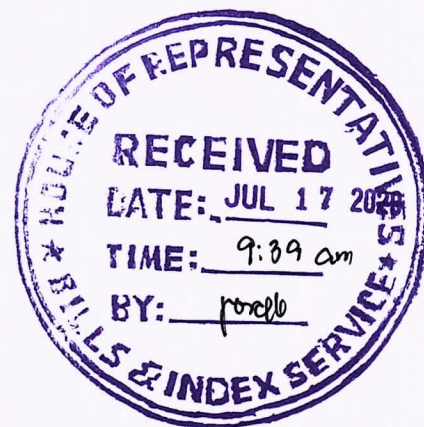




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7111

Introduced by Representative Sharon S. Garin

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The movement of people across localities in the country has become one of the most significant demographic processes currently driving socioeconomic structures and activities, including human settlement arrangements, infrastructure development and sociocultural changes in certain localities both in sending and receiving areas.

The congestion of population in highly urbanized areas likewise significantly affects the resiliency of people and their communities in these localities specifically during crisis situations. As the country currently experiences the unprecedented health crisis due to the communicable COVID-19 virus, data have shown the vulnerability of congested communities because of the lack of physical distancing and as exacerbated by poor socioeconomic conditions.

Socioeconomic disparity across regions in the Philippines has become more pronounced in recent years. In 2018, three highly urbanized regions: National Capital Region (NCR), CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon; or Region IVA), and Central Luzon (Region III) accounted for about two-thirds (62%) of the total gross domestic product (GDP) of the entire country, while the remaining one-third was shared by the rest of the 14 regions. This condition reflects a highly unequal and inequitable socioeconomic development across regions in the country. With the concentration of economic growth in highly urbanized regions, relatively poorer regions are left out of national development. Interestingly, the heightened economic

productivity in the three urbanized regions coincides with the high level of population size in these areas.

Recognizing that population congestion in a certain locality enhances the vulnerability of the poor families, women, children, older persons and adolescents to emerging pandemic or epidemic and other crisis situations caused by other factors such as natural disasters; and that congestion and crowding in highly urbanized areas is primarily caused by unmanaged internal migration, the passage of this measure is aims to:

1. attain equitable voluntary spatial distribution of its population and strengthen resiliency of families and communities by nudging urban population to return and be reintegrated in their areas of origin within the context of informed choice and voluntarism;
2. influence population movement within the context of human rights and sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic development;
3. attain an inclusive regional development to nudge population in rural areas to stay and productively contribute to the development of their communities; and
4. mitigate push factors in their home localities and support migrants who are willing to return back and be reintegrated in their area of origin through viable and sustainable socioeconomic opportunities and environment.

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



SHARON S. GARIN
AAMBIS-Owa Party-list



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AN ACT

INSTITUTING A BALIK PROBINSYA PROGRAM AND OTHER STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS FOR MANAGING INTERNAL MIGRATION FOR INCLUSIVE REGIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES DURING CRISIS SITUATIONS

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

Section 1. Title. This Act shall be known as the "***Balik Probinsya Program Act of 2020.***"

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. The State shall guarantee and foster the constitutional right of every Filipino to liberty of abode and of changing the same within the limits prescribed by law and the right to travel except in the interest of national security, public safety, or public health, as may be provided by law.

The State shall also foster and protect the right of individuals to sustainable and inclusive development and shall continuously build their capacities to increase their share in the fruits of socioeconomic progress ensuring that no one is left behind.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. For purposes of this Act, the following terms and concepts shall have their corresponding meanings:

- (a) Highly urbanized cities – refers to cities or localities with at least 200,000 inhabitants and with an annual income of at least 50 million pesos based on 1991 constant prices, as certified by the city treasurer.

- 28
29 (b) Inclusive development – refers to the development or economic growth
30 distributed fairly and equitably across society and which creates opportunities
31 for all (Organization of Economic Co-operation for Development [OECD]);
32
33 (c) Internal migration – refers to a form of geographic or spatial mobility of people
34 involving a change of usual residence within a country (region, province,
35 municipality, city) during a specified period of observation (PSA, 2017);
36
37 (d) Migrant – pertains to the person who moved from one geographic or political
38 area to another involving a change in usual residence during a specified period
39 of observation (PSA, 2017);
40
41 (e) Migration - the form of geographic or spatial mobility of people involving a
42 change of usual residence between clearly defined geographic or political units
43 (such as country, region, province, city or municipality) during a specified
44 period or observation for a reason such as economic, social, political and
45 cultural (PSA, 2017);
46
47 (f) Population management – refers to interventions that aim to attain population
48 outcomes (e.g. population size, age-sex composition, and spatial distribution)
49 that are consistent and facilitative of socio-economic development;
50
51 (g) Reintegration – refers to the process of integrating someone back into society
52 or community where he/she originally belong;
53
54 (h) Return migration – pertain to the voluntary and involuntary return of migrants
55 or people to their place of origin;
56
57 (i) Spatial distribution of population – refers to the dispersion or distribution of
58 population in certain geographic or administrative areas;
59
60 (j) Sub-urban areas - is a mixed-use or residential area, existing either as part of
61 a city or urban area or as a separate residential community
62 within commuting distance of a city.
63

