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THE FILIPINO AMERICAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

**Galing Pinoy**

**GARY RUIZ :  
THE CHEVY VOLT  
LEAD DESIGNER**



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**DATELINE USA**  
FROM THE AJPRESS NEWS TEAM ACROSS AMERICA

**Enslaved Filipina to sue for damages**

**MILWAUKEE**—A 42-year-old Filipino woman from Camarines Sur, Philippines who was allegedly enslaved by a family for 19 years is seeking \$5.4 million in damages.

According to the Associated Press, Irma Martinez filed a federal lawsuit last week in the Wisconsin Eastern District Court against her former employer Jefferson and Elnora Calimlim and their three adult children, Jefferson Jr., Christopher and Christina.

Martinez had worked for the Calimlim's, who are also Filipino immigrants, as a maid and nanny of their three children in their \$1.2 million Milwaukee home and paid about \$1,000 a year for her services, according to court records.

The couple and their oldest son Jefferson Jr. were indicted on federal charges in May 2006. Jefferson and Elnora are currently each serving a four-year prison term after being convicted at a federal jury trial of four felony counts of harboring an illegal immigrant for financial gain, conspiracy to harbor an illegal immigrant, forced labor and attempted forced labor. Their son, 33-year-old Jefferson, received three years of probation for his role in Martinez's enslavement.

**Sweet Nightmare**  
According to court records, then 19-year-old Martinez was

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**Voting No to Proposition H**

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA**—The Filipino American Democratic Empowerment Council, the Filipino American Political Association and community leaders have met to discuss their strong opposition to Proposition H -- a measure on the November Ballot that would take away the right to vote on bonds, and enable the city to take over privately owned utilities. With other Asian Pacific American organizations, these FilAmerican groups have all voted to formally oppose Proposition H.

The San Francisco City Controller estimates the cost of the take over to be "in the billions." Other estimates put it at more than \$4 billion.

In addition to the Filipino American Democratic Empowerment Council and the Filipino American Political Association, other key Asian Pacific American organizations opposing Proposition H are the Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus, Asian Pacific Democratic Club, and the Westside Chinese Democratic Club all.

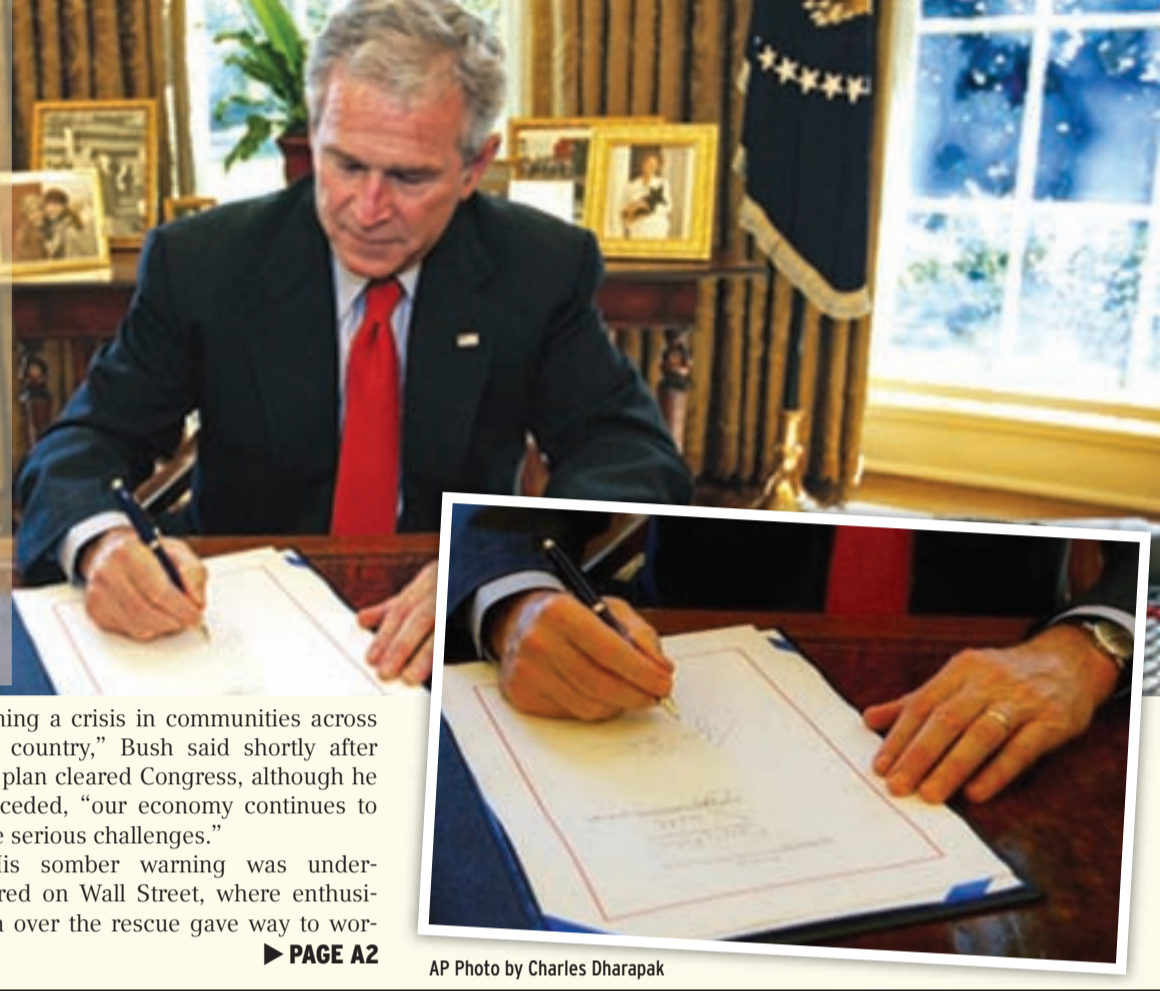
US Senator Dianne Feinstein, Mayor Gavin Newsom, the San Francisco Fire Fighters Association, the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods, the Small Business Network, and many other civic groups and other leaders also urge a NO vote on Proposition H. (Inquirer.net)

