

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 260

Introduced by **Honorable Roilo Golez**

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Republic Act 4373, having been enacted into law on 19 June 1965, and amended by RA 5175 04 August 1967, paved the way for the professionalization of social work practice in the Philippines.

Recent developments proved that there is a need to update the law in order to remain responsive to the needs of social workers, its clientele groups, and the society in general.

In June 2004, thousands of social work graduates were not able to take the Board Examinations. This was so, because of their failure to satisfy the basic requirements for applicants as provided for under Section 12 of the law.

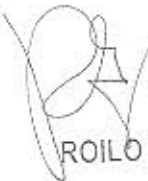
In this connection, it is noteworthy that, most, if not all, applicants were, at the time of the examination, falling between the ages of twenty (20) and above; and, this was brought about by the latest development in our educational system that requires one to be at least six (6) years of age in order to be able to enter primary education, compared to seven (7) years old in the past.

This Bill, therefore, seeks to give opportunity to young social work graduates to take the examination and become economically and socially productive by joining the workforce as professionals. It, likewise, intends to minimize the government's lack of social work professionals that are essential in the implementation of its major programs and services.

Furthermore, the bill aims to continually capacitate the social workers by requiring them to embrace the habit of lifelong education. Changes and developments in the global scene, which have direct impact to Philippine society, compel social workers to keep themselves abreast of the latest social technology available and develop indigenous means to respond to these challenges. This is significant to ensure that their clients and the society as a whole will benefit from the social workers' intervention.

Finally, the Bill aims to upgrade the penalties for violations of various provisions concerning the practice of social work in order to protect the profession as well as the public against fraudulent and malicious acts.

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



ROILO GOLEZ

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AN ACT

ABOLISHING THE AGE REQUIREMENT FOR APPLICANTS TAKING THE BOARD EXAMINATION FOR SOCIAL WORKERS, PROVIDING FOR THE CONTINUING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND UPGRADING THE SUNDRY PROVISIONS RELATIVE TO THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK

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

SECTION 1. Section 12 of Republic Act Numbered Forty-three hundred seventy-three is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 1. *Qualifications of Applicants.* – In order to be admitted to take the social work examination, an applicant must, at the time of filing his or her application, establish to the satisfaction of the Board that:

- (a) He or she is a Filipino citizen;
- (b) He is in good health and of good moral character;
- (c) He or she has received a diploma as holder of a bachelor's degree or master's degree or its equivalent in social work from an institution, college or university duly accredited and legally constituted: *Provided*, That the provisions of Republic Act Numbered Twenty-two hundred and sixty, in so far as cultural minorities are concerned, should be applied;
- (d) He or she has completed a minimum period of one thousand case hours of practical training in an established social work agency under the direct supervision of a fully trained and qualified social worker: *Provided*, That in the institution, college or university's undergraduate program, the academic courses preceded the required field practice of one thousand hours: *Provided further*, That the required field practice complied with the social work curriculum approved by the Commission on Higher Education and the Board for Social Workers which specifies Field Practice in working with individuals and families with small groups and with communities; and

(e) If the applicant had failed in the licensure examinations three times, he or she must enroll in formal refresher courses for two semesters before applying for another licensure examination.

SECTION 2. Section 24 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 24-A. *Continuing Social Work Education.* - All registered social workers must provide proof of accomplishing 20 units of Continuing Professional Education given / issued by accredited CPE provider by the Social Work Board of Examiners as a requirement for renewal of professional social worker's license.

SEC. 24-C. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and the Philippine Association of Social Workers, Inc. (PASWI) shall jointly formulate the implementing rules and regulations for this specific provision 30 days upon approval of this law.

SECTION 3. Section 26 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 26. *Penal Provisions.* - The following shall be punished by a fine of not less than one hundred thousand nor more than two hundred thousand pesos, or imprisonment for no less than six months nor more than two years of imprisonment, or both, in the discretion of the court:

- (a) Any person who shall practice social work in the Philippines without getting registered or exempted from registration in accordance with the provisions of this Act;
- (b) Any person presenting or attempting to use as his own, the certificate of registration of another;
- (c) Any person who shall give any false or fraudulent evidence of any kind to the Board or nay member thereof in obtaining a certificate of registration as social worker;
- (d) Any person who shall impersonate any registrant of like or different name;
- (e) Any person who shall attempt to use a revoked or suspended certificate of registration;
- (f) Any person who shall in connection with his or her name, otherwise assume, use or advertise any title or description tending to convey the impression that he or she is a social worker without holding a valid registration;
- (g) Any person who shall violate any provision of this Act; or
- (h) Any person or corporate body who shall violate the rules and regulations of the Board or orders promulgated by it, duly approved by the President of the Philippines, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act; or

- (i) Any person, corporation or entity operating as a social work agency without the corresponding License to Operate issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take upon its approval.

Approved,