

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**
Second Regular Session

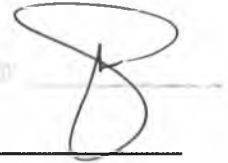
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SENATE
Office of the Secretary

24 MAY 22 A11:56

SENATE
S. B. No. 2695

RECEIVED



Introduced by Senators SONNY ANGARA and GRACE POE

AN ACT
GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO MATTHEW STEEVES WESTFALL

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Matthew Westfall is an urbanist, author, filmmaker and former multilateral development bank executive with over 29 years of experience in the international development field. His enduring dedication to the Philippines began in 1983 when he arrived as a US Peace Corps Volunteer. His initial work in Zambales and Benguet focused on municipal development and providing water access to the Aeta communities. Wanting to fully understand the Filipino way of life, Westfall mastered dialects such as Ilokano.

Westfall's contributions extend beyond grassroots development. He is the director of the award-winning documentary "On Borrowed Land," which addresses urban development challenges in Manila. His expertise was further recognized when he returned to Manila as a project leader for USAID, overseeing initiatives in decentralized shelter and urban development across the country.

In 1994, Westfall joined the Asian Development Bank, where he helped champion numerous innovative projects, including efforts to rehabilitate the Pasig River, clean up the Payatas dumpsite, support critical infrastructure projects, and lead pioneering informal settler relocation projects in Muntinlupa and Quezon City. These projects have had a lasting impact on improving the living conditions and environment for countless Filipinos.

Westfall's contributions are not limited to such professional endeavors. He is a passionate historian, as evidenced by his publication "The Devil's Causeway," which explores a forgotten chapter of Philippine-American history. His work has enriched the cultural narrative of the country by bringing lesser-known historical accounts to light.

In 2018, he founded Full Circle Craft Distillers Co., a PEZA-registered enterprise located in the Carmelray II Special Economic Zone. The company is dedicated to manufacturing a line of world-class craft spirits, with the goal of putting the Philippines on the global craft spirits map. Currently exporting to 18 countries, including the USA, EU, UK, and regional Asia, Full Circle embodies our collective aspiration to become an industrialized nation. Its award-winning spirits, inspired by the country's botanical flavors, are truly "Tatak Pinoy."

Westfall has been captivated by both the beauty of the Philippines and its people. He married a Filipina, and together they raised three daughters who are now contributing to the country's development through their work in filmmaking, journalism, and art.

Completely by chance, Matthew Westfall's connection to the Philippines is part of a family legacy as his grandfather first arrived in Manila in 1918. A century later, Westfall launched his own company in the country and is now committed to becoming a legitimate Filipino citizen.

Hence, in view of the foregoing, immediate passage of the bill is earnestly sought.


SONNY ANGARA
JA


GRACE POE

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Grant of Philippine Citizenship to Matthew Steeves***
2 ***Westfall.*** – Matthew Steeves Westfall is hereby granted Philippine citizenship with all
3 the rights, privileges and prerogatives, as well as the duties and obligations
4 appurtenant thereto under the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of the
5 Philippines.

6 **SEC. 2. *Oath of Allegiance.*** – Matthew Steeves Westfall shall take the Oath
7 of Allegiance to the Republic of the Philippines before an officer duly authorized for
8 this purpose. The Oath of Allegiance shall be registered with the Bureau of
9 Immigration.

10 **SEC. 3. *Certificate of Naturalization and Enjoyment of Philippine***
11 ***Citizenship.*** – Upon registration of the Oath of Allegiance, the Bureau of Immigration
12 shall forthwith issue Matthew Steeves Westfall’s Certificate of Naturalization, who shall
13 thereupon enter into the full enjoyment of Philippine citizenship.

14 **SEC. 4. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect upon publication in the Official
15 Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,