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S E N A T E
Senate Bill No. **2590**

Introduced by Senator Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III

AN ACT
DECLARING THE 22nd OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR AS A
SPECIAL DAY FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE
"PHILIPPINES – AUSTRALIA FRIENDSHIP DAY"

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Republic of the Philippines and Commonwealth of Australia established formal diplomatic relations on May 22, 1946. Seventy-seven (77) years later, both countries recognize the importance of fostering friendship to promote mutual prosperity, and diplomatic cooperation.

Trade between the two countries yielded $4.1 billion in 2023, with around 40,000 Filipino workers employed by more than 300 Australian companies.[1] The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) also shared that it had garnered $1.53 billion in Australian investments to the Philippines from 12 business agreements signed by the stakeholders of the two nations.[2]

Moreover, the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) seek to benefit trade growth between the Philippines and Australia from a regional perspective.

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[1] https://mb.com.ph/2024/3/4/dti-garners-1-53-b-australian-investments-to-the-philippines
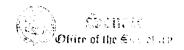[2] Ibid.

This bill seeks to dedicate May 22 as a special day to honor the long-standing relationship between the Republic of the Philippines and the Commonwealth of Australia.

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

AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III

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AN ACT
DECLARING THE 22nd OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR AS A
SPECIAL DAY FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE
"PHILIPPINES – AUSTRALIA FRIENDSHIP DAY"

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

1 **SECTION 1.** *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State
2 to pursue an independent foreign policy in its relations with other
3 States. It is also the policy of the State to put value to its existing
4 bilateral relations with other States and to commemorate and celebrate
5 these bilateral relations annually, and on their special occasions like the
6 50th, 75th, and 100th year anniversaries of the said bilateral relations.
7
8 **SEC. 2.** *Diplomatic Relations.* - The Philippines and Australia
9 established their diplomatic relations on May 22, 1946. Therefore, the
10 22nd of May of every year is hereby declared as a Special Day for the
11 commemoration of the "Philippines – Australia Friendship Day".
12
13 **SEC. 3.** *Implementing Agency.* - The Department of Foreign
14 Affairs (DFA) shall lead the Government in the commemoration and
15 celebration of the "Philippines – Australia Friendship Day" annually,
16 and on other special occasions such as the 100th year anniversary.

1   **SEC 4.** *Special Day Status.* - The Special Day status of the date
2 herein referred to in Section 2 shall not affect its classification as either
3 a working or a non-working day as determined by some other more
4 specific law.

5

6   **SEC. 5.** *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the initial
7 implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current
8 appropriations of the DFA. Thereafter, such amount necessary for the
9 continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual
10 General Appropriations Act.

11

12   **SEC. 6.** *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders,
13 proclamations, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are
14 inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified
15 accordingly.

16

17   **SEC. 7.** *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
18 after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2)
19 newspapers of general circulation.

    Approved,