

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 0440



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Introduced by **HONORABLE STRIKE B. REVILLA**

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our Overseas Filipino Workers are considered modern heroes. Their remittances to their families contribute largely to our economy. Their indispensable role cannot be taken for granted. Because of this, aside from their skills and experiences, it is important that they possess good health. Long hours of work coupled by emotional stress raise the risk of weakness and ill health.

It has become imperative for the State to protect OFWs, their interest and well-being, including their families and dependents through the provision of social and welfare services. It will be part of an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development. It will endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all people at affordable cost.

This bill seeks to establish a special hospital for OFWs and their dependents, to be supervised and controlled by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**REP. STRIKE B. REVILLA**  
2<sup>nd</sup> District, Cavite

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS HOSPITAL  
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

**SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) Hospital Act or OFW Hospital Act.

**SEC. 2. Declaration Policy.** - It is policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the Filipino people and to instill health consciousness among them. The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development. Further, the state shall protect the interest and promote the well-being of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) as recognition of their importance and contribution on economic development and nation building.

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

**SEC. 4. Objectives.** – To ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality health care, the hospital shall have the following main objectives:

- a. Provide comprehensive and total health care services to all migrant workers including Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) contributors, whether active or non-active, and their legal dependents;
- b. Conduct medical examinations to ensure the physical and mental capability of would-be overseas contract workers duly covered by an approved job order;
- c. Serve as primary referral hospital for repatriated OFW needing medical assistance and support;

- d. Set up systems that will effectively monitor condition of patients and to generate relevant health information and data for policy formulation, and
- e. Participate in the health care provider networks and arrangements relative to the implementation of Republic Act No. 11223, or the Universal health Care Act.

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

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

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

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

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

**SEC. 8. Appropriations.** – The Secretary of Health shall include in the Departments' program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The OWWA shall also include in their benefits and medical assistance programs for OFW the line item budget necessary to improve the access of OFW and dependents to healthcare services.

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

**SEC. 10. Separability Clause.** – If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

**SEC. 11. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, issuances or any part thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 12. Effectivity Clause.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*