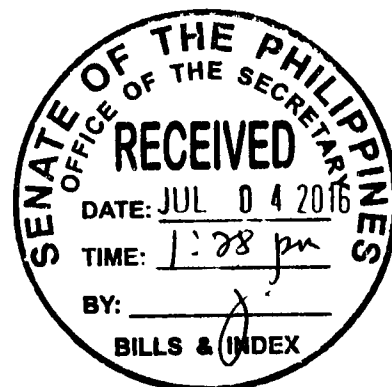


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 324



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Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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**AN ACT**  
**EXTENDING THE VALIDITY OF THE REGULAR PHILIPPINE PASSPORT**  
**ISSUED TO ADULT APPLICANTS TO TEN (10) YEARS, AMENDING FOR THIS**  
**PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8239 OR THE PHILIPPINE PASSPORT ACT OF**  
**1996**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The 1987 Philippine Constitution guarantees that our right to travel shall not be impaired except in the interest of national security, public safety, or public health, as may be provided by law.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, the government has the duty to issue passport or any travel document to any citizen of the Philippines or individual who complies with the requirements under Republic Act No. 8239 or the Philippine Passport Act of 1996, which established the guidelines for the application and issuance of passports. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is the government agency that enforces the guidelines.

Long queues for passport application and/or renewal at the DFA Office have been a common sight. Given that there has been a steady increase of the number of Filipinos desiring to travel abroad, due to the increase in the deployment of our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and to the increasing affordability of foreign travel, we foresee not only longer queues but also a backlog of passport applications that will take weeks and even months to process. The resulting delay amounts to an impairment of our countrymen's right to travel unless effective measures are immediately undertaken.

To be fair, DFA has been constantly adopting measures to address the long queues and ease the backlogs and delays in both application and release of passports. Recently, DFA has provided additional frontline personnel, changed the

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<sup>1</sup> Article III, Section 6 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution

layout of work stations and locations of service providers, and instituted a dedicated OFW lane.<sup>2</sup> Yet, these measures may not be adequate to bring to a halt the backlogs and delays.

This bill proposes to increase the validity of the regular passports issued to adult applicants from five (5) years to ten (10) years, as what is being observed in other countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, to mention a few. Increasing the passport's validity to ten (10) years will in effect lessen the frequency and volume of applications for passport renewal, and thus, may contribute in reducing, if not eliminating, the long queues at the DFA office and backlogs for passport renewals.

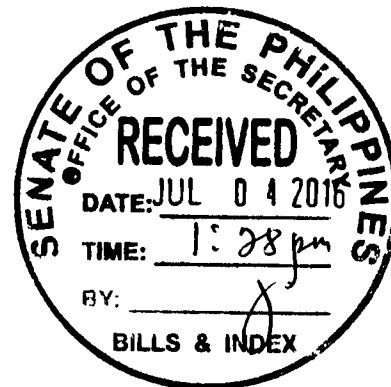
In view of the foregoing, I urge the early approval of this bill.

  
**CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mb.com.ph/dfa-barely-coping-with-long-queues-for-passports/>

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 324

Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

**AN ACT**

**EXTENDING THE VALIDITY OF THE REGULAR PHILIPPINE PASSPORT ISSUED TO ADULT APPLICANTS TO TEN (10) YEARS, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8239 OR THE PHILIPPINE PASSPORT ACT OF 1996**

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

1       SECTION 1. Section 10 of Republic Act No. 8239 is hereby amended to read  
2 as follows:

3               SEC. 10. *Validity.* - Regular passports issued **TO ADULT**  
4 **APPLICANTS** under this Act shall be valid for a period of **[five (5)]**  
5 **TEN (10) years, WHILE THOSE REGULAR PASSPORTS ISSUED TO**  
6 **MINORS SHALL BE VALID FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS:**  
7 Provided, however, That the issuing authority **IN ITS DISCRETION**  
8 may **[limit]** **DECREASE** the period of validity **IN BOTH INSTANCES**  
9 **[to less than five (5) years;]** whenever in the national economic  
10 interest or political stability of the country such restriction is necessary:  
11 Provided, finally, That a new passport may be issued to replace one  
12 which validity has expired, the old passport being returned to the holder  
13 after cancellation.

14       SEC. 2. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
15 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or and regulation

1 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended  
2 accordingly.

3 SEC. 3. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
4 complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

5 Approved,