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**FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC** )  
**OF THE PHILIPPINES** )  
First Regular Session )

7 JUL -2 PG 36

**SENATE**

RECEIVED BY: 

**Senate Bill No. 570**

**INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration or OWWA is primarily tasked to manage a special fund dedicated to repatriation assistance and other welfare services for distressed OFWs.

Ever since the special fund has grown into a multi-billion peso concern, there has been a growing pressure on the OWWA to render more welfare services to OFWs, including the deployment abroad of Welfare Officers who provide the Filipino migrant worker and his family all the assistance they may need in the enforcement of contractual obligations by agencies or entities and/or by their principals. In the performance of this functions, the Welfare Officer can make representation, and may call on the agencies or entities concerned to conferences or conciliation meetings for the purpose of settling the complaints or problems brought to his attention.

In other words, OWWA is being allowed to encroach on the proper functions of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration or POEA simply because it is the agency that controls the multi-billion peso special fund for OFWs.

This setup is dysfunctional since it is the POEA that has regulatory functions over recruitment agencies and their principals, and it is POEA, not OWWA, that is in the forefront of overseas deployment, including the review and approval of OFW contracts.

This bill seeks to remedy this anomaly by abolishing OWWA and transferring all its functions to the POEA, including the management of the special fund for OFWs.

Hence, the immediate passage of this bill is therefore earnestly requested.

  
**JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA**  
**Senator**

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**AN ACT**  
**ABOLISHING THE OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE**  
**ADMINISTRATION OR OWWA**

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

SECTION 1. The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration or OWWA is hereby abolished. All properties, records, equipment, buildings, facilities, and other assets, liabilities and appropriations of and belonging to the abovementioned office, as well as other matters pending therein, including the special funds it administers, shall be transferred to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration or POEA. All personnel of the above abolished office shall continue to function in a holdover capacity and shall be preferentially considered for appointments to or placement in the POEA.

Any official or employee separated from the service as a result of the abolition of office pursuant to this Act shall be entitled to appropriate separation pay and retirement and other benefits accruing to them under existing laws. In lieu thereof, at the option of the employee, he shall be preferentially considered for employment in the government or in any of its subdivisions, instrumentalities, or agencies, including government-owned or controlled corporations and their subsidiaries.

The Department of Labor and Employment shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act, and for the incorporation of the functions and activities of OWWA into the POEA organization within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 2. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national papers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,