

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Seventeenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7913



Introduced by Honorable Deogracias Victor "DV" B. Savellano

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is truly a reflection on our collective attitude towards our fellow Filipinos who work overseas that while we consider them as modern-day heroes, not much is being done to advance and promote their welfare. Indeed, while there are government agencies under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), particularly the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), these government agencies are based in Metro Manila. In cases where there are field offices, it is a set up wherein these agencies are sharing space with a major government agency like the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the DOLE, creating an impression that services rendered by the POEA and the OWWA are token services to make the OFWs in the country believe we all value them.

For while line agencies of the government do have regional and provincial offices which are regularly appropriated with funds for personnel services, capital outlay and miscellaneous and other operating expenses, the OFWs rarely have near access to field offices of the OWWA and POEA which are both based in the national capital region. The OFWs and their families thus have to go to these offices at great expense and effort to be able to transact business. To think that collectively, our OFWs contribute no less than \$20 billion in remittances which help the Philippine economy remain afloat.

Truth be told, the other line agencies will pale in comparison to the OWWA and the POEA in terms of significance to our toiling OFWS. And in every town, city and province throughout the Philippine islands, we have pockets of communities of OFWs and their dependents who need assistance in terms of overseas employment and economic well-being.

There is then an urgent need to establish, provincial and regional offices of the OWWA most particularly, complete with a personnel complement and operational budgets which would act as frontline offices for the OFWs in the areas they are most needed.

Approval of this bill is then earnestly sought.

Hon. Deogracias Victor "DV" B. Savellano
Representative, 1st District, Ilocos Sur

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AN ACT

ESTABLISHING OWWA OFW CENTERS IN EVERY PROVINCE AND REGION OF THE COUNTRY PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFORE AND OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. There is hereby established, in every province and region, of the country an OWWA OFW Center.

Section 2. The Secretary of Labor and Employment shall immediately include in the department's programs, the operationalization of the OWWA-OFW's Centers in provinces and cities throughout the Philippines, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 3. Implementation. The Administrator of the OWWA shall issue rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this Act.

Section 4: Effectivity. This Act shall take effect after its publication in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,