

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. **4406**

Introduced by Reps. TEDDY A. CASIÑO, NERI JAVIER COLMENARES,
RAFAEL V. MARIANO, LUZVIMINDA C. ILAGAN, EMMI A. DE JESUS
RAYMOND V. PALATINO and ANTONIO L. TINIO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to immediately supplement the government's national budget in light of the unforeseen circumstances and developments that afflict our overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and immigrants in countries situated in the global regions of Asia, North Africa and the Middle East.

The measure will provide adequate allocations for the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) – the lead agency in providing government services to Filipinos abroad. The current DFA budget for fiscal year 2011 of P11 billion is a far cry from the Department's original proposal of P19 billion.

In fact, the current administration chose to bloat the budgets of other departments and executive agencies for the controversial Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program while cutting by half the already extremely inadequate DFA allocations (from P200 million to P109.3 million) for programs on assistance to nationals that include repatriation and legal assistance programs for the estimated 10 million overseas Filipinos, in violation of the Amended Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act (Republic Act 10022).

The problematic situation currently faced by overseas Filipinos and our diplomatic posts abroad – especially in countries afflicted by political upheavals, natural and man-made calamities and war – cannot be remedied with a simple restoration of the DFA budget to its 2010 level. Government agencies that are supposed to provide services to Filipinos once they are repatriated also need additional funding.

It is important to note that our OFWs in the Middle East and Africa accounted for 16 percent of the total dollar remittances in 2010 (US\$3 billion) while our compatriots in Japan sent back US\$883 million in the same year.

Our foreign policy will be a complete failure if government cannot allocate funds for the safety and bailout of Filipinos caught in dire situations abroad. This measure will correct the mistake of slashing items in the 2011 DFA budget that were devoted to servicing Filipinos toiling in various nations abroad.

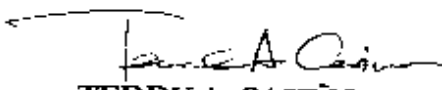
The proposed new allocations for the DFA are for: (1) the emergency evacuation and repatriation of our 305,972 overseas Filipinos in Japan that was hit by a mega earthquake and a resultant tsunami and now facing an increasing likelihood of a major peace-time nuclear disaster; (2) assistance to overseas Filipinos in the current and potential flashpoints in North Africa: Libya (23,713), Tunisia (254), Algeria (4,937), Nigeria (6,256) and Egypt (5,973); (3) assistance to Filipinos in the Middle East: Bahrain (50,695), Iran (863), Iraq (6,108), Jordan (28,100), Syria (17,000), Kuwait (170,600), Qatar (200,000), Oman (13,100), United Arab Emirates (589,461), Israel (41,000), Lebanon (37,265), Yemen (1,400) and Saudi Arabia (1,857,794) and other African and Middle Eastern countries experiencing political strife that could possibly lead to war.

Additional allocations are also provided for the Departments of Labor and Employment and Trade and Industry and local government units to help fund the reintegration programs, domestic business, employment and livelihood for overseas Filipinos who were repatriated, including those of their families.

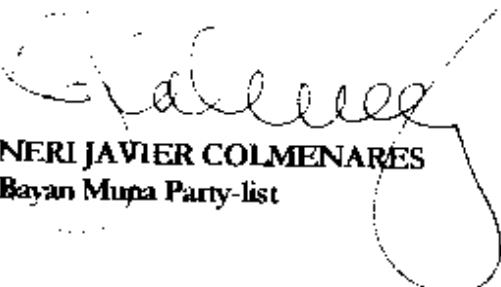
Our overseas Filipinos have kept our economy afloat and our nation alive for the last five decades. It is high time we return the favor in their time of need.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this measure is sought.

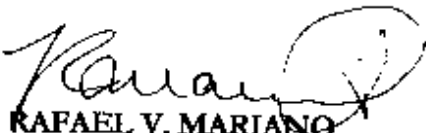
Approved.