**PESO-DOLLAR RATE**  
As of October 3, 2008  
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**HISTORIC BAILOUT BILL PASSES CONGRESS; BUSH SIGNS**

by JULIE HIRSCHFELD  
AP Writer

**WASHINGTON**—With the economy on the brink of meltdown and elections looming, a reluctant Congress abruptly reversed course and approved a historic \$700 billion government bailout of the battered financial industry on October 3. President Bush swiftly signed it.



The 263-171 vote capped two weeks of tumult in Congress and on Wall Street, punctuated by urgent warnings from Bush that the country confronted the gravest economic disaster since the Great Depression if lawmakers failed to act.

"We have acted boldly to help prevent the crisis on Wall Street from be-

coming a crisis in communities across our country," Bush said shortly after the plan cleared Congress, although he conceded, "our economy continues to face serious challenges."

His somber warning was underscored on Wall Street, where enthusiasm over the rescue gave way to wor-

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AP Photo by Charles Dharapak

**GREG MACABENTA AND ROZITA LEE**

**A new team with the passion to serve the FilAm community through NaFFAA**

by MALOU LIWANAG-AGUILAR  
AJPress

**T**HE National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA) has struggled, fought, and forged a mission to achieve empowerment for FilAms in the past 11 years. Last September 24 to 26, the 8th NaFFAA Empowerment Conference was held in Seattle, calling in hundreds of FilAm community leaders and organizers from all over the US.

But what stands behind NaFFAA's success and survival aside from its members are its leaders—those who pushed the limits, in the desire to unite all the FilAm organizations all over the country.

The then Philippine News Publisher Alex A. Esclamado, TLC Beatrice CEO & President Loida Nicolas Lewis, nationally-acclaimed Guitarist Michael Dadap, and San Francisco State College Board President Rodel Rodis were talking over dinner in New York about how to unite the 3,000 Filipino American organizations all over the country. This was when the seeds for what is now known as the National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA) were sown.

**Greg Macabenta, NaFFAA's new National Chair**  
Publisher, editor, advertising vet-

eran and community activist Greg Macabenta is the newly elected National Chair of NaFFAA, replacing Alma Quintas Kern. Macabenta, a charter member and National Vice-Chair Emeritus, believes that NaFFAA still needs to achieve its original directions, instead of forging new ones, namely, the socio-economic and political empowerment of the Filipino community in America.

"When the need for NaFFAA was discussed at the planning meeting in Salinas that resulted in the first National Filipino American Empowerment Conference in Washington, DC in August 1997, we all agreed that important events were happening in America that our community had no hand in shaping; that we were mere bleacher viewers rather than participants; reactors rather than pro-actors," he said.

Macabenta also would like to focus on making NaFFAA more sustainable and self-reliant, and provide services that its members can utilize. He be-



Consul General Mary Jo Aragon, Rozita Lee and Greg Macabenta at a NaFFAA function for Philippine Vice President Noli de Castro during his visit in Las Vegas.

believes that by strengthening NaFFAA's image, implementing key programs and providing meaningful services, generating operating funds and program funding, the organization will survive beyond the lifetime of its founders.

But as always, challenges are part of the cycle. Macabenta believes that one of the hurdles they face as community workers and volunteers is how to persuade the greater number of the community to become more involved, as well as how to care more about the issues that affect them in the long term.

"If we have so much difficulty getting our own people to appreciate the importance of NaFFAA, is it surprising that the American mainstream has not recognized us enough?" he said.

In closing, Macabenta's statement on achieving NaFFAA's original directions holds true. Also, now being the National Chair, he is taking on the challenge on leading the organization the way he has built his life. "My whole life and career have been built on virtual 'spit, prayer and bubble"

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