

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1403



Introduced by Representative Harlin Cast. Abayon

EXPLANATORY NOTE

We brand our Overseas Filipino Workers as modern day heroes. We should at least help them in supporting their loved ones here in the country during their times of sickness or incapacity to support. This measure was previously filed by Senator Manny Villar in the 15th Congress. Passage of this Bill is earnestly sought now in the 16th Congress.


HARLIN CAST. ABAYON
Representative
First District of Northern Samar

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AN ACT
TO PROVIDE A SYSTEM OF ASSISTANCE AND INCENTIVES TO FAMILIES
OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO IN TIMES OF NEED AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Title. This Act shall be known as "Assistance to OFW Family Act of 2013."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policies. It is the policy of the State to protect the families of OFWs whenever for any of the reasons stated herein below, assistance may be required by them.

SECTION 3. Instances when assistance may be given. The following instances, which are not exclusive in character, shall be the instances when assistance may be given to families of OFWs or to the OFW:

- a.) Whenever the OFW has deprived the legitimate family or the common-law wife of any form of financial assistance for any reason;
- b.) Whenever the OFW has left the legitimate family or the common-law wife without any form of financial assistance for any reason;
- c.) Whenever the OFW has deprived the legitimate children of any form of financial assistance for any reason;
- d.) In the absence of any of the following, the illegitimate children shall be entitled to avail of the assistance granted by the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 4. Qualifications for assistance to be given. The following qualifications shall be imposed upon the applicants for assistance granted by this Act:

- a) Families - for the legitimate family or the common-law wife of the OFW, there shall be

required the following:

- i. Status as legitimate family or common-law wife without any impediment to marry;
- ii. The total household income shall not exceed sixty thousand pesos (P60,000.00) per annum subject to verification from the Bureau of Internal Revenue of such fact and the appropriate clearances from the employer;

b) Children -for the legitimate or illegitimate child, the assistance shall be limited to the following qualified individuals:

- i. The child shall not exceed the age of majority provided for by law;
- ii. no sufficient means of income to support himself;

SECTION 5. Form of assistance. The assistance shall be in the following:

- 1) livelihood opportunities for the families;
- 2) scholarship grants to the children;
- 3) such other forms of assistance as may be provided for by law, Provided, that the number of children entitled to the assistance herein shall not exceed four (4).

SECTION 6. Livelihood assistance. The livelihood assistance as defined herein shall mean such assistance as may be sufficient to support the basic needs of the family herein, such assistance to be extended primarily to the family in most need of support. The livelihood assistance shall be provided for by the Department of Trade and Industry through the creation of a new division, the OFW Livelihood Assistance Division. Provided, that the implementing rules and regulations of this act shall be formulated by the Department of Trade and Industry.

SECTION 7. Scholarship grants. The scholarship grants shall be extended to children qualified according to the provisions of this Act. Provided, that the scholarship grant shall extend to the tertiary level of education but not to post-graduate studies; Provided, further, that the Department of Education, shall be responsible for the grant of such benefits accordingly; Provided, finally, that even upon reaching the age of majority, the child previously entitled to the benefits of this Act shall be extended assistance until the completion of the education, subject to the Implementing Rules and Regulations to be formulated by the Department of Education.

SECTION 8. Appropriations. - The sum of fifty million pesos (P50,000,000.00) necessary for the initial operating expenses of the assistance is hereby charged to the appropriations authorized for the OFW Assistance Fund. Thereafter, the sum necessary for the continued operation and maintenance shall be included in the annual budget of the Office of the President.

SECTION 9. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act or any part hereof be declared, unconstitutional or invalid the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

2 SECTION 10. Repealing Clause. - All laws, orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or part thereof, which are inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,