

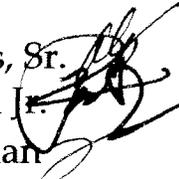
I MINA'TRENTA NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2009 (FIRST) Regular Session

2009 OCT -8 AM 11:16

20

Resolution No. 214-30(COR)

Introduced by:

A. B. Palacios, Sr. 

Frank Aguon Jr. 

v. c. pangelinan

Edward J.B. Calvo 

Frank F. Blas, Jr. 

Tina Rose Muña Barnes

James V. Espaldon

Telo Taitague

Judith Paulette Guthertz

Matt Rector

Thomas C. Ada

R. J. Respicio

Ray Tenorio

B.J. Cruz

J. T. Won Pat

Relative to requesting the United States Government to extend the application and coverage of Medicare entitlements to eligible Guam recipients who have earned these Medicare benefits and who choose to obtain quality health and medical care services in the Philippines.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF I**
2 **MINA'TRENTA NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN:**

1 **WHEREAS,** over the years many of Guam’s residents have
2 acquired quality health and medical services from healthcare clinics and
3 medical hospital facilities in Guam or in various locations throughout the
4 United States, to include Hawaii, Los Angeles-California, Seattle-Washington,
5 etc., through the application and use of their Medicare health entitlements;
6 and

7 **WHEREAS,** in recent years a growing number of Guam residents
8 have sought quality medical care at facilities such as St. Luke’s Hospital,
9 Makati Medical Health Center, Asian Hospital, and others, located in the
10 Philippines, which is geographically within close proximity to Guam (with
11 flight time of slightly over three hours); and

12 **WHEREAS,** the much closer geographical location of the
13 Philippines medical facilities, combined with the less restrictive cost of
14 medical care and travel expenses, allows for a greater number of Guam
15 patients to have family members and friends accompany them and offer direct
16 supervision or assistance on the medical trip as they receive much-needed
17 healthcare services; and

18 **WHEREAS,** many Guam residents who have earned their U.S.
19 Medicare benefits and entitlements have expressed an interest in obtaining
20 necessary medical treatment in the Philippines, which in most instances result
21 in lower medical treatment costs (resulting in overall savings within the
22 Medicare Program), lesser travel time, and a reduction in travel expenses; and

1 **WHEREAS,** the level of treatment being administered by some of
2 the medical hospital facilities in the Philippines have been appropriately
3 recognized by medical hospital affiliates in the United States for their
4 provision of good, quality medical care that is equivalent to or better than the
5 minimum medical care standards required in the United States; and

6 **WHEREAS,** Guam residents or U.S. Medicare members who are
7 eligible Medicare beneficiaries, should be provided the opportunity to obtain
8 medical and health care services in medical hospitals and facilities of their
9 choice, particularly to include medical facilities in the Philippines, as this
10 would result in lower costs and allow for family members to provide
11 necessary support and assistance during this time of personal need; and

12 **WHEREAS,** the United States of America and the Republic of the
13 Philippines have been mutual economic and political partners, friends, and
14 allies for more than one hundred (100) years, whereupon the extension of
15 Medicare entitlements for qualified U.S. citizens receiving medical treatment
16 in the Philippines would further reinforce this relationship and promote the
17 sharing of resources within the healthcare industry; and

18 **WHEREAS,** recent actions and decisions have been made that
19 further recognize the special relationship between the United States of
20 American and the Philippines which include: Filipino veterans who served in
21 the U.S. Army during World War II recently obtained their U.S. citizenship
22 and the benefit of retaining up to seventy-five percent (75%) of their

1 Supplemental Security Income (SSI) when they return to the Philippines;
2 Filipino Veterans have also recently been granted additional healthcare
3 benefits by the U.S. Congress; since July, 2003, U.S. Medicare recipients from
4 Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands who obtain
5 medical care in the Philippines are provided limited reimbursement for
6 specific medical care treatment services that are not available in Guam and the
7 CNMI; and, health insurance companies in the U. S., to include the Tri-care
8 health plan for active duty and retired military personnel, have permitted
9 health insurance coverage for medical services obtained in the Philippines;
10 and

11 **WHEREAS,** information provided during the public discussion of
12 the possible application of Medicare to qualified beneficiaries receiving
13 healthcare services in the Philippines have cited that existing federal
14 regulations allow the application of Medicare coverage for emergency
15 circumstances that occur while traveling along the borders of Canada or
16 Mexico, thus a similar application of Medicare in such situations and as
17 highlighted in the provisions contained herein would not be a major
18 departure from existing allowable practices; and

