the rest were Filipinos. Yes, the majority of the troops in Bataan were Filipinos, but somehow, if you look at Hollywood on the Bataan death march, you hardly see a Filipino marching. Of the survivors of the Bataan, 15,000 were Americans, 60,000 were Filipinos. The march took a little over a month. They were not given medicine or water. By the time it ended, 54,000 survived. Very few Filipinos survived.*

*Then we had Corregidor. The same thing.*

*So in March 1942, the Congress of the United States --the Senate and the House—passed a measure thanking the Filipinos for their gallantry, for their heroism, and said: If you wish, you may become a citizen of the United States and get all the benefits of a U.S. veteran.*

*The war ended, and in February of 1946, this Congress passed a bill rescinding, repealing that Act of 1942. Believe it or not, it declared that the service the Filipinos had rendered as not active service. I don't know what it meant by that. It was not active service.*

*The Filipinos have been waiting all this time. We have had measure after measure presented. We did so in the proper fashion, and we got filibustered, we got ruled out, and everything else.*

*At this moment, out of the 470,000 who volunteered, 18,000 are still alive – 18,000. The average age is 90. At this moment, while I am speaking, hundreds lie in hospitals on their death beds. And I am certain, while I am speaking, some are dying. Two weeks from now, we will have 17,000 surviving.*

*I agree with the Senator from Arizona. This is not a stimulus proposal. It does not create jobs. But the honor of the United States is what is involved.*

*It is about time we close this dark chapter. I love America. I love serving America. I am proud of this country, but this is a black chapter. It has to be cleansed, and I hope my colleagues will join me in finally recognizing that these men served us well. They died for us. They got wounded for us. And they deserve recognition.*

*Incidentally, this bill doesn't contain a penny for the Filipinos. It recognizes them. And we will provide the money later.*

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