


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

SENATE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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SENATE

S. No. 817

RECEIVED BY: 

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

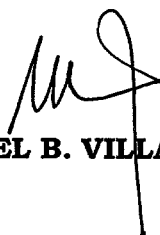
It is the policy of the State to support efforts of government agencies and private sector aimed at the attainment of our national development goals. In line with this, the State encourages the promotion of volunteer service programs.

This measure aims to establish the Volunteer Service Program to provide the necessary manpower and technical expertise for development projects undertaken within the country.

The said program shall be implemented by the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency which shall formulate policies and guidelines concerning volunteer service plans and programs, identify sectors that need volunteer services and coordinate programs and activities of domestic and governmental and private voluntary organizations in order that their services may be made to fit into the national development goals.

This proposed measure, if enacted into law, would encourage the establishment and would tremendously strengthen the volunteer service organizations in the country.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE }
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'04 JUN 30 10:09

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROGRAM,
STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENTAL MECHANISMS FOR THE REGULATION OF
VOLUNTEER SERVICES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "National Volunteer Service Act OF 2004."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to support efforts of government agencies and the private sector aimed at the attainment of national development goals, encourage the promotion of volunteer service programs for national development, social welfare and international understanding, and maximize the benefits that may be derived from volunteer service programs.

SECTION 3. *Volunteer Service Program.* - A Volunteer Service Program, hereinafter referred to as the Program, is hereby established to provide the necessary manpower and technical expertise for developmental projects undertaken within the country.

SECTION 4. *Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency.* - The Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA), hereinafter referred to as the Agency, created under Executive Order No. 635, shall be the

Program's implementing agency. The Agency shall be a domestic, community-based body.

SECTION 5. *Functions of the Agency.*- The Agency shall have the following functions:

1. Formulate policies and guidelines concerning volunteer service plans and programs;
2. Identify sectors that need volunteer services;
3. Organize and implement a National Volunteer Service Program to give the educated youth and adults a constructive opportunity to use their talent and skills for national development;
4. Coordinate programs and activities of domestic and foreign governmental and private voluntary organizations in order that their services may be made to fit into the total national development goals;
5. Strengthen and promote volunteer service through conferences, seminars, training sessions and other related activities;
6. Administer all funds from all sources appropriated for or donated to the Agency;
7. Undertake on its own, utilizing volunteer manpower, development projects which are consistent with the purposes of this Act;
8. To serve as liaison between domestic and all foreign governmental and private voluntary organization, including the United Nations Voluntary Program under the UNDP; and
9. Perform such other functions and duties as may be provided by law.

SECTION 6. *Director, Project Coordinator and Professional Staff/Employees.*- The Agency which shall be headed by a Director and assisted by professional staffs and employees will continue to perform its functions. The Director shall create a project unit for the Program and shall appoint a Project Coordinator and professional

staffs/employees the Director deems necessary and in accordance with the Civil Service law, and rules and regulations.

SECTION 7. *Powers of the Agency.* - The Agency shall have the following powers:

1. Provide consultative and advisory services to the various government agencies and private organizations and educational institutions on matters pertaining to volunteer service;
2. Develop plans, programs and operating standards and techniques for the promotion of the objectives and functions of the Agency;
3. Appoint, in accordance with Civil Service laws, such personnel as may be necessary to enable the Agency to carry out its functions;
4. Provide for the training of volunteers through the use of training centers and facilities of the government offices and institutions;
5. Accept in the name of the Agency, and employ or dispose of in furtherance of the purpose of this Act, any money or property received by gift, decree, bequest, or otherwise;
6. Accept voluntary and unaccompanied service;
7. Enter into contracts with government agencies and private non-profit organizations including public and private schools, colleges and universities for the assignment or referral of volunteers under this Act, which contracts shall provide that the other contracting party shall pay all or part of the costs of the project;
8. Provide each volunteer with a certificate of completion of volunteer work after he has rendered service for at least one year or six months in case of a student volunteer;
9. Arrange for education and vocational counseling of volunteers to:
 - a) Encourage them to use in the national interest the skills and experience which they have derived from their training and service; and

- b) Assist them, after completion of volunteer service, in obtaining placements in areas of employment where they can use such skills and experience;
- 10. Issue rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act, and
- 11. Generally perform such functions and take such steps, consistent with the purpose and provisions of this Act.

SECTION 8. *Volunteer Manpower Beneficiary Organizations.* - Any government agency or office, as well as any private non-profit organization duly organized by law, undertaking development projects and education and social welfare programs and in need of the services of volunteer workers may submit to the Agency a request that volunteers be assigned to a particular projects or program.

Such project or program shall deal with:

1. Assisting delivery of primary health care services to socially disadvantaged families and communities at the municipal or barangay levels or to indigenous communities;
2. Agriculture production and marketing systems, community reforestation and agro-forestry intercropping techniques;
3. The care and rehabilitation of the mentally ill, disabled, abandoned, neglected, and abused children;
4. Informal, indigenous and other alternative learning programs of adult citizens and out-of-school youth;
5. Such other concerns or activities as are consistent with national development goals.

The request for volunteers shall be evaluated by the Agency based on national development priorities of the Government, the identified needs of the community, the actual necessity for volunteer workers, and compliance of the project proposal with such other project criteria and policy guidelines as may be adopted by the Agency. Upon approval of its request for volunteers, the government agency or office or private

non-profit organization concerned shall be deemed a Volunteer Manpower Beneficiary Organization, hereinafter referred to as a Beneficiary Organization.