19 **WHEREAS,** with the existence of a Guam Medical Referral Office
20 in the Philippines, any additional necessary coordination of applicable
21 program requirements on behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and
22 Human Services in the effective implementation of the program can be

1 directly monitored and facilitated through the Guam Medical Referral Office,
2 thus not necessitating the expansion of the existing program administration or
3 requiring additional expenses; furthermore, public discussions have
4 highlighted that the Medicare program coverage of healthcare services should
5 be applicable toward the coverage of individuals who have been qualified as
6 recipients, and should not restrict the location in which the beneficiaries
7 receive their medical care; and

8 **WHEREAS,** it is believed that the inclusion of Medicare healthcare
9 services coverage to the Philippines for Guam residents who are beneficiaries
10 of the Medicare Program would result in a visible reduction in healthcare
11 program costs for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (thus
12 resulting in cost-savings which may be applied toward enhanced program
13 administration or extended to other Medicare recipients), and would benefit
14 Guam residents in receiving medical services which may not be readily
15 accessible or available in the island

16 **WHEREAS,** on Monday, September 28, 2009, the Speaker of *I Mina'*
17 *Trenta Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* and members of the Guam Legislature met with
18 the Honorable Anthony R. Babauta, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for
19 Insular Affairs to discuss several key issues affecting the Territory of Guam,
20 one of which was regarding Medicare benefits. Assistant Secretary Babauta
21 was given a copy of Resolution 68(EC) which was passed unanimously in the
22 Twenty Ninth Guam Legislature, which contents are re-presented in this

1 resolution to reiterate the request made in Resolution 68 (EC), to extend the
2 application and coverage of Medicare entitlements to eligible Guam recipients
3 who have earned these Medicare benefits and who choose to obtain quality
4 health and medical care services in the Philippines; now, therefore, be it

5 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina' Trenta Na*
6 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and the
7 people of Guam, respectfully request the United States Government, through
8 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Congress, to
9 extend the application and coverage of Medicare entitlements to its eligible
10 recipients who have earned these Medicare benefits and who choose to obtain
11 quality health and medical care services in the Philippines consistent with
12 Medicare rules, regulations, quality assurances, cost effectiveness, and other
13 Medicare program requirements; and be it further

14 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina' Trenta Na*
15 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and the
16 people of Guam, request the support of the Honorable Madeleine Z. Bordallo,
17 Guam Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, to aggressively pursue
18 this effort in realizing the extension of Medicare healthcare benefits coverage
19 to qualified recipients who receive medical treatment and health care services
20 in the Philippines; and to coordinate the timely and effective implementation
21 of this unique and much-needed healthcare service upon its approval by the

1 appropriate U.S. Governmental authorities for the benefit of eligible Guam
2 residents; and be it further

3 **RESOLVED,** that the Speaker and the Chairman of the Committee
4 on Rules certify, and the Secretary of the Legislature attest to, the adoption
5 hereof and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the Honorable
6 Barack H. Obama, President of the United States of America; the Honorable
7 Harry Reid, Majority Leader, United States Senate; the Honorable Nancy
8 Pelosi, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Madeleine Z.
9 Bordallo, Guam Delegate, U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
10 Gregorio C. Sablan, CNMI Delegate, U.S. House of Representatives, the
11 Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of the United States Department of
12 Health and Human Services; Mr. Jonathan Blum, Director of the Center for
13 Medicare Management, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; the
14 Honorable Congressman Mike Honda, Chairman of Asian Pacific American
15 Caucus, U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Congresswoman
16 Donna Christensen, U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
17 Congressman Charles Rangel, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee,
18 U.S. House of Representatives; Congressman Michael Michaud, Chairman of
19 the Subcommittee on Health, U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
20 Senator Daniel Inouye, U.S. Senate; the Honorable Senator Tom Harkin,
21 Chairman of Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, U.S. Senate,
22 the Honorable Senator Max Baucus, Chairman of the Finance Committee, U.S.

1 Senate; Mr. Tom Barcinas, President of the Guam Chapter, American
2 Association of Retired Persons, Mr. Ray J. Aflague, Program Director, Guam
3 Association of Retired Persons; and to the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, *I*
4 *Maga'lahaen Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF I MINA'TRENTA NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE DAY
OF 2009.**

JUDITH T. WONPAT
Speaker

RORY J. RESPICIO
Chairman, Committee on Rules

TINA ROSE MUÑA-BARNES
Secretary of the Legislature