64 **Section 4. Instituting and Implementing an Integrated and Sustainable *Balik***
65 ***Probinsya* Program.** There shall be a Balik Probinsya Program which generally aims
66 to reduce the vulnerability of congested urban localities especially during pandemic
67 and crisis situations and consequently promotes more equitable population spatial
68 distribution and regional socioeconomic development. It shall have the following
69 specific objectives:

- 70
71 (a) facilitate and promote return migration or reintegration of urban population
72 to their area or origin to prevent congestion in highly urbanized areas and
73 mitigate their vulnerability to pandemic and other crisis situations;

- 74
75 (b) establish mechanisms for viable and sustainable reintegration of migrants or
76 families from urban areas into their area of origin or into relocation
77 communities outside highly urbanized areas which shall include access to
78 livelihood, employment, housing and human settlement and social services
79 and maintaining a desirable degree of quality of life;
80
81 (c) engage and establish collaborative framework for effective cooperation and
82 partnership between and among public and private institutions to support the
83 establishment and sustainability of mechanisms and communities for viable
84 and effective reintegration of migrants or urban residents; and
85
86 (d) institute and implement other effective strategies for mitigating the
87 vulnerabilities of congested localities during crisis situations caused by
88 epidemic or natural disasters.
89

90 **Section 5. *Balik Probinsya Program Strategies.*** The *Balik Probinsya* Program shall
91 prioritize socioeconomically poor families in the highly urbanized cities who are willing
92 to return to their province of origin. The program shall be implemented as an
93 integrated population management and socioeconomic development strategy.
94

95 The reintegration strategy shall be pursued through: a) voluntary return of individuals
96 and families to their area of origin or, b) systematic voluntary relocation of
97 beneficiaries to a built-up human settlement or communities with sustainable living
98 and working environment with consent and well-coordinated planning with host
99 localities.

100
101 The Program shall have the following specific strategies or program components:
102

- 103 (a) **Provision of financial and logistics support for transportation and**
104 **physical transfer of urban residents to areas of origin or sub-urban**
105 **communities.** This shall include the provision of necessary support to
106 facilitate the physical transfer of individuals and/or families to areas of origin
107 or sub-urban communities identified as relocation site.
108
109 (b) **Provision of conditional cash transfer or subsidies for the transition**
110 **period.** All individuals and families qualified and enrolled in the Program shall
111 be provided with conditional cash transfer for their survival and adjustment
112 until they are fully reintegrated in their new communities. Subsidies may be
113 in the form of cash payouts or food or cash for work programs.
114
115 (c) **Ensuring access to education, health, and other social services.**
116 Mechanisms to link and ensure access of program beneficiaries to education,
117 health, and other basic social services in the communities into which they shall
118 be reintegrated shall be established and sustained. Financial and technical
119 support to host or receiving local government units (LGUs) shall be provided

120 for this purpose. Such services shall then be eventually integrated in local
121 development strategies.

122
123 (d) **Ensuring livelihood and employment opportunities and subsidies.**

124 Subsidies for livelihood and support to employment or income generating
125 activities shall be provided to beneficiaries. Arrangements for this shall be
126 made prior to relocation to ensure that the target beneficiaries shall not be
127 prompted to return to the cities. Subsidies of livelihood and employment may
128 include, but not limited to, financial loans for micro or small-scale enterprise
129 or business or livelihood activities that are implemented in a systematic and
130 effective manner. This shall also be pursued through partnership and
131 collaboration between LGUs and private business institutions within the
132 relocation area.

133
134 (e) **Construction of viable local communities, economies, and human
135 settlements for relocation of poor families from the cities.**

136 An integrated and sustainable human settlement program for Balik Probinsya
137 beneficiaries shall be developed and implemented. Such human settlement
138 strategy shall be integrated within the mainstream of socioeconomic
139 development within the host locality such that access to livelihood and
140 economic opportunities, social services (i.e. health, education, nutrition, and
141 similar services), cultural development, and other services that are needed for
142 integrated human development shall be ensured. Priority relocation sites shall
143 be in the suburban areas to maintain its linkage with the cities for its
144 interdependent economic support. Financial support, incentives, and technical
145 assistance to LGUs participating in the relocation and human settlement
146 program for beneficiaries from the cities shall be provided with adequate
147 financial appropriation.

148
149 (f) **Addressing the push factors of internal migration to the cities and
150 urban areas.**

151 To address the root causes and factors that push people to
152 migrate to the cities, a long-term intervention such as integrated population
153 management and poverty reduction strategy shall be instituted and
154 implemented. This shall include the intensive implementation of family
155 planning program among the poor to reduce intergenerational poverty,
156 interdependent urban-rural development particularly to support agricultural
157 development in the rural areas, and evidence-based regulation of internal
158 migration and settlements especially in hazardous areas in the cities.

