

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

3994

HOUSE BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_



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Introduced by Representative **TYRONE D AGABAS**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill seeks to establish the Overseas Filipino Workers hospital that will protect the interest and well-being of our overseas workers. This bill has already been approved by the House of Representatives on its 3<sup>rd</sup> and final reading in the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress. Considering however the significance of this bill recognizing the welfare of the overseas Filipino workers, it is imperative that this bill be filed.

The State recognizes the indispensable role of the overseas contract workers to nation development. To this end, the Philippines has even ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrants Workers and their Families in 1995. Republic Act 8042 was even passed to "institute the policies of overseas and establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress." Section 2 (c) of the said law amplified, "(w)hile recognizing the significant contribution of Filipino migrant workers to the national economy through their foreign exchange remittances, the State does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development. The existence of the overseas employment program rests solely on the assurance that the dignity and fundamental human rights and freedom of the Filipino citizens shall not, at any time be compromised or violated. The State, therefore, shall continuously create local employment opportunities and promote the equitable distribution of wealth and the benefits of development."

We are fully cognizant of the fact that a good number of our migrant workers, because of unfavorable working conditions abroad, come back to our country in destitute. Some of whom are even debilitated. It is thus necessary that their dignity and fundamental rights

to equitable distribution of wealth and benefits be secured. This can be assured with the establishment of a tertiary hospital that will cater to the needs of our migrant workers and their dependents.

In full recognition of the contributions of our migrant workers, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'A' with a horizontal line extending to the right and a vertical line intersecting it.

ATTY. TYRONE D. AGABAS  
Representative  
6<sup>th</sup> District, Pangasinan

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3994

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Introduced by Representative **TYRONE D. AGABAS**  
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AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS HOSPITAL  
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

*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 "Overseas  
2       Filipino Workers (OFW) Hospital Act or OFW Hospital Act"

3       SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is policy of the State to protect and  
4       promote the right to health of the Filipino people and to instill health  
5       consciousness among them. The State shall adopt an integrated and  
6       comprehensive approach to health development. Further, the State shall  
7       protect the interest and promote the well-being of overseas Filipino  
8       workers (OFW) as recognition of their importance and contribution to  
9       economic development and nation building.

10       SEC. 3. *Establishment of the OFW Hospital.* – There shall be established  
11       a hospital with at least tertiary level of care to be known as OFW Hospital,  
12       hereinafter referred to as the Hospital. The Hospital shall be developed  
13       consistent with the health care needs of the OFW and their dependents.  
14       The Hospital shall be under the full administrative and technical  
15       supervision of the Department of Health (DOH).



16 SEC. 4. *Objectives.* – To ensure the availability, accessibility and  
17 affordability of quality health care, the Hospital shall have the following  
18 main objectives;

19 (a) Provide comprehensive and total health care services to all  
20 migrant workers including Overseas Workers Welfare  
21 Administration (OWWA) contributors, whether active or non-active,  
22 and their legal dependents;

23 (b) Conduct medical examinations to ensure the physical and  
24 mental capability of would-be overseas contract workers duly  
25 covered by an approved job order;

26 (c) Serve as primary referral hospital for repatriated OFW needing  
27 medical assistance and support;

28 (d) Set up systems that will effectively monitor condition of patients  
29 and to generate relevant health information and data for policy  
30 formulation; and

31 (e) Participate in the health care provider networks and  
32 arrangements relative to the implementation of Republic Act No.  
33 11223, or the “Universal Health Care Act”.

34 SEC. 5. *Medical Assistance.* – The Secretary of Labor and Employment  
35 (DOLE), as Chairperson of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration  
36 (OWWA) Board, shall ensure that existing health benefits and medical  
37 assistance programs are strengthened to include, among others,  
38 subsidies on hospitalization and medical procedures for OFW and  
39 qualified dependents.

40 SEC. 6. *Joint Executive Oversight Committee.* – There is hereby created a  
41 Joint Executive Oversight Committee on OFW Hospital to review and  
42 recommend hospital development plans and ensure implementation of this  
43 Act.

44           The Committee shall be co-chaired by the Secretary of Health and  
45           the Secretary of Labor and Employment. It shall be composed of seven (7)  
46           members including the co-chairs. The members shall be appointed by the  
47           Secretary of Health upon consultation with the Secretary of Labor and  
48           Employment.

49           SEC. 7. *Tax Exemption.* – All grants, bequests, endowments, donations  
50           and contributions made to the OFW Hospital to be used actually, directly  
51           and exclusively by the OFW Hospital shall be exempt from donor's tax and  
52           the same shall be considered as allowable deduction from the gross  
53           income of the donor, in accordance with the provisions of the National  
54           Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

55           The importation of equipment, machinery and spare parts which are  
56           used solely and exclusively for the operation of the OFW Hospital and  
57           are not available locally shall be exempt from value-added tax and  
58           customs duty.

59           SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The Secretary of Health shall include in the  
60           Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which  
61           shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The OWWA  
62           shall also include in their benefits and medical assistance programs for  
63           OFW the line item budget necessary to improve the access of OFW and  
64           dependents to health care services.

65           SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days  
66           from the approval of this Act, the DOH, in coordination with DOLE,  
67           OWWA, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and  
68           other stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and  
69           regulations (IRR) to carry out the provisions of this Act.

70 SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid  
71 or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of  
72 the other provisions hereof.

73 SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, decrees, executive orders,  
74 and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of  
75 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

76 SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
77 publication in the *official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

78 Approved,