

Become a Cosponsor of the Corporal Fernando Ruiz Baltazar Posthumous Citizenship Act

117th Cosponsors (5): Carson, Case, McGovern, Murphy, Bobby Scott

Dear Colleague:

We respectfully request your support for the bipartisan Corporal Fernando Ruiz Baltazar Posthumous Citizenship Act. Nearly 83 years ago, over 250,000 Philippine Scouts fought alongside American forces during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines in World War II. The bill would extend posthumous citizenship to noncitizen service members in the Philippines who enlisted, reenlisted, extended enlistment, or were inducted in the Philippines and died during the period beginning September 1, 1939, and ending December 31, 1946. This bill previously passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a voice vote in the 115th Congress.

This bill is named after Corporal Fernando Ruiz Baltazar who served in the United States Army for six enlistments with the Philippine Scouts and was killed in action during the Battle of Bataan on January 25, 1942. For his service, Cpl. Baltazar received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and has a headstone at Arlington National Cemetery. For two generations his family, as well as the families of other fallen Philippine Scouts, have attempted to obtain posthumous citizenship, but they have been unsuccessful due to a third requirement.

Posthumous citizenship requirements for servicemembers are currently defined in the Posthumous Citizenship for Active Duty Service Act of 1989, which provides posthumous citizenship if the deceased has met three requirements. First, they must have served honorably in an active-duty status during any period. Second, they must have died as a result of injury or disease incurred or aggravated by that service. Third, servicemember must have been a lawful permanent resident, or that at the time of enlistment, reenlistment, extension of enlistment, or induction they were either in the United States, the Canal Zone, American Samoa, or Swains Island, or onboard a United States noncommercial vessel. The current requirements do not, however, provide a procedure for a non-citizen who was enlisted, reenlisted, extended enlistment, or was inducted in the Philippines, which our bill would amend.

America owes a debt of gratitude to those Philippine Scouts and posthumous citizenship would be a fitting tribute to their sacrifice.

For any questions or to cosponsor the bill, please contact Melvin Sanchez (Rep. Napolitano) at Melvin.Sanchez@mail.house.gov or Reid Wilson (Rep. Sessions) at Reid.Wilson@mail.house.gov.

Warm regards,

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Pete Sessions
Member of Congress