

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4646



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ARCADIO H. GORRICETA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Formerly introduced by 1-Care Partylist Representative Salvador P. Cabaluna III and co-authors Representatives Angelo B. Palmones and Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas, this bill was filed during the Fifteenth Congress and was approved on third reading in the House of Representatives as House Bill 6788 last February 4, 2013. House Bill 6788 was transmitted to the Senate of the Philippines last February 6, 2013, however, it was not discussed in the Senate Committee due to the adjournment of the Fifteenth Congress. Moreover, in support to Resolution No. 2013-213 by the 11th Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the Province of Iloilo, this representation, Rep. Arcadio H. Gorriceta re-files this bill in the Sixteenth Congress.

This bill seeks the declaration of December 29 of every year as a special nonworking public holiday in the Municipality of Leon, Province of Iloilo, in honor of Jose Calugas, a death-march survivor and the only Filipino World War II veteran to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor from the United States Congress, the highest honor conferred by the US Congress to a person.

Jose Calugas was born on December 29, 1904 in Barangay Tagging in the Municipality of Leon, Province of Iloilo. His valiant act to protect our freedom was aptly described by Representative Bob Filner in his tribute to Captain Calugas in February 3, 1998 where he said:

"On January 6, 1942, his (Calugas) unit was covering the withdrawal of a portion of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) with the 26th Calvary Regiment of the Philippine Scouts and the 31st Infantry Regiment. Calugas was a mess sergeant in charge of a group of soldiers who were preparing the day's meals. He noticed that one of his unit's gun had been silenced and its crew killed. Without orders, he ran 1, 000 yards across a shell-swept area to take command of a gun position where all the cannoneers had been killed or wounded. Organizing a volunteer squad of 16 men, he placed the gun back in commission and fired effectively against the enemy although this position was under constant and heavy Japanese artillery fire. While Calugas and his squad maintained a steady fire on the enemy positions, other soldiers had time to dig in and defend the line. For his actions on that day, his superiors recommended Calugas for the United States military's highest decoration of valor, the Medal of Honor but before he could receive it, all American forces on Bataan surrendered to the Japanese Forces."

This heroic act of Jose Calugas effectively delayed the fall of Bataan by more or less three (3) months. In recognition of what he has done for the Philippines and the United States of America, he was given the US Medal of Honor, Distinguished Unit Citation, Prisoner of War Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Philippine Defense Medal and Philippine Liberation Medal. Upon receiving the Medal of Honor, he was quoted as saying: "When the situation confronted me, I did not have any hesitation to fight and give my life for the cause of freedom and my country."

In this day and age, the likes of Captain Jose Calugas is truly worthy of emulation. He is an epitome of courage, bravery and nationalism and deserves recognition for risking his life to keep the freedom we all hold dear and now enjoy.

Having December 29, the birthday of Jose Calugas, declared as a special non-working holiday in the Municipality of Leon to acclaim and acknowledge his gallantry and selfless act will ensure that his extraordinary display of nationalism will remain alive in the hearts and minds of the people of the Municipality of Leon and will be a reminder of his legacy to the Filipino nation.

Immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


ARCADIO H. GORRICETA

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**"AN ACT DECLARING DECEMBER 29 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL
NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LEON, PROVINCE OF
ILOILO, IN HONOR OF CAPTAIN JOSE CALUGAS, SR. TO BE KNOWN AS
"JOSE CALUGAS DAY."**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. December 29 of every year is hereby declared a special nonworking holiday
in the Municipality of Leon, Province of Iloilo, in honor of Captain Jose Calugas, Sr. to be
known as "Jose Calugas Day".

SEC. 2. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official
Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,