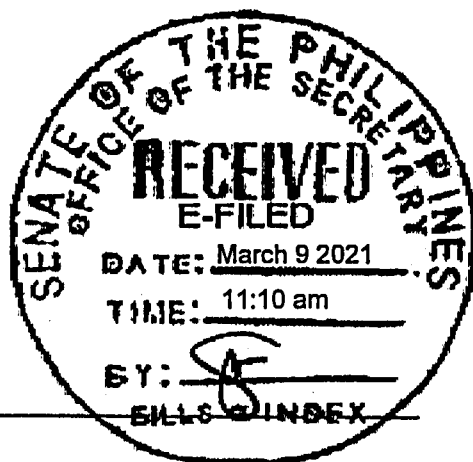


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

SENATE
S. No. 2090



Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

**AN ACT
AMENDING SECTION 4 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11261, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE "FIRST TIME JOBSEEKERS ASSISTANCE ACT", THEREBY
EXTENDING THE WAIVER OF FEES AND CHARGES TO JOBSEEKERS WHO
HAVE LOST THEIR EMPLOYMENT DURING THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE
(COVID-19) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the wake of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the deleterious effect to society is nowhere more severe than in the labor sector. Based on the October 2020 Labor Force Survey, underemployment and unemployment rates stood at 14.4% and 8.7%, respectively¹. Albeit relatively more benign than the figures during April 2020 (18.9% and 17.6%), these rates are far from the numbers of the previous time period of October 2019 where underemployment only amounted to 12.8% and unemployment at 4.6%². At the regional level, three regions reported double-digit unemployment rates, namely: National Capital Region (12.4%), Ilocos Region (11.5%), and CALABARZON (11%)³. According to the same survey, 12.7% of workers who are forced or are limited to work less than 40 hours per week (or on a part-time basis) cite the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), lockdown or the COVID-19 pandemic as the cause for such; while 38.2% of those who have jobs but are not at work cite the ECQ/Lockdown/COVID-19 as the reason⁴. Furthermore, 8.6% and 3.2%,

¹ <https://psa.gov.ph/content/employment-situation-october-2020>

² Id.

³ Id.

⁴ <https://psa.gov.ph/system/files/TABLE%20C%20-%20Reasons%20for%20Working%20Less%20Than%2040%20Hours%2C%20Working%20>

respectively, of the latter demographic said that they are out of work because of poor business condition or reduction in clients/work⁵.

COVID-19's economic toll on our workers and the households that depend on them cannot be more emphasized than the stories of the jobless waiting for cash aid just to tide over hunger, PUV drivers gathering in streets to ask for donations, and employees receiving either notices of work stoppages or worse, termination. At the moment, the community quarantines and lockdowns have eased and businesses have slowly re-opened, but a critical task remains at hand – providing relief and assistance to the recently unemployed or underemployed for them to be able to resume gainful employment at the soonest time possible.

This proposed measure seeks to contribute to this mission by extending the benefits of Republic Act No. 11261 or the "First Time Jobseekers Assistance Act" to the pandemic-induced unemployed individuals. Under this bill, the benefit of waived fees and charges for government-issued pre-employment documents such as proofs of identification, clearances, and certifications will apply to jobseekers who have lost their employment during the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic Public Health Emergency as a result of authorized causes such as installation of labor-saving devices, redundancy, retrenchment, closure or cessation of business operations, or disease. To substantiate their status to qualify for the benefit, the jobseeker must submit a duly issued certificate of employment or notice of termination, or in the absence thereof, a barangay certification which shall be issued free of charge.

The rationale behind this measure is that the government must exert its best efforts to assist our jobless so that they may get back on their feet and recover financially from the pandemic. Removing barriers to immediate re-employment and re-hiring is one form of assistance. Significantly bringing down the unemployment rate is definitely one of the factors that will propel our country out of the economic doldrums of COVID-19.


More%20than%2048%20Hours%2C%20and%20with%20Job%20but%20not%20at%20Work%20October%202020%2C%20July%202020%20and%20April%202020.xlsx

⁵ Id.

In view of this, early passage of this bill is sought.



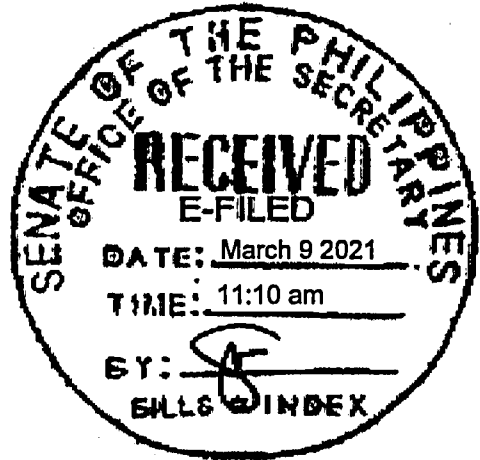
MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator



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(COVID-19) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

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

1
2 **Section 1.** Section 3 of Republic Act No. 11261, or the "First Time Jobseekers
3 Assistance Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

4
5 Section 3. Waiver of Fees and Charges. - Subject to
6 exceptions provided in Section 8 of this Act, all
7 government agencies and instrumentalities, including
8 government-owned and -controlled corporations
9 (GOCCs), local government units (LGUs), and
10 government hospitals shall not collect fees or charges
11 from a first time jobseeker: Provided, That such fee or
12 charge is paid in connection with the application for
13 and the granting of licenses, proofs of identification,

1 clearances, certificates or other documents usually
2 required in the course of employment locally or abroad:
3 Provided, further, That the benefit provided under this
4 Act shall only be availed of once.

5
6 **THE BENEFIT PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION**
7 **SHALL EXTEND TO JOBSEEKERS WHO HAVE**
8 **LOST THEIR EMPLOYMENT DURING THE**
9 **CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PUBLIC**
10 **HEALTH EMERGENCY AS A RESULT OF**
11 **AUTHORIZED CAUSES SUCH AS INSTALLATION**
12 **OF LABOR-SAVING DEVICES, REDUNDANCY,**
13 **RETRENCHMENT, CLOSURE OR CESSATION OF**
14 **BUSINESS OPERATIONS, OR DISEASE, AS**
15 **SUBSTANTIATED BY A DULY ISSUED**
16 **CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYMENT OR NOTICE OF**
17 **TERMINATION, OR IN THE ABSENCE THEREOF,**
18 **A BARANGAY CERTIFICATION, WHICH SHALL**
19 **BE ISSUED FREE OF CHARGE, STATING THE**
20 **FACT OF THE JOBSEEKER'S UNEMPLOYMENT,**
21 **THE CAUSE THEREOF, AND THAT HIS/HER**
22 **PREVIOUS EMPLOYER FAILED OR REFUSED TO**
23 **ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF EMPLOYMENT OR**
24 **NOTICE OF TERMINATION.**

25
26 **Section 2. *Repealing Clause.*** — All laws, presidential decrees, executive
27 orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are
28 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified
29 accordingly.

1 **Section 3. Separability Clause.** – If any provision or part of this Act, or the
2 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid,
3 the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

4
5 **Section 4. Effectivity Clause.** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
6 from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
7 circulation.

8
9 *Approved,*