

COMMUNITY JOURNAL

Ignoring a notice to appear doesn't make the problem go away

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ATTY. ROBERT REEVES & NANCY MILLER

the hearing was provided to the alien and that the alien is removable.

The notice must be properly addressed. It must include the correct apartment number and zip code and be properly addressed to the person named in the notice to appear. Where the alien is a minor, the notice must be served upon the responsible adult in whose custody the alien is placed. If the alien is over 14 years old, he must also be served. In the view of some courts, notice to counsel is deemed sufficient even if the lawyer does not convey this information on to the alien. Notice to an adult relative is also considered service.

Atty. Reeves has represented clients in numerous landmark immigration cases that have set new policies regarding INS action and immigrants' rights. His offices are located in Pasadena, San Francisco, Las Vegas and Makati City.

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The analysis and suggestions offered in this column do not create a lawyer-client relationship and are not a substitute for the personalized representation that is essential to every case.

(Advertising Supplement)

IT can begin as innocently as going to the mailbox. Lying there is a letter with a return address from the Executive Office for Immigration Review. Inside is a document titled Notice To Appear. Getting a Notice to Appear in Immigration Court is scary. It means that the government has begun a process to try to remove a non-citizen from the United States. It is not surprising that some people respond by ignoring the notice and not going to court. However, that does not make the problem go away. In fact, it usually makes it worse.

If a person fails to appear at a removal hearing after proper notice is sent out, that person will be ordered removed if the government establishes by clear, unequivocal and convincing evidence that written notice of the date, time and place of

“A person who has a final order entered against her in absentia after receiving oral notice is barred from most forms of relief, including cancellation of removal, adjustment of status, change of status and voluntary departure for 10 years.”

The Voice of FilAmerica

Political empowerment is still a treasure that eludes us as a community here in America. While we are the second largest Asian American community in the United States, we have yet to harvest the power that comes from our numbers. The Voice of FilAmerica features elected and appointed officials—regardless of political affiliation—in the different US states who are of Filipino ancestry. As your Filipino American community newspaper, the Asian Journal recognizes the fact that we all have a responsibility towards bringing political empowerment to fruition, especially for our future generations. It is our hope to have our voices heard all over America.

Lynn Berbano Finnegan

Hawaii House of Representatives Minority Leader

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL
AJPress



FILIPINO-American Lynn Berbano Finnegan is one of the rising politicians in Hawaii.

Finnegan, a republican, is the Hawaii House of Representatives Minority Leader. She's served that post since 2005 when her colleagues appointed her.

The Aspen Institute's Rodel Fellowships in Public Leadership recently named the 38-year-old Finnegan as one of its Top Young Elected Officials to its fourth class of Aspen-Rodel Fellows. Each of the members of the class was selected on their reputation for intellect, thoughtfulness, and a bipartisan approach to governing, according to the Aspen Institute.

Finnegan was elected to the House of Representatives in 2002. She represents District 32, which consists of Lower Pearlridge, Aiea, Halawa, Hickam, Pearl Harbor, Moanalua Gardens in Hawaii. This is her fourth term as a State Representative.

Prior to serving as an elected official, Finnegan worked as a Senior Loan officer at Primary Residential Mortgage. She graduated from the Christian Private School Hanalani Schools before moving on and receiving a degree at the University of Hawaii.

She said that Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle is the reason why she was inspired to run for office.

In 2002, Lingle had presented a vision for Hawaii's future and wanted to challenge the mostly Democratic state that is Hawaii.

"I believe a thriving democracy lies in a government that operates with at least two political parties encouraging thoughtful debate," said Finnegan in her Opening Day Speech during the first day of the 2008 legislative session. "This contributes to a more transparent process and results in better

laws representing a greater number of Hawaii's people. I also believe that within this process respect can be earned even when values and views differ."

Finnegan currently serves on the Education, Health, Higher Education, Interim Task Force on Standards of Conduct and Legislative Management committees. The key issues Finnegan focuses on are Crime Reduction and Drug Use Prevention, Education Reform, Charter School Funding, Improving Business Climate and to help the Senior and Elder.

She has been awarded Hawaii's Ten Outstanding Filipino Young Women of 2004, Hawaii Medical Association's 2006 Legislator of the Year, and Patrick Henry Award from the National Guard Association in 2007, according to the Ilocos Times.

She is one of the advocates of establishing a sister-state relationship with the Philippines and passionate about the Filipino community.

She is also a member of a number of organizations from the Imago Dei Community Church, Moanalua Lions Club to national organizations like National Foundation of Women Legislators and Council for State Government West Leadership Academy Class of 2004 Education Commission of the States, State Committee.

Finnegan is married to Honolulu Fire Department Captain Peter Finnegan. They have two children Piikea and Luke. ■



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