

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
1690
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The humble intent of this bill is to help alleviate the financial struggles that many of our public school teachers face by instituting a housing program specially tailored to them. This would allow them to purchase a housing unit of their choice through loans with affordable interest and long-term repayment period. This legislation seeks to engage the NHA, National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation, Home Guaranty Corporation, and the Government Service Insurance System to spearhead the formulation and implementation of the proposed program.

In addition, this bill proposes the provision of on-site living quarters for public school teachers in remote and hard-to-reach areas free of charge. This is meant to be a boost to schools in rural areas, away from city centers, and promote quality education in every nook and cranny of the country.

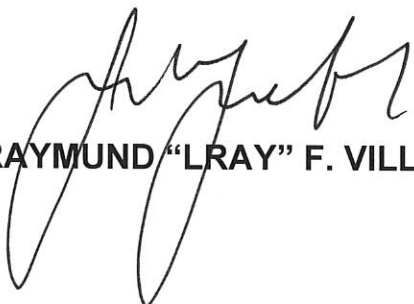
Despite a higher net take-home pay and allowances from the tax reform this year, a salary increase for public school teachers is still due. Some educators boast a 30-year record in their profession yet remain in the lowest rank for public school teachers, as Teacher 1 who take home a monthly net income of PhP16,000.00 only under the Salary Standardization Law. These educators face the demands of the job, coupled with the current demands of public schools across the country, every day while tending to their own families. Calls for financial security for our teachers have

been heard, yet have to be acted upon. The bill proposed seeks to be a solution to the woes of our educators and our education system as a whole.

It is unfortunate that housing has remained a serious problem in the country, with a backlog of six million housing units needed to cater especially to the rapidly urbanizing areas. However, the government has stepped up through President Duterte's Joint Resolution, as approved by the House of Representatives and Senate on May 9, 2018, to allow the National Housing Authority (NHA) to award the unoccupied housing units of uniformed personnel to other qualified beneficiaries².

The housing needs of our people can no longer be delayed and homelessness by the poorest and most vulnerable should not be prolonged.

The approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

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AN ACT
CREATING PROGRAMS FOR INCARCERATED PARENTS AND THEIR
CHILDREN

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as "Parents in Jail Act of 2018".

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State that:

- (1) The State shall defend the rights of children to special protection from all forms of neglect and other conditions prejudicial to their development;
- (2) The State recognizes that all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated humanely and shall enjoy all the rights guaranteed to free persons, subject to the restrictions that are unavoidable in a closed environment;
- (3) The State shall promote stable and solid relationships between children and parents, who are their primary caregivers and support incarcerated parents to develop and maintain their relationship with their children;

The State shall assure the right of the child to express his views freely in all matters affecting him, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with his age and maturity.

SECTION 3. *Apprising Incarcerated Parents of their Parental Rights.* – In cases involving incarcerated parents, the court must give an appropriate warning of the special consequences concerning the parental rights of the accused that may result from a plea of guilty or conviction, especially the loss of parental authority.

SECTION 4. *Placement and Guardianship Options.* – After arraignment and upon plea of guilty, the court shall inquire from the accused if the latter has any minor children and in whose custody the minor children are. In the event that the accused has minor children, the court shall *motu proprio* direct a social worker or a representative of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, to confer with the accused to discuss various options available to the latter, in relation to the care and custody of his or her minor children. A compliance report, duly signed by the accused, shall thereafter be submitted to the court, attesting that options have been discussed and the selected option, if any.

Should the accused be unable to place his minor children under the care of a responsible adult, the minor children shall be placed under the care of the following persons, in the order indicated:

1. Surviving grandparent;
2. Oldest brother or sister, over twenty-one (21) years of age, unless unfit or disqualified;
3. Any collateral relative of the accused, over twenty-one (21) years of age, and within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity of the minor children; and
4. The Department of Social Welfare and Development.

SECTION 5. *Coordinating Body.* – A coordinating body comprised of representatives from the Department of Justice, the Bureau of Corrections, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the Department of Health shall be established, for purposes of implementing the provisions of this Act. Such body shall:

- a. Formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act;

- b. Provide for specific procedures for the placement of children of the accused or for infants born to women already incarcerated in state prisons; and
- c. Establish programs designed to provide counseling, health and other social services to the incarcerated parents and their children. Mothers' and children's (those under one (1) year old and still staying with their mother) access to health care services and medicines, including reproductive health care and medical attention, gynecological and pediatric services shall be assured by the institution where parent and child are detained.

SECTION 6. *Child-Friendly Visitation Programs.* – The prison facilities shall establish child-friendly visitation opportunities for solo parents and children. A special visitation room for solo parents and children shall be provided for this purpose.

SECTION 7. *Independent Monitoring.* – Frequent access to prisons shall be granted to relevant institutions such as the Commission on Human Rights, human rights non-governmental organizations, and international organizations. The Coordinating Body shall assign persons to conduct independent monitoring of the various prison facilities. Such persons conducting monitoring tasks shall be allowed to make periodic and unannounced visits to the premises and speak in private with imprisoned solo parents and their children.

SECTION 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act is hereby authorized to be appropriated in the budget of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following the enactment of this law and every year thereafter.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision herein be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of this Act.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect in fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in one (1) newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,