

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 6716

Introduced by Representatives
DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO and GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT
INSTITUTING A FORMER PRISONERS' EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Former prisoners, once they are out and back in mainstream society, are considered at a crossroad in life. They are raring to be reunited with their loved ones but more importantly, to find gainful work so they can provide for their families. Sad to say, statistics reveal that former prisoners have a slimmer chance of being employed after their release. Most, if not all employers, are reluctant to hire former prisoners, because of their criminal past. This makes it extra difficult for former prisoners to reform and reintegrate into society.

It seeks to provide incentives to private establishments hiring inmates. It proposes an additional deduction from gross income, equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of total amount paid as salaries and wages to former prisoners, to be given to business establishments employing former prisoners. It also seeks to create a Committee on Employment Opportunities for Former Prisoners under the Department of Justice, which is tasked to draft the implementing rules and regulations for the training and employment of former prisoners.

This bill is being introduced to make life easier for former prisoners by making employment opportunities available and accessible so that they may enjoy their gained freedom and life after incarceration worthwhile.

Given that life inside prison is more than enough punishment for their trespasses against society, it is unfair, once they are out of prison, if they are unjustly denied of a decent source of livelihood brought about by the stigma of their delinquent past.

We, therefore, urge our colleagues to ensure this bill's immediate passage into law given its paramount importance.



DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Camarines Sur



GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Pampanga

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Former Prisoners' Employment Act of 2012."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to aid former prisoners in their continued reformation, and reintegration into society after they have been released from prison.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For the purpose of this Act, the term:

(A) "Business establishments" mean private companies that employ former prisoners;

(B) "Committee" means the Committee on Employment Opportunities for Former Prisoners, under the Department of Justice;

(C) "Former prisoners" refer to those convicted by final judgment and who have been released on probation, parole, pardon, or after having served their sentences.

SECTION 4. *Committee on Employment Opportunities for Former Prisoners.* – The Committee on Employment Opportunities for Former Prisoners under the Department of Justice, hereinafter referred to as the Committee, is

hereby created with the task of drafting provisions for the training and employment of former prisoners.

SECTION 5. *Structural and Personnel Organization.* – The Committee shall be headed by a Chairman and assisted by a Vice Chairman, who shall both be appointed by the President, upon the recommendation of the Secretary of the Department of Justice.

Appointees to the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman must be holders of a doctoral/masteral degree in business or public administration and/or lawyers with at least one year experience in penology management.

The Committee shall have a Technical Service Arm to assist it to carry out its duties and functions.

SECTION 6. *Tax Credit.* – Business establishments that will employ former prisoners upon the effectivity of this Act, shall be entitled to an additional deduction from their gross income, equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the total amount paid as salaries and wages to former prisoners, subject to Chapter IV of the National Internal Revenue Code.

SECTION 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Secretary of the Department of Justice and Secretary of Department of Labor and Employment shall, within thirty (30) days from effectivity of this Act, issue such rules and regulations necessary for the proper implementation of the provisions of this law.

SECTION 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter. An initial amount of One Hundred Million Pesos (P100,000,000.00) shall be allocated for the first year of its implementation.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or is inconsistent with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,