

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES**
First Regular Session



Senate
Office of the Secretary

'19 AUG 28 A9:15

SENATE
S.B. NO. 975

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides:

"The State recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development."

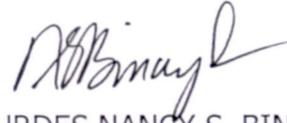
Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are known as the nation's modern day heroes. They work abroad in order to provide a better life for the families at home. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), an estimated 2.3 million OFWs worked abroad during the period of April to September 2018.

In spite of profitable employment overseas, there are costs in terms of family relations for OFWs. Social problems arise within their families due to long separations between spouses and children.

The proposed bill seeks to protect and strengthen the Filipino family by establishing OFW Family Centers that shall provide welfare assistance and counseling to the families of OFWs. It also seeks to direct the OWWA to develop

a comprehensive reunification, reintegration and replacement plan for returning OFWS.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ML Binay', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY
Senator

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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 as the “Left-Behind
2 Household of OFWs Act.”

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

8 Towards this end, the Administrator shall take such actions as are
9 necessary to the maximum extent practicable, to sustain harmony of the family
10 and prepare families for future reintegration of OFWs.

11
12 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the term:

13 (A) “Administration” means the Overseas Workers and Welfare
14 Administration or “OWWA”;

15 (B) “Administrator” means the Administrator of OWWA;

16 (C) “Center” means the Overseas Filipino Workers Family Center;

1 (D) "Left-Behind Household" means families left behind by Overseas
2 Filipino Workers to work abroad; and

3 (E) "Overseas Filipino Worker" or "OFW" means any Filipino citizen who
4 is temporarily working in any country outside the Philippines.

5
6 Sec. 4. *OFW Family Centers.* –

7 (A) *Centers.* – The Administrator shall establish OFW Family Centers
8 nationwide, using the facilities of its regional offices, or any of the
9 regional offices of the Philippine Overseas Employment
10 Administration and the Department of Social and Welfare
11 Development. The purpose of each Center are –

12 (1) To provide welfare assistance and counseling serves to the
13 families of OFWs;

14 (2) To serve as coordinating office to non-government
15 organizations and associations that cater to the plight of
16 OFWs; and

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

20 (B) *Location of Centers.* – Each Center shall be strategically located in
21 every municipality where there is a large population of families who
22 have relative working abroad.

23 (C) *Jurisdiction.* – The responsibilities of each Center shall be centered
24 on the welfare of left-behind families of OFWs.

25
26 Sec. 5. *Left-Behind Household Organizations.* – OWWA shall facilitate the
27 establishment of organizations or support groups of families left behind by
28 migrant workers. It shall also provide a venue for the interaction of members of
29 families of migrant workers.

1 Sec. 6. *Report to Congress.* – Three years from the passage of the
2 provisions of this Act, the OWWA shall report to Congress the number of cases
3 brought to the various Centers and the intervention provided. A yearly statistical
4 report shall be submitted to the Department of Labor and Employment and other
5 concerned agencies.

6
7 Sec. 7. *Appropriations.* – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such sums
8 as may be necessary are hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National
9 Treasury.

10
11 Sec. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
12 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other
13 provisions hereof.

14
15 Sec. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or
16 portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are
17 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

18
19 Sec. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
20 after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general
21 circulation.

Approved,