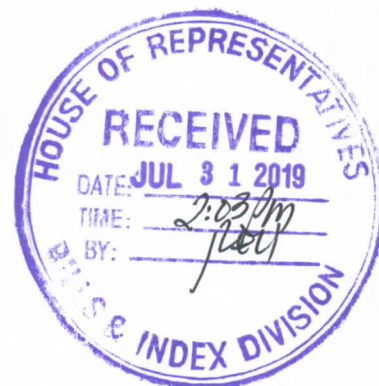


Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3217



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Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representatives  
Eduardo 'Bro. Eddie' C. Villanueva and Domingo C. Rivera

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**AN ACT PROVIDING FREE INSURANCE FOR COVERED  
APPLICANTS OF OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATES,  
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

From April to September 2018, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) accounts over 2.3 million Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)<sup>1</sup> who worked abroad at any time during the said period, excluding Filipino migrant workers who are permanent residents or citizens of another country.

However, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration's (OWWA) reported only 1,315,584 members during that period in 2018. This means there was an almost one million unaccounted OFWs deployed abroad deprived of welfare protection and assistance on employer concerns.

Consider the incident of 22 Filipino truck drivers who suffered from social dumping and wage exploitation in Padborg, Denmark.<sup>2</sup> The Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) confessed during the Senate hearing of the issue that

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<sup>1</sup> Total Number of OFWs Estimated at 2.3 Million (Results from the 2018 Survey on Overseas Filipinos. Philippine Statistics Authority. 2019. Retrieved from: <https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/survey/labor-force/sof-index> (date last accessed: June 30, 2019)

<sup>2</sup> 2018, October 31. 22 Pinoy truck drivers rescued from 'deplorable conditions' in Denmark: DFA. Retrieved from: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/overseas/10/31/18/22-pinoy-truck-drivers-rescued-from-deplorable-conditions-in-denmark-dfa> (date last accessed: June 30, 2019)

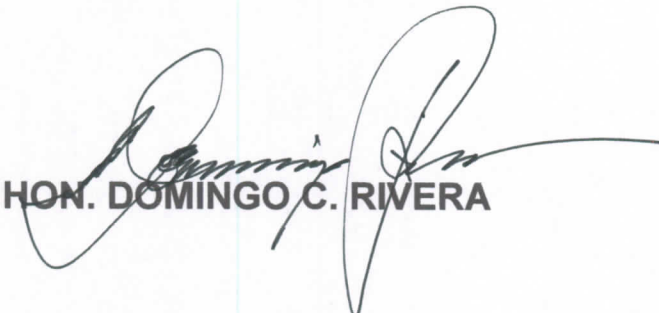
the drivers were undocumented, unmonitored, and were only given attention to after media outlets raised their situation to the Embassy.<sup>3</sup> This is but one of the many cases of OFWs who did not go through the procedures of POEA and were abused by their employers.

Hence, an incentive is necessary for OFWs who haven't registered their membership with OWWA after their initial deployment or who have transferred to another country by way of third-country recruitment to register with the POEA or the Philippine Embassy abroad and get their corresponding overseas employment certificates (OECs).

Given the abovementioned concerns, this bill aims to provide free insurance coverage to all OFWs who apply for OEC. This way, undocumented OFWs will be granted incentives in obtaining proper documentation so that they, too, can receive the benefits and protection guaranteed to them by the State. This bill will also aid the government in devising a system for the proper monitoring OFWs abroad and ensuring their protection from human trafficking and abuses.

With this, the immediate enactment of this bill is earnestly requested.

  
**HON. EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA**

  
**HON. DOMINGO C. RIVERA**

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<sup>3</sup> November 26, 2018 Senate Labor Committee Hearing Transcripts, at p. 118.

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1       **AN ACT PROVIDING FREE INSURANCE FOR COVERED**  
2       **APPLICANTS OF OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATES,**  
3       **APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER**  
4       **PURPOSES**

5  
6  
7       *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress of the*  
8       *Philippines assembled:*  
9

10  
11       **SECTION 1. Declaration of Policies.** – The State shall afford full protection to labor,  
12       local and overseas, organized and unorganized. Towards this end, the State shall  
13       provide adequate and timely social, legal and economic services to overseas  
14       Filipinos workers. Pursuant to this, the State shall ensure that all overseas Filipino  
15       workers are properly monitored and accounted for with due regard for their  
16       protection and welfare, and that overseas Filipino workers are incentivized to  
17       make themselves known to Philippine authorities abroad.  
18

19       **SECTION 2. Coverage.** – The benefits under this Act shall apply to applicants of  
20       overseas employment certificates (OECs); Provided, That the applicant-migrant  
21       worker is abroad; *Provided further,* That he/she has no prior record with the  
22       Philippine Overseas Employment Authority (POEA), or if he/she has a prior  
23       record, is working in a vulnerable sector, as may be determined by the POEA in  
24       consultation with relevant government agencies and other stakeholders.  
25

26       **SECTION 3. Benefits.** – Covered migrant workers shall, upon securing an  
27       overseas employment certificate from the POEA or the Philippine Embassy or  
28       consular offices abroad shall be given a free one-year insurance with the same or



1 similar coverage as required under Republic Act No. 8042, as amended, otherwise  
2 known as the "Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act."  
3

4 **SECTION 4. *Funding.*** – The payment for the premium of the insurance provided under  
5 this Act shall be funded partly by the budget of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)  
6 earmarked for the Assistance to Nationals and partly by the appropriations in the General  
7 Appropriations Act as included in the budget of the POEA. For the first year of the  
8 implementation of this Act, an initial amount of Thirty Million Pesos (P30,000,000.00) is  
9 hereby appropriated. Thereafter, such amount necessary for its continued implementation  
10 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.  
11

12 **SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Department of Labor  
13 and Employment (DOLE), DFA, POEA, OWWA, Insurance Commission and other  
14 relevant stakeholders, shall issue the implementing rule and regulations of this Act  
15 within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.  
16

17 To ensure the proper implementation of this Act, DOLE, POEA and DFA shall  
18 establish a system that shall facilitate the processing and issuance of OECs  
19 abroad.  
20

21 **SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act is held  
22 unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provision hereof which are not  
23 affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.  
24

25 **SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,  
26 rules and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with any  
27 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.  
28

29 **SECTION 8. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
30 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general  
31 circulation.  
32

33  
34 *Approved,*