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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

<b>SPONSOR</b>	<u>Cote</u>	<b>ORIGINAL DATE</b>	<u>01-18-08</u>	<b>HJM</b>	<u>5</u>
<b>SHORT TITLE</b>	<u>Congressional Gold Medal to Bataan Veterans</u>	<b>LAST UPDATED</b>		<b>SB</b>	
				<b>ANALYST</b>	<u>Padilla</u>

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Joint Memorial 5 (HJM5) requests that the New Mexico Congressional Delegation introduce legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Bataan Veterans of the 200th Coast Artillery of the New Mexico National Guard for their valorous defense of the American and Filipino peoples during World War II upon the 1941 Japanese invasion of the Philippines. The Congressional Gold Medal is the nation's highest civilian award and the most distinguished award given by the United States Congress to citizens who represent the best characteristics of the American people. A copy of this Memorial is to be transmitted to the members of the New Mexico Congressional Delegation and to Governor Richardson.

### SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

On December 8, 1941, in the critical early hours of World War II, the 200th Coast Artillery of the New Mexico National Guard was in the first line of defense in the United States Commonwealth Territory of the Philippines against the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. As such, during the invasion, the men of the 200th Coast Artillery stood guard between the invading Japanese forces and the freedom of American and Filipino peoples. The men of the 200th Coast Artillery were the first to fire upon Japanese forces and the last to put down their rifles when ordered to surrender on April 9, 1942.

The men of the 200th Coast Artillery, in the face of terrible odds, made a valiant stand against the Japanese forces, suffering though months of enemy attack with outmoded equipment; a scarcity of food, medicine and ammunition; and diseases such as malaria, dysentery and beriberi that ravaged them to utter exhaustion.

Subsequently, the men of the 200th Coast Artillery were captured on April 9, 1942 and were forced by Japanese soldiers to march for six long days in exhausted and sickened states in scorching tropical heat while being brutalized by the Japanese soldiers along the way. The men were then placed in prisoner war camps for four years where they were forced into slave labor, losing scores of their ranks to starvation, disease and brutality.

## **House Joint Memorial 5 – Page 2**

The men who returned home are known as the members of the “greatest generation,” contributing immeasurably to the country’s growth. The men of the 200th Coast Artillery of the New Mexico National Guard received four Presidential Citations and the Philippine Presidential Citation for their valorous defense.

### **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

The consequences of not enacting this bill will result in no legislation introduction to begin the process of awarding the highest civilian award to the distinguished men of the 200th Coast Artillery of the New Mexico National Guard who fought valorously against Japanese soldiers during World War II while defending American and Filipino lives.

JRP/nt