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NEWS RELEASE

November 20, 2009

U.S. WWII Veterans Benefits Update

As of November 20, the U.S. Embassy's Veterans Affairs office has approved the applications of more than 10,000 World War Two Filipino and Fil-Am veterans for new, one-time benefits created by the 2009 Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation law. These qualified veterans were paid a total of nearly P5.8 billion.

These one-time payments are all *new benefits* paid under a law passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Obama in February 2009 to recognize the service of qualified veterans.

All claims for this one-time benefit filed by February 16, 2010 will be adjudicated, and every application is handled expeditiously so that qualified veterans receive their payments as quickly as possible.

Approximately half of the nearly P5.8 billion in one-time benefits paid out so far has gone to American citizen veterans, and the other half to non-U.S. citizen veterans.

The new, one-time benefits are available to eligible veterans and widows of eligible veterans who applied before their death. Any change in the law to provide these additional benefits to other survivors would require new legislation in the U.S. Congress.

There is no "master list" of eligible veterans for this new, one-time benefit. Each claim is unique and decided on its own merits. All veterans who feel they may be eligible are encouraged to apply. The application process is free and simple, and there is no need to pay anyone to assist in completing the form, which can be mailed to the U.S. Embassy. Additional outreach activities will be conducted around the country to ensure that all eligible veterans have an opportunity to apply.

These new payments are *in addition to* previous and continuing payments for these same veterans, and many others, including family members.

Overall, the Embassy's Veterans Affairs office pays more than *P800 million per month* in benefits to veterans in the Philippines. Nearly half of that goes to Filipino WWII veterans or their survivors – and this is separate from the one-time benefits provided for eligible veterans.

Application instructions for the one-time benefits are on the U.S. Embassy website: <http://manila.usembassy.gov>.

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