

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )

6 MAR 15 P5:30

SENATE

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S. No. 2230

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Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

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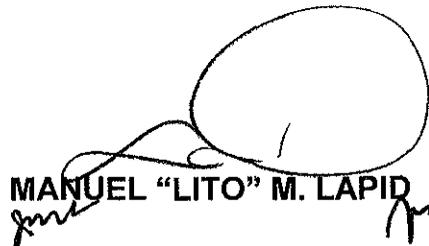
### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The tradition of having close family ties among Filipinos understandably makes the life of every Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs) and their families living separately for years, hard to sustain.

This could probably explain why the bulk of outgoing mails from the country go to Filipino OCW-rich countries in the Middle East. As per official records of the Central Mail Exchange Center of the Philippine Postal Corporation (Philpost), from January 2000 to June 2005, the total volume of outgoing mails bound for Middle East alone reached an estimate of 25 million or an average of at least 5 million mails a year.

Granting franking privilege to the immediate family members of OCWs, can be an effective tool to inspire the remaining Filipino OCWs to keep going. The privilege will also serve as a way of showing our gratitude for their heroism. Besides, this would be a small price to pay if we are to compare what our OCWs have done for the Philippine economy.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID

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AN ACT  
GRANTING FRANKING PRIVILEGE TO THE IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS  
OF OVERSEAS CONTRACT WORKERS

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

**SECTION 1. Franking Privilege.** - The immediate family members of Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs) are hereby granted franking privilege; *Provided*, that such mail shall be exclusively addressed to the name of their OCW-relative and at the country of destination where they are currently employed; *Provided further*, that this privilege shall cease immediately upon the return to the country of the OCW.

**SEC. 2. Coverage.** - In order to avoid illegal Filipino migrants working overseas from benefiting from this Act, franking privilege shall only be extended to immediate family members of OCWs whose names are registered with or recognized by the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA).

**SEC. 3. OCWs Envelopes.** - Envelopes to be used for mails availing of this franking privilege shall contain a distinct marking of "FILIPINO OCWs" and a penalty clause printed on the upper right-hand corner, to be devised by the Philippine Postal Office (PPO).

**SEC. 4. Internal Rules and Regulations.** - The PPO together with the POEA shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations within thirty (30) days upon the effectivity of this Act.

**SEC. 5. Penalty Clause.** - Unauthorized use of this franking privilege shall be penalized by a fine of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00).

**SEC. 6. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* and at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,