PRESS RELEASE HTX.08.2026

TEXAS HONORS FILIPINO NURSES WITH PROCLAMATION AT STATE CAPITOL



Secretary of State Robert Howden (middle) presents the proclamation to Dr. Alex Sardual, President of Philippine Nurses Association - Metro Houston (PNAMH) (left) and Dr. Jonathan Gecomo, Vice President of PNA-South Central Region (right)

AUSTIN, Texas. The State of Texas formally recognized the contributions of Filipino nurses to the state's healthcare system at a ceremony at the Texas State Capitol on 22 October 2026. Secretary of State Robert Howden presented a proclamation designating 18 October 2026 as Filipino Nurses Appreciation Day, together with a letter of greetings from Governor Greg Abbott honoring Filipino nurses.

The ceremony was organized by the Philippine Consulate General in Houston in coordination with the Philippine Nurses Association of America (PNAA). Representing the nursing community were Dr. Bob Gahol, PNAA National President, and leaders and representatives of the ten Philippine Nurses Association chapters in Texas. Dr. Gahol delivered remarks, and Dr. Jonathan Gecomo, Regional Vice President of PNAA South Central Region, responded to the proclamation on behalf of Filipino nurses in Texas.



L-R: Dr. Jonathan Gecomo, Dr. Bob Gahol, Secretary of State Howden, Consul General Gunther Sales, Dr. Riza Mauricio, and Dr. Alex Sardual

Consul General Gunther Sales thanked the State of Texas for the honor and paid tribute to the generations of Filipino nurses who have served Texans with skill, dedication, and *malasakit*. “Through all those years, you served quietly, never asking for anything in return,” he told the nurses. “Today, Texas honors that service.”

Texas expects the highest standard of care, the Consul General noted, a standard for which Filipino nurses are known around the world. The recognition, he said, also honors a friendship between Texans and Filipinos that has been built, in many ways, at the bedside.



Filipino nurse leaders from Texas chapters of the Philippine Nurses Association join Secretary of State Robert Howden at the State Capitol after the presentation of the recognition and proclamation

Filipino nurses make up 56 percent of all foreign-educated nurses practicing in Texas. They have helped stabilize hospital staffing, train new nurses, and fill roles in rural and underserved communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they also bore a disproportionate share of the profession's losses.

Their recognition at the seat of state government affirms their enduring contribution to the health of Texans and strengthens the ties between Texas and the Filipino people. It also comes at a meaningful time, during Filipino American History Month and in a year when the Philippines and the United States mark 80 years of diplomatic relations.