

I MINA' BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2007 (FIRST) Regular Session

Resolution No. 68 (EC)

As amended by the Author
and further amended on the Floor.

Introduced by:

A. B. Palacios, Sr.
v. c. pangelinan
Frank F. Blas, Jr.
David L.G. Shimizu
Tina Rose Muña Barnes
Edward J.B. Calvo
James V. Espaldon
Mark Forbes
Judith Paulette Guthertz
Frank T. Ishizaki
J. A. Lujan
R. J. Respicio
Ray Tenorio
A. R. Unpingco
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 *I MINA' BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN***
2 ***GUÅHAN*:**

3 **WHEREAS,** over the years many of Guam's residents have acquired quality
4 health and medical care services from healthcare clinics and medical hospital facilities
5 in Guam or in various locations throughout the United States, to include Hawaii, Los

1 Angeles-California, Seattle-Washington, etc., through the application and use of their
2 Medicare health entitlements; and,

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

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

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

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

22 **WHEREAS**, Guam residents or U. S. Medicare members who are eligible
23 Medicare beneficiaries, should be provided the opportunity to obtain medical and
24 health care services in medical hospitals and facilities of their choice, particularly to
25 include medical facilities in the Philippines, as this would result in lower costs and

1 allow for family members to provide necessary support and assistance during this time
2 of personal need; and

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

9 **WHEREAS**, recent actions and decisions have been made that further
10 recognize the special relationship between the United States of America and the
11 Philippines which include: Filipino veterans who served in the U. S. Army during
12 World War II recently obtained their U. S. citizenship and the benefit of retaining up
13 to seventy-five percent (75%) of their Supplemental Security Income (SSI) when they
14 return to the Philippines; Filipino Veterans have also recently been granted additional
15 healthcare benefits by the U. S. Congress; since July, 2003, U. S. Medicare recipients
16 from Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands who obtain
17 medical care in the Philippines are provided limited reimbursement for specific
18 medical care treatment services that are not available in Guam and the CNMI; and,
19 health insurance companies in the U. S., to include the Tricare health plan for active
20 duty and retired military personnel, have permitted health insurance coverage for
21 medical services obtained in the Philippines; and

22 **WHEREAS**, information provided during the public discussion of the possible
23 application of Medicare to qualified beneficiaries receiving healthcare services in the
24 Philippines have cited that existing federal regulations allow the application of
25 Medicare coverage for emergency circumstances that occur while traveling along the
26 borders of Canada or Mexico, thus a similar application of Medicare in such situations

1 and as highlighted in the provisions contained herein would not be a major departure
2 from existing allowable practices; and

3 **WHEREAS,** with the existence of a Guam Medical Referral Office in the
4 Philippines, any additional necessary coordination of applicable program requirements
5 on behalf of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services in the effective
6 implementation of the program can be directly monitored and facilitated through the
7 Guam Medical Referral Office, thus not necessitating the expansion of the existing
8 program administration or requiring additional expenses; furthermore, public
9 discussions have highlighted that the Medicare program coverage of healthcare
10 services should be applicable toward the coverage of individuals who have been
11 qualified as recipients, and should not restrict the location in which the beneficiaries
12 receive their medical care; and

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

20 **RESOLVED,** that *I Mina 'Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guåhan (Twenty Ninth*
21 *Guam Legislature)* does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, respectfully request
22 the United States Government, through the U. S. Department of Health and Human
23 Services and the U. S. Congress, to extend the application and coverage of Medicare
24 entitlements to its eligible recipients who have earned these Medicare benefits and
25 who choose to obtain quality health and medical care services in the Philippines,

1 consistent with Medicare rules, regulations, quality assurances, cost-effectiveness, and
2 other Medicare program requirements; and be it further

3 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guåhan (Twenty Ninth*
4 *Guam Legislature)* does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, request the support
5 of the Honorable Madeleine Z. Bordallo, Guam Delegate to the U. S. House of
6 Representatives, to aggressively pursue this effort in realizing the extension of
7 Medicare healthcare benefits coverage to qualified recipients who receive medical
8 treatment and healthcare services in the Philippines; and to coordinate the timely and
9 effective implementation of this unique and much-needed healthcare service upon its
10 approval by the appropriate U. S. Governmental authorities for the benefit of eligible
11 Guam residents; and be it further

12 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Secretary of the Legislature
13 attest to the adoption hereof and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to
14 the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States of America; the
15 Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader, United States Senate; the Honorable Nancy
16 Pelosi, Speaker, U. S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Madeleine Z.
17 Bordallo, Guam Delegate, U. S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Mike
18 Leavitt, Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services;
19 Mr. Kerry Weems, Director of the Center for Medicare Services, U. S. Department of
20 Health and Human Services; the Honorable Congressman Mike Honda, Chairman of
21 Asian Pacific American Caucus, U. S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
22 Congresswoman Donna Christensen, U. S. House of Representatives; the Honorable
23 Congressman Charles Rangel, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee; the
24 Honorable Congressman Fortney “Pete” Stark, Chairman of the Subcommittee on
25 Health; the Honorable Senator Danny Inouye, U. S. Senate; the Honorable Senator
26 Edward Kennedy, Chairman of Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, U.

- 1 S. Senate; the Honorable Senator Max Baucus, Chairman of the Finance Committee,
- 2 U. S. Senate; Chairman, Guam Chapter, American Association of Retired Persons;
- 3 Chairman, Guam Association of Retired Persons; and to the Honorable Felix P.
- 4 Camacho, *I Maga'lahaen Guåhan*.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY *I MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN* ON THE 10TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2007.



EDWARD J.B. CALVO
Acting Speaker



RAY TENORIO
Senator and Secretary of the Legislature