

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**

First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2062**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE **PETER M. UNABIA**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This Bill seeks to impose the payment of entrance fees to residents of the Philippines who patronize gambling casinos, amending for the purpose Presidential Decree (PD) NO. 1869, as amended, also known as the Charter of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR).

Addressing poverty has always been a challenge to the government. What is more worrisome is that many Filipinos want to gamble instead of doing something more concrete to improve their lives other than waging hard-earned money in gambling, particularly, in casinos.

Some countries have already adopted policies as deterrents to their locals not to enter casinos. In Singapore, after a 2011 survey showed an increasing proportion of low-income gamblers playing with ever-larger sums, the government decided to prohibit entry in casinos by the unemployed, people on welfare and people who have filed for bankruptcy protection. Thereafter, Singapore also imposed an entrance levy for local patrons to dissuade them from gambling and therefore minimizing the impact of casinos on local residents. In an effort to deter gambling in casinos, the government of Singapore obliged all permanent residents to pay S100 (Singapore Dollars) entrance levy or an annual entry levy of \$2,000 (Singapore Dollars).

In Monaco, the local residents are not allowed entry at all while foreigners who enter casinos are charged entry fees. In India, local patrons are charged an entry fee of 200 rupees to deter them from playing in the casinos.

A close look at the charter of PAGCOR yields no requirement of an entry fee for anyone who wants to play casino. Under section 14 (3) (b) of PD1869, a resident must have a gross income for the previous year of at least P50,000.00 as certified by the Bureau of Internal Revenue, in order to be allowed to play in the casino. In reality, however, this requirement is neither observed nor imposed.

To prevent financially inadequate persons from entering the gambling casinos, however, PAGCOR has been implementing the following built-in controls:

1. Issuance of player tracking system (PTS) cards or loyalty cards for casino patrons;
2. Establishment of casinos in locations where financially inadequate individuals cannot enter including luxury resorts and 3-star hotels at the minimum; and
3. Betting at minimum bets of P500 pesos in a single play for baccarat tables.

These measures are not enough. An entrance fee of P3,500.00 for local patrons will serve as a deterrent to locals and would make them think twice before entering a gambling casino. It will discourage the locals from gambling in casinos. Moreover, the amount realized in requiring entrance fees will serve as additional revenues for the socio-civic programs of the government as mandated by PD 1869.

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



PETER M. UNABIA

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**AN ACT**

**IMPOSING THE PAYMENT OF ENTRANCE FEE TO RESIDENTS OF THE PHILIPPINES WHO PATRONIZE CASINOS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1869, AS AMENDED, ALSO KNOWN AS THE CHARTER OF THE PHILIPPINE AMUSEMENT AND GAMING CORPORATION**

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

SECTION 1. Section 14 (3) (b) of Presidential Decree No.1869, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows;

"SEC. 14. Other Conditions.

(1) *Place.* - xxx

(2) *Time.* - xxx

(3) *Persons allowed to play-*

(a) Tourist and/or Foreigners who are not residents of the Philippines;

(b) Residents (with a gross income for the previous year of at least P50,000, which fact shall be certified to the Bureau of Internal Revenue) OF THE PHILIPPINES; *PROVIDED, THAT AN ENTRANCE FEE OF THREE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P3,500.00) IS PAID UPON ENTRY TO THE CASINO.*

THE CORPORATION IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED, UPON APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES, TO INCREASE THE ENTRANCE FEE REQUIRED UNDER THE SECTION EVERY FIVE (5) YEARS AFTER THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT.

- (c) The number of guests of the above-mentioned qualified persons shall be limited to two (2) only: *Provided*, That said guests are at least 21 years of age. GUESTS WHO ARE RESIDENTS OF THE PHILIPPINES SHALL ALSO PAY THE ENTRANCE FEE REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH 3 (B) OF THIS SECTION.

SECTION 2. All laws, decrees orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,