

FOR SECRETARY OF STATE



The Thai American Chamber of Commerce of California led by president Polthep 'Eddie' Inturat and coordinated by Issaree Jedsuwan collaborated with Asian Food Trade Association president Paul Sher for a successful fund raiser for State Sen. Leland Yee's (seated seventh from left) campaign for Secretary of State. The event took place March 29 in San Gabriel, Southern California. For more information, contact Thai American Chamber of Commerce of California TCCC at thaicalchamber@gmail.com, senator.yee@senate.ca.gov or raymascarinas@yahoo.com.

Hawaii senator to introduce Equity Bill April 9 Bataan Day

HONOLULU —Moved by the constituents' demand to end years of denial and discrimination, Schatz during the final negotiation, promised to introduce a Senate bill similar to HR 210, "The Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011," that earned 96 cosponsors in the House before it expired last year.

"In a way, it's another battle that we have to fight but you have a friend in me. It's the least thing we in Congress can do," said Schatz. He added, "We need to provide these veterans the full honor they deserve."

"I am extremely happy that our new Senator heeded our call for complete recognition and complete compensation," said Comm. Francisco Obina, WW II veteran and Hawaii resident. He added, "The problem of inequity will linger for as long as Filipinos are not considered American veterans."

Both U.S. and Philippine governments will mark the yearly Bataan Day, recently called "Day of Valor" on April 9, to commemorate the heroic

defense of the Philippines by Filipinos and American at the fall of Bataan during WW II. Separate bills were introduced in the Congress regarding Bataan Day offering medals of recognition for the veterans.

The equity bill will provide full compensation and benefits, including monthly pensions, to all Filipino veterans and their widows.

"The framework of discussion on veterans needs to extend to full benefits. With only months to live, I think they deserve to get all that they earned through their gallantry," said Eliza Escano, Maui-based coordinator of Justice for Filipino-American Veterans.

The Rescission Act of 1946 stripped the Filipinos of full recognition and full benefits as American veterans. The Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund in 2009 provided for \$9,000/15,000 lump sum benefits to the veterans. To date, there are 18,000 claims approved and 24,000 denied. Most of the widows were denied.

APPEAL

An hour before the talk with Schatz, veterans and families sat down with Field Representative at the office of Hawaii Sen. Mazie Hirono to ask for support for full equity. Hirono was one of the first to co-sponsor the equity bill in the House last year when she was still a Congress member.

"We have been coming to this office for the longest time to show the extreme need for equity. I have lost many comrades along the way, the latest just weeks ago. I hope that Senator Hirono co-sponsors the bill right away as we need another champion inside the Veterans Affairs Committee," said Commander Obina.

"This is a substantial victory for the veterans and widows. We will commence lobbying in D.C. very soon," said Ago Pedalizo, lead U.S. Congressional lobbyist who flew from San Francisco to meet with Schatz in Honolulu.

For more information on Justice for Filipino American Veterans, e-mail unrecognizedvets@yahoo.com.

KRIS from A10

plained her plan to leave show business "for a simple and quiet life with him."

Aquino momentarily lost her composure when she quoted her son's plea for her to say he was the reason for her plan.

"It was a decision I made on the way here because my heart was breaking seeing how much my son was suffering," she said. "It broke my heart."

Aquino apologized to "our bosses" and colleagues at ABS-CBN for her sudden resignation. She had not advised her sisters or her lawyer of the decision, she said. She did not mention her brother, the president.

Upon PNews request, ABS-CBN issued a statement March 23 saying Aquino "would fulfill her commitments" on her return from vacation. The network was scheduled to meet with their franchise talent, according to the statement signed by Bong Osorio, head of integrated corporate communications.

RIGHT RESPONSE

Family resource providers agreed that a stable environment for both the parent and child may mitigate the impact of a traumatic situation and pave the way for their mental and emotional health.

"I hope Kris considers sur-

rounding herself with friends and family members who will not only support her and her son - certainly not treat her like a celebrity - but also help them deal with the reality that this is going to take some hard work -- and it will entail a lot of accountability and responsibility on her part," said Africa, equity manager for Behavioral Health and Recovery Services with the San Mateo County Department of Health. "I am also hopeful that she also takes time to work through her own personal issues that she probably has carried throughout her life. No one is immune to baggage, not even superstars."

Trajano works with diverse families and attends trainings to deepen her understanding of family dynamics. She recommends the same education for Aquino and other parents.

"There is a lot of wonderful information for learning about the impact of trauma on the developing brain and early childhood development," she said.

While some sectors say a nuclear family requires two parents, one parent may be capable of raising a healthy child, the experts said.

"The question is who are the child's role models," Trajano said. "If his biological mother or father acknowledge

that they are not healthy examples, then perhaps the extended family - grandmother, aunt or uncle, or a family friend can be the one to lead steps to healing and the learning of healthy behaviors and relationships."

"If she really takes this hiatus seriously, for herself and her son, then it might be the best thing she's done in her life," said Africa. "She could add another successful story to the growing number of single parents who are around us."

Uy's counsel is to be aware of and recognize Philippine law.

"While it is acceptable for a survivor of any form of intimate partner abuse to seek protection from the batterer and to take action to protect the child, it is never acceptable to take that child out of the country of the child's residence, to hide the child from the other parent as that is international child abduction," said the partner of the Law Offices of Lien Uy and current president of AL-LICE Alliance for Community Empowerment, a nonprofit all-volunteer organization dedicated to preventing family abuse through education.

"Ms. Aquino should exhaust her remedies in the Philippines to ensure that she does not find herself running afoul of international child abduction laws."

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