

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE }
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
First Regular Session

04 21 30 PM '54

SENATE

S. No. 633

Order

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to recognize the invaluable help to economic growth and nation building by granting them certain rights and privileges.

It has been told that if all Overseas Filipino Workers will go on strike for a day, the whole world may not be able to function. Imagine the Europeans without our nurses, doctors and nannies; or the Singaporeans and Chinese without our domestic helpers; or the Arabs without our engineers and construction workers; or the Canadians without our caregivers; or the Americans without our IT professionals, and yes, the international maritime industry without our seafarers.

Indeed, the Filipino worker has contributed much to the country's as well as the world's progress. These men and women are truly our modern day heroes who kept the Philippines afloat with pride and with their remittances.

In view of the above, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

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SENATE
S. No. 633

INTRODUCED BY: Ordo

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AN ACT
TO RECOGNIZE AND REWARD THE CONTRIBUTION OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO
WORKERS TO NATION BUILDING, GRANT THEM BENEFITS AND SPECIAL
PRIVILEGES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policies and Objectives.* - Pursuant to Article II, Section 18 of the Constitution, it is the duty of the State to promote the welfare of the Overseas Filipino Workers taking into consideration their invaluable help to the Philippine economy. Consonant with this constitutional principle, the following are the declared policies of this Act:

- a. To motivate and encourage overseas Filipino workers to contribute to economic prosperity and nation building;
- b. To encourage them and their families and the communities they live in to reaffirm the valued Filipino tradition of "Bayanihan" by rewarding their invaluable contribution to Philippine economy with certain rights and privileges

In accordance with these policies, this Act aims to:

- a. Establish mechanisms whereby the contributions of the overseas Filipino workers are maximized;
- b. Adopt measures whereby our overseas Filipino workers are assisted and appreciated by the community as a whole;
- c. Establish a program beneficial to the overseas Filipino workers, their families and the rest of the community that they serve; and
- d. Promote a sustained economic growth by encouraging our overseas Filipino workers to invest in the local market thereby further enhancing domestic employment and increase of the gross national product.

SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the term "overseas Filipino workers" shall mean any Filipino who is employed overseas, whether permanent or contractual, and those who are working in the Philippine Foreign Service posted abroad regardless of income and year of service.

The term "dependent" shall mean the lawful spouse or parents of the overseas Filipino worker who are dependent on him for support; Provided, that dependent shall not be entitled to avail of the benefits under this Act if he has already availed of the benefits provided under R.A. No. 7432 otherwise known as tile "Senior Citizen Law."

SECTION 3. *Privileges for the Overseas Filipino Workers.* - The overseas Filipino workers shall be entitled to the following:

- a. The grant of twenty percent (20%) discount from all establishments relative to utilization of transportation services, hotels and similar lodging establishment, restaurants and recreation centers and purchases of cell cards or credits for mobile phone, medicine and family residence anywhere in the country and payment for tuition fee for college education of children;
- b. A minimum of twenty percent (20%) discount on admission fees charged by theaters. cinema houses arid concert halls, circuses, carnivals and other similar places of culture, leisure, and amusement;
- c. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) discount from payment of boarding pass to airline;
- d. Exemption from training fees for socio-economic programs; and
- e. Free medical and dental services in government establishment anywhere in the country, subject to guidelines to be issued by the Department of Health.

SECTION 4. *Dependent Privileges.* - The State shall provide the following assistance to the dependents of the overseas Filipino workers:

- a. The grant of ten percent (10%) discount from all establishments relative to utilization of transportation services, hotels and similar lodging establishment, restaurants and recreation centers and purchases of medicine and cell cards or credits for mobile phone anywhere in the country;
- b. A minimum of ten percent (10%) discount on admission fees charged by theaters. cinema houses and concert halls, circuses, carnivals and other similar places of culture, leisure, and amusement;
- c. A minimum of thirty percent (30%) discount from payment of boarding pass to airline;
- d. Exemption from training fees for socio-economic programs; and
- e. Free medical and dental services in government establishment anywhere in the country, subject to guidelines to be issued by the Department of Health.

SECTION 5. *Tax Credit.* - The private establishment that provided the privileges or discount set forth under Sections 3 and 4 hereof shall be entitled to claim the grant of privileges or discount as tax credit.

SECTION 6. *The Office for Overseas Filipino Workers Affairs (OFFWA).* There shall be established in every municipality and OOFWA and for this purpose the Social Worker of the Department of Social Welfare Development in every municipality shall be deputized as head of OFFWA. The functions of this office are:

- a. Maintain a register of overseas contract workers and their dependents in the municipality;
- b. Regularly update on a quarterly basis the list of overseas Filipino workers and to issue nationally uniform individual identification cards which shall be valid anywhere in the country;
- c. Implement and monitor yearly work programs pursuant to the objectives of this Act;
- d. Service as a general information and liaison center to serve the needs of the overseas Filipino workers and dependents.

SECTION 7. *Penalties.* - Violation of any provision of this Act for which no penalty is specifically provided under any other law shall be punished by imprisonment not exceeding one (1) year or a fine not exceeding Five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) or both.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Secretary of Labor and Employment through the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, jointly, with the Department of Finance, Department of Tourism, Department of Interior and Local Government and the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to fully carry out the objectives of this Act.

SECTION 9. *Appropriation.* - The National Government shall appropriate such amount as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All provisions of laws, orders, decrees, including rules and regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and/or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Separability Clause.* - If any part or provision of this Act shall be held to be unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in two (2) national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,