

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

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session  
HOUSE BILL No. **3323**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by Honorable Rosenda Ann Ocampo

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Constitution, Article 15, Section 1, provides:

*The state recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development.*

Statistics from the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) show that 1.8 million Filipinos are leaving the country annually to work abroad. Data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas show that in 2014 the total remittances of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) amounted to US\$26.92 billion (P1.20 trillion).

Despite the economic benefits brought by overseas employment, there are attendant costs in terms of family displacement. Reports from cases handled by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and non-government organizations link social problems, such as broken marriages, drug addiction, sexual immorality, crime, suicide or psychological breakdowns to the long separations between spouses and children.

This bill seeks to protect and strengthen the Filipino family by establishing OFW Family Centers that shall provide welfare assistance and counselling services to the families of OFWs. It also seeks to direct the OWWA to develop a comprehensive reunification, reintegration and replacement plan for returning OFWs.

  
ROSENDA ANN OCAMPO

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING A WELFARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO**  
**FAMILIES LEFT BEHIND BY OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS**

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

**SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the “*Left-Behind Households of OFWs Act.*”

**SECTION 2. *Declaration of State Policy.*** – It is declared policy of the State to strengthen the solidarity of the family and actively promote its total development. The State recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation.

Towards this end, the Administrator shall take such actions as are necessary to the maximum extent practicable, to sustain harmony of the family and prepare families for future reintegration of OFWs.

**SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – For purposes of this Act, the term:

- (A) “*Administration*” means the Overseas Workers and Welfare Administration or “OWWA”;
- (B) “*Administrator*” means the Administrator of OWWA;
- (C) “*Center*” means the Overseas Filipino Workers Family Center;
- (D) “*Left-Behind Household*” means families left behind by Overseas Filipino Workers to work abroad; and
- (E) “*Overseas Filipino Worker*” or “OFW” means any Filipino citizen who is temporarily working in any country outside the Philippines.

**SECTION 4. *OFW Family Centers.*** –

(A) *Centers.* – The Administrator shall establish OFW Family Centers nationwide, using the facilities of its regional offices, or any of the regional offices of Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and the Department of Social and Welfare Development. The purposes of each are -

- (1) To provide welfare assistance and counselling services to the families of OFWs;
- (2) To serve as coordinating office to non-government organizations and associations that cater to the plight of OFWs; and
- (3) To serve as a link of left-behind households to various services and/or agencies of the government on overseas employment.

(B) *Location of Centers.* – Each Center shall be strategically located in every municipality where there is a large population of families who have relatives working abroad.

(C) *Jurisdiction.* – The responsibilities of each Center shall be centered on the welfare of left-behind families of OFWs.

**SECTION 5. *Left-Behind Household Organizations.*** – OWWA shall facilitate the establishment of organizations or support group of families left behind by migrant workers. It shall also provide a venue for the interaction of members of families of migrant workers.

**SECTION 6. *Report to Congress.*** – Three years from the passage of the provisions of this Act, the OWWA shall report to congress the number of cases brought to the various Centers and the intervention provided. A yearly statistical report shall be submitted to the Department of Labor and Employment and other concerned agencies.

**SECTION 7. *Appropriations.*** – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such sums as may be necessary are hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury.

**SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

**SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED.