


SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Third Regular Session )



15 SEP 17 A11 31

SENATE  
S.B. No. 2956

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

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**AN ACT GRANTING PERMANENT RESIDENCY TO QUALIFIED RELIGIOUS WORKERS AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 9 AND 13 OF COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 613, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PHILIPPINE IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1940 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**Explanatory Note**

Foreign religious workers and missionaries have played an important role not only in the faith life of Filipino communities, but also in promoting the welfare of the poor through outreach work and social missions. They have sacrificed and left the comfort of their homes to live away from their families without expecting or asking for anything in return. They have chosen not just to share their talents and skills but also to live the rest of their lives serving the Filipino people. We are honored to have them in our country.

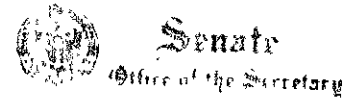
This bill seeks to amend Commonwealth Act No. 613, otherwise known as the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940. It is our intent to relieve foreign religious workers of the burdensome requirements and procedures for staying in the country and performing their chosen vocation here for the benefit of our communities. This bill seeks to assist the many religious workers who have already dedicated long years of their lives to their missionary work and vocation in the country.

This measure is also part of the proposed reforms to update our antiquated immigration law to better address the changing needs and demands of the Philippines, as a member of an increasingly globalized and interconnected international community.

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

  
Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

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75 SEP 17 AM 31

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

3 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the "Permanent Residency for Qualified  
4 Religious Workers".

5 **SECTION 2.** Section 9 of Commonwealth Act No. 613 or the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940  
6 is hereby amended by inserting the following provision after Subsection (f) to read as follows:

7 "Section 9. Aliens departing from any place outside the Philippines, who are otherwise  
8 admissible and who qualify within one of the following categories, may be admitted as  
9 nonimmigrants:

10 xxx

11 (g) Prearranged employment. - An alien coming to prearranged employment for whom  
12 the issuance of a visa has been authorized in accordance with section twenty of this Act, and his  
13 wife, and his unmarried children under twenty-one years of age, if accompanying him or if  
14 following to join him within a period of six months from the date of his admission into the  
15 Philippines as a nonimmigrant under this paragraph. An alien who is admitted as a  
16 nonimmigrant cannot remain in the Philippines permanently. To obtain permanent admission, a  
17 nonimmigrant alien must depart voluntarily to some foreign country and procure from the  
18 appropriate Philippine consul the proper visa and thereafter undergo examination by the  
19 officers of the Bureau of Immigration at a Philippine port of entry for determination of his  
20 admissibility in accordance with the requirements[.]; **AND**

21 **(H) RELIGIOUS WORKERS - DULY ORDAINED OR PROFESSIONAL MISSIONARIES AND**  
22 **RELIGIOUS MINISTERS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILY, WHO SEEK TO ENTER THE**  
23 **PHILIPPINES TO JOIN A RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION OR DENOMINATION DULY REGISTERED**  
24 **WITH THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION, UPON INVITATION, SPONSORSHIP OR**  
25 **GUARANTEE OF SUCH RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION OR DENOMINATION, SOLELY FOR THE**  
26 **PURPOSE OF PROPAGATING, TEACHING AND DISSEMINATING THEIR FAITH OR RELIGION."**

27 **SECTION 3.** Section 13 of Commonwealth Act No. 613 or the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940  
28 is hereby amended by inserting the following provision after Subsection (f) to read as follows:

29 xxx

1 (f) A natural-born citizen of the Philippines, who has been naturalized in a foreign  
2 country, and is returning to the Philippines for permanent residence, including his spouse and  
3 minor unmarried children, shall be considered a non-quota immigrant for purposes of entering  
4 the Philippines[.]; **AND**

5 **(G) RELIGIOUS WORKERS WHO HAVE FULFILLED RESIDENCY AND OTHER**  
6 **REQUIREMENTS TO BE DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ).**

7 **SECTION 4. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act is subsequently declared invalid or  
8 unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain in full  
9 force and effect.

10 **SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, and other  
11 issuances, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or  
12 modified accordingly.

13 **SECTION 6. *Effectivity Clause.*** - This Act shall take fifteen (15) days after its publication in the  
14 Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

15 Approved,