

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



22 NOV 23 A11 :06

SENATE
S. No. 1527

RECEIVED BY:

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Introduced by Senator MARK A. VILLAR

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A WELFARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO
FAMILIES LEFT BEHIND BY MIGRANT WORKERS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Migrant workers are considered as modern-day heroes who bravely chose to be at a distance far away from their families to support and to give the latter a sustainable life.

While they are able to financially contribute to their families, migrant workers are often separated from their children during their most formative years of growth, which threatens healthy development.¹

Based on a study, a review was conducted to determine the health effects of being left behind to Filipino children. From the findings, it indicated that children of migrant workers experienced a vast range of poor physical and mental health outcomes due to separation from their parents.² Ruptures in the family that started in early childhood may result to a long-term physical, cognitive, and emotional outcomes.³

¹ Dominguez, G. B., & Hall, B. J. (2022). The health status and related interventions for children left behind due to parental migration in the Philippines: A scoping review. *The Lancet Regional Health - Western Pacific*, 28, 100566. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanwpc.2022.100566>

² Dominguez, *supra* note 1.

³ Global Education Monitoring Report Team Migration, Displacement and Education Building Bridges, Not Walls. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris 2018. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265866> as cited in Dominguez, *supra* note 1

Migrant workers aim to fulfill the basic needs of the family, especially those related to food and financial security, however, the psychological needs of belongingness and intimacy were fully challenged because of physical separation.⁴

To address such, this bill seeks to establish Migrant Workers Family Centers nationwide to provide welfare assistance and counselling services to the families of migrant workers; to serve as coordinating office to non-government organizations and associations that cater to the plight of migrant workers; and to serve as a link of left behind households to various services and/or agencies of the government on overseas employment. These family centers will help the left behind family members to sustain harmony in their relationships and to prepare them to future reintegration with the migrant worker.

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




MARK A. VILLAR

⁴ Parreñas RS. Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes Stanford. Stanford University Press, 2005 as mentioned in Dominguez, *supra* note 1

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known “Left Behind Household of
2 Migrant Workers Act.”

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is declared policy of the State to strengthen
4 the solidarity of the family and actively promote its total development. The State
5 recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation.

6 Towards this end, the State shall take such actions as are necessary to the
7 maximum extent practicable, to sustain harmony of the family and prepare families
8 for future reintegration of Migrant Workers.

9 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the term:

10 a. “Center” means the Migrant Workers Family Center;

11 b. “Left-Behind Household” means families left behind by migrant workers to
12 work abroad; and

13 c. “Migrant Workers” means any Filipino citizen who works in any country
14 outside the Philippines.

15 Sec. 4. *Migrant Workers Family Centers.* –

16 (a) Centers. – DMW shall establish Migrant Workers Family Centers nationwide.

17 The purpose of Center are –

1 (1) To provide welfare assistance and counselling services to the families of
2 migrant workers;

3 (2) To serve as coordinating office to non-government organizations and
4 associations that cater to the plight of migrant workers; and

5 (3) To serve as a link of left-behind households to various services and/or
6 agencies of the government on overseas employment.

7 (b) Location of Centers. – Each center shall be strategically located in every city
8 or municipality where there is a large population of families who have relative
9 working abroad.

10 (c) Jurisdiction. – The responsibilities of each center shall be centered on the
11 welfare of left-behind families of migrant workers.

12 *Sec. 5. Left-Behind Household Organizations.* – DMW shall facilitate the
13 establishment of organizations or support groups of families left behind by migrant
14 workers. It shall also provide a venue for the interaction of members of families of
15 migrant workers.

16 *Sec. 6. Report to Congress.* – Three years from the passage of the provisions
17 of this Act, the DMW shall report to Congress the number of cases brought to the
18 various centers and the intervention provided.

19 *Sec. 7. Appropriations.* – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such sums as
20 may be necessary are hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National
21 Treasury.

22 *Sec. 8. Separability Clause.* – If any section or provision of this Act shall be
23 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or the provisions not affected
24 thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

25 *Sec. 9. Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
26 following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,