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S.F. Veterans Equity Center Lauds White House' Continuing Support for Filipino WWII Veterans

San Francisco, CA- On October 17, 2012, the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders, through its co-chair Chris Lu announced the creation of the Interagency Working Group comprised of the officials of the Department of Veterans of Affairs, Department of Defense and the National Archives and Record Administration. The collaborative efforts of young Filipino Americans together with other Asian Pacific groups worked hard to get this far. In the White House press statement there is only one task identified for the Interagency Working Group, that is, to **analyze** the "process faced by Filipino veterans in demonstrating eligibility for compensation in order to ensure that all applications receive thorough and fair review."

The San Francisco Veterans Equity Center (VEC) and the veterans they represent are grateful to President Obama and for the Democratic leadership of Senator Daniel Inouye, Senator Daniel Akaka, Secretary Norm Mineta and Representatives Nancy Pelosi, Mike Honda and Bob Filner, among others, for championing the veterans' cause. VEC Executive Director, Luisa M. Antonio noted that *"through all these years of lobbying for full equity it is only the incumbent president who initiated and implemented the FVEC that benefited 18,000 veterans and now recently created the Interagency Working Group for those who were wrongfully denied."*

While the community is elated with this development, Attorney Lourdes Tancinco, President of the Board also emphasized the urgency of acting on denied petitions. According to Tancinco, *"the new Interagency Working Group has to be reminded that Filipino World War II veterans who have denied claims and deprived of their just recognition are dying each day. After three years, the FVEC process needs no further analysis or review."* It should be clear, by this time, that the VA need to change the process by accepting the fact that reliance on the Missouri list is erroneous and that secondary reliable proof of military service should be accepted now before it is too late. Time is of the essence.

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