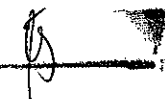


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

7 JUL -3 P4:25

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

S.B. No. 854

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The tradition of having close family ties understandably makes the life of every Filipino Overseas Contract Worker (OCW) difficult and full of sacrifices not only for the sake of his/her family but for the country.

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 Filipino OCWs to continue with their work and contribution to the country. This privilege will also serve as a way of showing our gratitude to the OCWs for all their sacrifices and heroism.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
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SENATE

S. No. 854

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Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

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,