



Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

**Seventeenth Congress**

**First Regular Session**

**House Bill No. 2296**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by **HON. ROMEO M. ACOP**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

A Philippine passport is both a travel document and a primary national identity document issued to citizens of the Philippines since there is no national identity card system in the Philippines as yet. It is issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and Philippine diplomatic missions abroad, with certain exceptions.

As of August 2015, the DFA is facing a backlog of 42,230 passports due to technical glitches and an out-dated production system. The figure is alarming considering that the DFA receives a total of 12,000 passport applications a day. Instead of the normal 15 to 20 days processing time, it often comes to a point where several passports have been released after 3 months. The delays are attributed to old printing machines that have not been upgraded since they were installed in 2009, the year the Philippine electronic passports were introduced. Under the existing system, the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* (BSP) prints the passports while a private contractor provides maintenance and repair under an agreement with the BSP.

In response, the DFA offers free extension of expired passports for a period of not less than one year but not more than two years upon request

while their new passports are being processed. This is of course a palliative measure.


Republic Act No. 8239, otherwise known as the 'Philippine Passport Act', established the guidelines for the application, issuance and / or renewal of passports. Under Section 10 of the law, regular passports issued shall be valid for a period of five (5) years, subject to a limitation of a period of validity less than 5 years whenever the national economic interest or political stability of the country so requires.

This bill aims to amend Republic Act No. 8239 to extend the period of validity of regular Philippine passports from five (5) years to ten (10) years. Extending the passports' validity will, in effect, lessen the frequency and volume of applications for renewal and will contribute in reducing, if not eliminating, the backlogs in both application and release of passports. It will also ease the long queues of applicants that have caused so much inconvenience and costs to the people.

Moreover, an extended period of validity of passports will reduce the cost of application and renewal in favor of our citizens in the long-run, while the government can relatively offset its potential revenue loss through reasonable increases in the fees for acquiring the document as provided for in the law.

This proposal also takes into consideration the fact that many developed nations in the world, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, have already adopted the 10-year validity period for their respective passports.

For the foregoing reasons, the immediate consideration and approval of this bill is earnestly urged.



**HON. ROMEO M. ACOP**  
Representative  
2<sup>nd</sup> District, Antipolo City



Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

**Seventeenth Congress**

**First Regular Session**

**House Bill No. 2290**

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Introduced by HON. ROMEO M. ACOP

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**AN ACT**  
**EXTENDING THE PERIOD OF VALIDITY OF PHILIPPINE PASSPORT**  
**FROM FIVE (5) YEARS TO TEN (10) YEARS, AMENDING FOR THE**  
**PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8239, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE**  
**'PHILIPPINE PASSPORT ACT OF 1996'**

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

**SECTION 1.** Section 10 of Republic Act No. 8239, otherwise known as the 'Philippine Passport Act of 1996', is hereby amended to read as follows :

Section 10. *Validity.* – Regular passports issued under this Act shall be valid for a period of ~~{five (5)}~~ **TEN (10)** years: *Provided, however,* That the issuing authority may limit the period of validity to less than ~~{five (5)}~~ **TEN (10)** years; whenever in the national economic interest or political stability of the country such restriction is necessary: *Provided, finally,* That a new passport may be issued to replace one which validity has expired, the old passport being returned to the holder after cancellation.

**SECTION 2. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*** - The Secretary of Foreign Affairs, shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

**SECTION 3. *Repealing Clause.*** - All existing laws, orders, decrees, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 4. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

**Approved.**