

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



SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3679

Introduced by
OFW Family Party-List Representative ROY V. SEÑERES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill is in furtherance of relevant provisions of the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, to wit:

1. Section 10, Article II, states: "The State shall promote social justice in all phases of national development."
2. Section 18, Article II, states: "The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare."
3. Section 3, (first paragraph), Article XIII, which states: "The State shall afford full protection to labor, local and overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities for all."

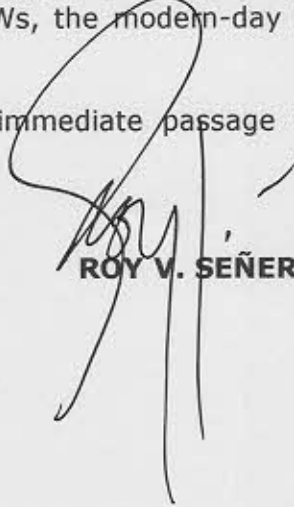
It is a known fact that overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) daringly venture outside our shores to countries many of us do not have the courage to go into. They took great risks and hazards of exposing themselves to unfamiliar surroundings, different cultures, customs, traditions, and idiosyncracies of peoples of the host countries, simply because they wanted to provide their families, dependents and loved ones financial sustenance for their daily needs.

Every year, our OFWs are increasing in number as we do not have enough jobs available for them to stay with higher pay. In the process, the foreign exchange remittances of our OFWs to their families and dependents have increased tremendously. The continuous influx of foreign exchange remittances of our OFWs to their families and dependents have further strengthened the Philippine economy and sustained our economic growth and economic development.

For this reason, it is only appropriate that the State should be considered as the surrogate employer of the more than ten (10) million OFWs who are considered to be the economic soldiers of the country. As surrogate employer, it shall be State's duty and obligation to contribute and share in the payment of SSS, Pag-ibig and Philhealth premium payments or contributions of OFWs.

The passage of this social legislation is a tribute and in recognition of the valuable contribution of the OFWs, the modern-day heroes of our time.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



ROY V. SEÑERES

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AN ACT
GRANTING SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO OVERSEAS FILIPINO
WORKERS (OFWs) IN THE PAYMENT OF SSS, PAG-IBIG AND
PHILHEALTH PREMIUMS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. **Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) Premium Benefits Act of 2014.”

SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to protect the interest, promote, and enhance the well-being of OFWs by granting them special privileges in the payment of SSS, Pag-Ibig and Philhealth premiums.

SEC. 3. **Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined to mean as:

- (a) “*Overseas Filipino Worker*” shall refer to a person who is to be engaged, is engaged, or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a legal resident. A person “to be engaged in a remunerated activity” refers to an applicant worker who has been promised or assured employment overseas and acting on such promise or assurance sustains damage and/or injury. The term “Overseas Filipino Worker” shall be used interchangeable with “Migrant worker”.
- (b) “*Overseas Filipinos*” shall refer to migrant workers, other Filipino nationals and their dependents abroad.

SEC. 4. **Special Privilege in the Payment of SSS, Pag-Ibig and Philhealth Premiums.** – As the surrogate employer of the more than ten (10) million OFWs, the government is obliged to contribute and pay Fifty percent (50%) of the SSS, Pag-Ibig and Philhealth premium payments or contributions of the covered OFW and the latter shall be entitled to all the benefits in accordance with the pertinent provisions provided under existing laws.

SEC. 5. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) is hereby tasked to implement this Act and shall, in coordination with the Social Security System (SSS), Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig), and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Philhealth), formulate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC.6. **Appropriations.** –The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. **Separability Clause.** – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. **Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, ordinances, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. **Effectivity Clause.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,