

BARACK OBAMA

October 1, 2008

Dear Friends,

I appreciate the opportunity to join the Filipino American National Historical Society and its friends in celebrating Filipino American History Month. This celebration is a wonderful opportunity to honor the values and traditions of Filipino Americans, and your role in the story of America.

America's greatness lies in our nation's ability to embrace and integrate different cultures into our national character. Filipino Americans nurture and maintain important social, cultural and business ties between America and the Philippines. As you celebrate your Filipino heritage and your American identity, I hope you remain inspired to make our country as great as we know it can be.

The stories of Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders are very personal to me. I first became acquainted with the diversity and richness of Asia and the AAPI community as a child growing up in Hawai'i and for a few years in Indonesia. Members of my family are of Asian descent and it is a community that I became a part of while living in Los Angeles, New York and Chicago.

Filipino Americans have participated in the triumphs and struggles along our road to a more perfect union, from farm workers who helped found the United Farmworkers Union, to the soldiers who fought bravely in World War II, to the thousands of nurses who have saved and improved countless lives, Filipino Americans are an integral part of our country. That's why I support policies that will honor your sacrifices, like the Filipino Veterans Equity Act.

As President, I will work to ensure that you have access to affordable, accessible healthcare that will also reduce the language and cultural barriers that limit access to our medical system. We will make sure the economy works for you by fixing our financial system, rebuilding public education, and making sure that schools have the resources they need to educate all of our children, regardless of the languages they speak or their family's income. And we will provide a path to employment by creating a \$4,000 annual college tax credit, a new Community College Partnership Program and new training opportunities for workers, and helping minority-owned small businesses.

Many Filipino families rely on family reunification policies to help them build better lives in the United States. However, AAPI families have some of the longest immigration backlogs. That's why I've fought to improve and pass a comprehensive immigration bill. I introduced amendments to put greater emphasis on keeping immigrant families together and to revisit a controversial new points system that would dramatically alter U.S. immigration policy.

The Philippines and the United States have long enjoyed a special relationship, and I am committed to building on our strong ties. We can create the changes we seek in America, but only if ordinary people rise up to demand change. Please accept my best wishes for a joyous celebration. I wish you all continued success and blessings in the years to come, and I thank you for your contributions to America.

Sincerely,



Barack Obama



OBAMA FOR AMERICA PO Box 8210 Chicago, IL 60680
WWW.BARACKOBAMA.COM

PAID FOR BY OBAMA FOR AMERICA