SECTION 9. *Volunteer Service Worker.* - Any Filipino citizen interested may be a Volunteer Service Worker.

A Volunteer Service Worker should preferably be a permanent resident of the community he/she is assigned to.

SECTION 10. *Volunteer Service Organization.* - A private entity, organization, club or association, or an aggregate of volunteers may constitute themselves as a volunteer service organization to undertake volunteer service or development projects and programs formulated or initiated by or under the auspices of the private sector or by the government, its branches, offices or agencies.

SECTION 11. *Nature of Voluntary Service.* - The service rendered by volunteers and voluntary service organizations shall be purely voluntary and private. Volunteers and voluntary service organizations shall not be deemed officers or employees or otherwise in the service or employment of, or holding office under, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines for any purpose. A volunteer is, however, entitled to stipends during his training and period of assignment. Such stipend shall be in such uniform amounts as may be fixed by the Agency, provided that a higher amount may be fixed for persons designated as a volunteer leader.

SECTION 12. *Registration.* - All volunteers, and volunteer service organizations, before undertaking any volunteer service, development project or program formulated or initiated by or under the auspices of the government, shall register with the Agency in accordance with its rules and regulations.

Nothing in this Act shall prevent the private sector from formulating, initiating and undertaking their own volunteer service or developmental projects. The private

sector shall, however, coordinate with the agency in order to maximize the benefits from such undertaking.

SECTION 13. *Provisions for Training.* - A volunteer shall before assignment to a beneficiary organization, undergo orientation and training, which shall be administered jointly by said organization if any, and the Agency. They shall be oriented as to the objectives and policies of the Agency and the program, and prepared for their assignment as volunteers.

SECTION 14. *Participation of Beneficiaries.* - To the maximum extent practicable, the people of the communities to be served by volunteers shall cooperate and participate in the implementing the program.

SECTION 15. *Registration of Volunteers.* - The registration of volunteers shall be valid for the duration of their contract with the sponsoring volunteers service organization, or the Agency as the case may be. The registration of volunteer service organizations shall be valid for five (5) years commencing from the date of registration, and renewable for like periods.

SECTION 16. *Terms and Conditions of Volunteer Service.* - A volunteer shall serve an initial period of six (6) months to two (2) years. Said period may be extended depending on the need of the project and upon request of the recipient agency, and as agreed upon by the volunteer, the sponsoring volunteer organization and the Agency. Provided, That said extension may not extend beyond one (1) year.

A volunteer shall also be provided by the beneficiary organization with medical/insurance benefits, monthly allowance, and travel/living allowance.

Student volunteers shall be provided with tuition vouchers.

SECTION 17. *Area of Volunteer Work.* - Volunteers shall be encouraged to do volunteer work in his/her own community or in communities where services are badly needed.

SECTION 18. *Student Volunteers.* - College students enrolled in any public or private school, college or university may volunteer to undertake civilian volunteer service for a period of six (6) months, in conformity with the volunteer service program of this Act and under the supervision of the school, college or university where such student is currently enrolled.

The period of civilian volunteer service shall be under the administration of the school, college or university which may grant academic credits to the student volunteers and charge fees for these credits for the administration and logistical expenses of the program.

SECTION 19. *Submission of List of Volunteers.* - Schools, colleges or universities shall coordinate with the governing board created board created under this Act and shall submit to the Agency a list of all student volunteers.

SECTION 20. *Prohibited Acts.* - A volunteer shall be prohibited from performing any of the following acts:

1. Accept other remunerative employment during his assignment;
2. Make, directly or indirectly, any contribution of money or other things of value, or promise expressly or impliedly to make any such contribution, in connection with any convention, caucus or other process to select candidates for any political office;
3. Participate in political activities;
4. Solicit contributions; and
5. Act in violation of the rules and regulations prescribed by the Agency.

Volunteer service organizations are likewise prohibited from engaging in business and performing the acts enumerated in paragraphs (2) to (5).

SECTION 21. *Penalties.* - A volunteer who commits any of the prohibited acts enumerated under Section 20 shall be disqualified from further performing any volunteer service under this Act.

A volunteer service organization which commits any of the prohibited acts enumerated under Section 20 shall be prohibited from performing further volunteer service.

SECTION 22. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Agency shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to properly implement the National Volunteer Service Program.

SECTION 23. *Funding.* - For the purpose of implementing the Program, the sum of Five million pesos (P5,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the unappropriated funds of the National Treasury. Thereafter, the amount needed for the Program shall be included in the annual appropriations of the Agency.

The agency shall also implement cost-sharing scheme between community and agency, and regulation of donations.

SECTION 24. *Prohibition Regarding Funds.* - The funds provided for the implementation of the Program shall not be used in:

1. Any partisan or non-partisan political activity associated with a candidate, or contending faction in an election for public office;
2. Any voter registration activity;
3. Any other illegal act.

SECTION. 25. *Programs Under Executive Order No. 635.* - All existing Programs of the Agency, including those created by virtue of Executive Order No. 635, shall be maintained and remain in full force and effect, until terminated by the Agency.

SECTION 26. *Separability Clause.*- If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 27. *Repealing Clause.* - All parts and provisions of all other acts, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 28. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,