TEDDY A. CASINO
Bayan Muna Party-list



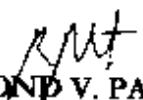
NERI JAVIER COLMENARES
Bayan Muna Party-list



RAFAEL V. MARIANO
Anakpawis Party-List

LUZVIMINDA C. ILAGAN
Gabriela Women's Party

EMMI A. DE JESUS
Gabriela Women's Party



RAYMOND V. PALATINO
Kabataan Party-list



ANTONIO L. TINIO
ACT Teachers Party-list

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AN ACT
APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF NINE BILLION PESOS (P9,000,000,000.00) AS
SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FOR FY 2011 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Appropriations. - The sum of Nine Billion Pesos (P9,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated to supplement the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget for the following purposes:

A. Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)	<u>P5,500,000,000.00</u>
A.1. Office of the Secretary	
A.1.a. Under the Assistance to Nationals program for the emergency evacuation and repatriation of distressed OFW's caught in natural and man-made disasters abroad such as Japan, including repatriation of OFW's from countries undergoing political upheavals and war in the Middle East, North Africa and other parts of the globe.	P4,000,000,000.00
A.1.b. Legal assistance fund for overseas Filipinos, both documented and undocumented, especially those languishing in jails abroad.	P500,000,000.00

A.1.c. For the establishment and the maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) of OFW centers abroad including additional items for welfare officers, psychologists, and Shariah or human rights lawyers in posts of highly problematic countries in the Middle East, North Africa and Asia as determined by the DFA.

P1,000,000,000.00

B. Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)

P500,000,000.00

B.1. Office of the Secretary

B.1.a. National Reintegration Center for overseas Filipino workers (NRCO). To fund the integrative trainings and skills upgrading programs for OFWs repatriated from strife-torn countries and nations devastated by natural and man-made calamities.

P450,000,000.00

B.1.b. Job placement programs of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) for those repatriated OFWs who may opt for new work abroad.

P50,000,000.00

C. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)

P500,000,000.00

C.1.a. DTI Bureau of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development (BMSMED). To further boost development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) markets, and strengthen linkages between MSMEs and large enterprises.

P150,000,000.00

C.1.b. DTI Regional Operations and Development Group (RODG). For further enhancement and integration of entrepreneurship programs for MSME development to provide employment/livelihood opportunities for overseas Filipinos repatriated from the Middle East, African and Asian regions, including their families.

P350,000,000.00

D Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)

P2,500,000,000.00

D.1.a. Allocation to local government units (ALGUs). Subsidy to LGUs for its full participation in the reintegration Middle East, African and Asian regions.

P2,500,000,000.00

P9,000,000,000.00

Section 2. *Use of Funds.* - The amount herein appropriated shall be used for the purposes indicated and subject to the applicable Special Provisions under Republic Act No. 10147, the FY 2011 General Appropriations Act: *Provided*, That the following conditions shall be applicable:

- A. The amount of four billion pesos (P4,000,000,000.00) appropriated under Section 1 A.1.a. shall be directly released to, and administered by, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA): *Provided*, That the amount of Three billion pesos (P3,000,000,000.00) shall be allotted to countries in the Middle East and Africa and One billion pesos (P1,000,000,000.00) shall be allotted to Asia; *Provided further*, That the highest priority is given to the evacuation and/or repatriation of distressed overseas Filipinos, both documented and undocumented, including the remains of deceased Filipinos, in the nations of Japan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Nigeria, Egypt, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Lebanon, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and other African and Middle Eastern countries experiencing political strife that could possibly lead to war.
- B. The amount of five hundred million pesos (P500,000,000.00) appropriated under Section 1.B. shall be in addition to existing programs and allocations financed by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and other line agencies of the DOLE.
- C. The amount of three hundred fifty million (P350,000,000.00) appropriated under C.1.b. shall also help fund DTI programs for MSMEs that shall employ the repatriated overseas Filipinos and their families across the country.
- D. The appropriations under ALGUs shall be devoted to the health services, local employment and livelihood start-up programs for repatriated overseas Filipinos and their families from the nations stated in Sections 1 and 2 of this Act.

SECTION 3. *Automatic appropriations.* - All the amounts stated in this Act are considered automatically appropriated.

SECTION 4. *Release of Funds.* - The amounts appropriated herein shall be released to the departments, bureaus, offices, agencies and LGUs by the DBM in accordance with relevant

budgeting laws, rules and regulations and in light of the urgency faced by our overseas compatriots in dire situations abroad.

SECTION 5. *Oversight Committee.* - There is hereby created a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee to oversee the utilization of the supplemental appropriations for the aforementioned Departments. The Oversight Committee shall be composed of twelve (12) Members, with the chairpersons of the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Committee on Appropriations as co-chairpersons, and with five (5) members each from the Senate and the House of Representatives: *Provided*, That two Members shall come from the Minority.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Effectivity.* -This Act shall take effect immediately upon its enactment into law.

Approved.