

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }

First Regular Session

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SENATE

S. No. 634

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

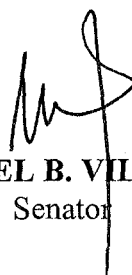
The burgeoning number of Our Overseas Filipino Workers (OWS) shows that we need to provide this sector of our population more attention and significance. More so that in the previous years, they have been the victims of exploitations within their respective workplaces in foreign countries. They are there precisely to earn better income and be able to afford their families better economic conditions.

Being in a different country is quite difficult given the fact that access to medical privileges is not equally granted to non-citizens. This is not to mention the fact that our OFWs' income in times of illnesses or diseases only goes directly to medical expenses leaving their families with nothing. Such being the case, the realization of our OFWs' dream of alleviating their present economic conditions are usually hampered by such inevitable circumstances.

In order to address this issue, this bill among others, aims to:

- To construct, establish, operate and maintain a medical center for Overseas Filipino Workers and their Families;
- To promote, encourage, and engage in scientific research on the prevention and the care and/or treatment of common and recurring cases of sickness among OFW patients and related activities, including sponsorship and conduct of relevant congresses, conventions, seminars and conferences;
- To facilitate and encourage the dissemination and exchange of ideas and information on the prevention, treatment, and control of such diseases; to arouse, enhance and develop public interest or awareness;
- To extend medical services to the OFWs and their families, to help prevent, relieve or alleviate their innumerable medical afflictions and maladies.

The immediate passage of this bill is fervently called for.


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.
Senator

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AN ACT

**CREATING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFW) MEDICAL CENTER
DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Creation of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) Medical Center;***
2 ***Board of Trustees*** – There is hereby created a trust for the benefit primarily of Overseas Filipino
3 Workers (OFWs), under the name and style of Overseas Filipino Workers Medical Center, herein
4 after referred to as OFW Medical Center.

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6 The OFW Medical Center shall be administered by a Board of Trustees, composed of
7 seven (7) members, to be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Director of the
8 Center shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

9
10 The six (6) appointive members of the Board of Trustees shall serve without
11 compensation for a period of four (4) years and until their successors shall have been appointed
12 and qualified. Any vacancy in the Board shall be filled by appointment by the President of the
13 Philippines, and the appointee shall serve for the unexpired term. The Board of Trustees of the
14 OFW Medical Center shall elect a Chairman from among themselves, who shall be the presiding
15 officer of the Board of Trustees.

16
17 Four (4) Members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum to transact business
18 and any decision of such four (4) members on any matter duly presented to the Board of Trustees
19 shall constitute a valid and binding act of OFW Medical Center.

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21 **SECTION 2. *Government's Contribution*** – The Government shall contribute the
22 necessary land, building equipment and facilities to the OFW Medical Center, and shall pay such
23 obligations for real, personal and mixed properties arising from such undertaking under a
24 deferred payment arrangement within five (5) years, at a preferred rate of interest.

