



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. **4691**

Introduced by Representative VICTOR A. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

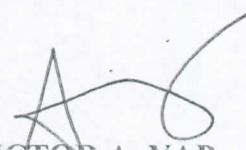
Based on the Philippine Statistics Authority's 2017 Survey on Overseas Filipinos, there was an estimated 2.3 million Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who worked abroad at anytime from April 1 to September 30, 2017. These OFWs reportedly sent an estimated total of 205.2 billion peso-remittance during the same period.

In 2016, however, data from the Department of Health showed that the most frequent medical reasons for OFW repatriation were cerebrovascular accidents or stroke, cardiovascular disease or heart attack, mental disorder, renal failure and cancer. This only proves that OFWs are exposed to serious health risks that the government should take care of. Having to consider this fact, it is essential that our OFWs be given enough attention when it comes to addressing their medical requirements.

Needless to say, contribution our OFWs to the country's economic development and nation-building cannot be disregarded. With the State's policy to protect and promote the right to health of the Filipino people, it is imperative that an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development be adopted to adequately address and eventually reduce the health risks faced by the OFWs.

This measure seeks to establish a hospital to be known as the OFW hospital, to cater an accessible, affordable and quality health care services to OFWs and their dependents. This bill ensures that there will be a medical institution whose primary purpose is to provide a comprehensive health care services to all migrant workers including Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) contributors. Through this bill, conducting medical examinations of would-be overseas contract workers will never be such a burden. Most importantly, with this proposed legislation, there will be a primary referral hospital for repatriated OFW needing medical assistance.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

  
**VICTOR A. YAP**  
Representative, 2nd District of Tarlac

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 4691

Introduced by Representative Victor A. Yap

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:

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

SEC. 2. *Declaration of 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 to 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 the 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 importation 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 Department’s 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 health care services.

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

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

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

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

8        *Approved.*