25

1 **SECTION 3. *Property of the Center*** – The Property of the OFW Medical Center shall
2 consist of the real, personal, mixed and other type of property, now owned or reserved for, or
3 may hereafter given, donated, acquired, transferred or conveyed to, the OFW Medical Center by
4 the Philippine Government, its branches and instrumentalities, any foreign government, as well
5 as by trust, foundations, corporations, or persons, alien or domestic, in order to carry out its
6 purposes and objective as set forth herein.
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8 **SECTION 4. *Purposes and Objectives*** - The purposes and objectives of the OFW
9 Medical Center are:
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- 11 1. To construct, establish, operate and maintain a medical center for Overseas Filipino
12 Workers and their Families;
- 13 2. To promote, encourage, and engage in scientific research on the prevention and the
14 care and/or treatment of common and recurring cases of sickness among OFW
15 patients and related activities, including sponsorship and conduct of relevant
16 congresses, conventions, seminars and conferences;
- 17 3. To stimulate and/or underwrite scientific researches on the biological, demographic,
18 social, economic, eugenic, physiological aspects of common or rare OFW illness; and
19 gather, compile and publish the findings of such researches for public dissemination;
- 20 4. To facilitate and encourage the dissemination and exchange of ideas and
21 information on the prevention, treatment, and control of such diseases; to arouse,
22 enhance and develop public interest or awareness;
- 23 5. To encourage and/or undertake the training of physicians, nurses, medical
24 technicians, health officers and social workers on the practical and scientific conduct
25 and implementation of medical services and other related activities;
- 26 6. To encourage the formation of other organizations on the national, provincial, city,
27 municipal or barangay level and to coordinate their various efforts and activities for
28 the purpose of achieving a more effective programmatic approach on the common
29 problems relative to the objective herein enumerated; and
30 7. To extend medical services to the OFWs and their families, to help prevent, relieve
31 or alleviate their innumerable medical afflictions and maladies.
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39 **SECTION 5. *Powers*** – For the attainment and/or furtherance of the above mentioned
40 purposes and objective, the OFW Medical Center, as body corporate, acting through its Board of
41 Trustees, shall have all the powers pertaining to a juridical person, and is therefore authorized,
42 among other things:
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- 44 1. To acquire and hold in any matter property of whatever nature or description, and
45 dispose of such property under any mode of encumbrance or conveyance;
- 46 2. To contract and be contracted with;
- 47 3. To mortgage, lease, sell, transfer, convey or otherwise dispose of its properties;
- 48 4. To solicit and receive donations, endowments and funds in the form of contributions,
49 whether cash or in kind, from both the public and the private sectors;
- 50 5. To open such accounts in banks and other financial institutions and to disburse such
51 funds or invest the same as the Board may direct to accomplish or advance the
52 purposes or interest of the OFW Medical Center;
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6. To invite foreign medical specialists and similar experts in the various medical field to train the personnel or trainees or residents of the OFW Medical Center;
7. To send the personnel of the OFW Medical Center to research institutes, medical institutes or universities for advance training or observation and to attend international or regional conventions, conferences, congresses, and seminars as the Board may deem necessary to accomplish the purposes and objectives of the OFW Medical Center;
8. To adopt a set of by-laws, rules and regulations not inconsistent with law and the provisions hereof to govern the administration and operation of the affairs of the OFW Medical Center; and
9. To do all such other acts and things as may be necessary or incidental for the accomplishment of the purposes and objectives of the OFW Medical Center.

SECTION 6. *Tax Exemptions, etc.* – All donations, contributions or endowments which may be made by entities or persons to the OFW Medical Center shall be exempt from income and gift taxes.

The OFW Medical Centers shall be exempt from the payment of all taxes, charges and fees imposed by the government or any political subdivision or instrumentality thereof for a period of ten (10) years.

All income earned by foreign doctors who shall use the facilities of the Center shall be tax exempt for a period of ten (10) years from the date of issuance thereof.

SECTION 7. *Assistance from Government Offices, etc.* – The OFW Medical Center may call upon any department, bureau, office, agency or instrumentality of the Government, including government owned or controlled corporations, for such assistance as it may need in the pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

SECTION 8. *Government Contribution* – The amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated as contribution of the National Government for the initial operations and maintenance of the OFW Medical Center, which shall be appropriated and included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. *Auditing* – The books and accounts of the OFW Medical Center shall be subject to periodic auditing by the Chairman of the Commission on Audit or his duly authorized representative.

SECTION 10. *Annual Report* - The OFW Medical Center shall render to the President of the Philippines and to the Secretary of the Department of Health an annual report of its activities and recommendations.

SECTION 11. *Effect of Dissolution of the Center* – If for any reason, the OFW Medical Center is dissolved, its property remaining at the time of such dissolution shall revert back to the Philippine Government for disposition in accordance with law.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations, issuances or parts thereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

1 **SECTION 13. *Separability Clause*** – If any part of this Act is held unconstitutional or
2 invalid, other parts hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and
3 effect.

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5 **SECTION 14. *Effectivity*** - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its
6 publication in the least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

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8 Approved,