159 (g) **Setting-up of a Regional and Provincial *Balik Probinsya* Centers.**

160 A *Balik Probinsya* Center shall be set-up and sustained to provide information
161 and necessary referral services to beneficiaries and prospective migrants and
162 other stakeholders. The Center shall be set-up and operated by regional and
163 provincial local population offices in the country.
164

165 (h) **Setting-up an internal migration information or registry system.** An
166 administrative information system that tracks population movement at the
167 barangay or community level shall be established and used for the Balik
168 Probinsya and other relevant interventions including the development of crisis
169 response mechanisms. This internal information system shall have the
170 capability to register in- and out-migrants within the community which shall
171 be protected with existing policies and laws on data privacy.

172
173 **Section 5. *Equitable Redistribution of Socioeconomic Activities and Development.***
174 National and regional socioeconomic and infrastructure planning shall review current
175 policies and strategies to ensure that economic activities are equitably distributed
176 across regions and localities. Based on local zoning policies and existing development
177 spatial strategies, areas and strategies for economic development shall be planned
178 and properly distributed across localities within the province, region, and country.
179 Incentive and support mechanism to businesses and participating private institutions
180 shall be provided.

181
182 **Section 6. *Incentive System for Relocation of Investments to Countryside or***
183 ***Suburban Areas.*** To motivate the private sector to relocate their investments in the
184 countryside and suburban areas there shall be an incentive system for participating
185 institutions such as, but not limited to tax rationalization, financial subsidies, and other
186 administrative support for viable busines and economic enterprises and investments;

187
188 **Section 7. *National and Regional Balik Probinsya Medium-Term Action Plan.*** A
189 national and regional Balik Probinsya inter-agency and multisectoral medium-term
190 plan shall be formulated to guide the implementation of various component strategies
191 of the program at various levels. The plan shall be integrated as part of the Regional
192 and Provincial Development Plans and approved by the concerned Provincial Governor
193 and *Sanggunian Panlalawigan*. Implementation will be managed by the provincial and
194 city governments and to be supported by local population offices.

195
196 **Section 8. *Interagency Committee for the Balik Probinsya Program.*** To plan and
197 ensure the implementation of the *Balik Probinsya* Program, the existing Board of
198 Commissioners of the Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM)
199 consisting of the following members and per Presidential Decree (PD) No. 79, PD 1204
200 and Executive Order 160 shall be mobilized as an interagency committee for the
201 program:

- 202
203 (a) The Secretary of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)
204 as the Chairperson;
- 205 (b) The Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development
206 (DSWD);
- 207 (c) The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government
208 (DILG);
- 209 (d) The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH);
- 210 (e) The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA);

- 211 (f) The Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR);
212 (g) The Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);
213 (h) The Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
214 (i) The Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd);
215 (j) The Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH);
216 (k) The Director of the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI);
217 and
218 (l) Three (3) private sector representatives.

219
220 The following relevant agencies shall be new members of the POPCOM Board of
221 Commissioners with voting rights:

- 222
223 (a) The Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
224 (DENR);
225 (b) The Secretary of the Department of Human Settlement and Urban
226 Development (DSHUD);
227 (c) The Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM);
228 (d) The Chief Minister of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim
229 Mindanao;
230 (e) The Chairperson of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA); and
231

232 The following shall likewise serve as ex-officio member of the BOC during meetings
233 related to the implementation of this Act:

- 234
235 (a) The Executive Director of the Commission on Population and Development
236 (POPCOM).
237 (b) Chairpersons of the following Congressional Committees
238 1. Senate Committee on Health and Demography;
239 2. Senate Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement;
240 3. HOR Committee on Housing and Urban Development; and
241 4. HOR Committee on Population and Family Relations.
242

243 Other relevant agencies shall be invited as resource persons as needed. A Technical
244 Working Group shall likewise be created consisting of designated technical staff from
245 the agency members to provide technical support to the Committee.
246

247 The POPCOM shall continue to provide Secretariat support to the interagency
248 committee for the program. For this purpose, the POPCOM shall determine the
249 necessary additional staffing complement needed for the implementation of the
250 Program and shall be integrated in their annual budget.
251

252 **Section 9.** *Additional Functions of the POPCOM Board of Commissioners.* For
253 purposes of this Act, the POPCOM Board of Commissioners, in addition to their
254 functions under PD 79 and other relevant issuances, shall perform the following roles
255 and functions:
256

- 257 (a) Provide overall policy and technical guidance and direction in the
258 implementation of the strategies of the Balik Probinsya Program;
- 259 (b) Define the role and responsibilities of member agencies in the
260 implementation of this Act and deputize other relevant agencies, as
261 necessary;
- 262 (c) Steer the formulation and implementation of the national, regional, and
263 provincial *Balik Probinsya* Action Plan;
- 264 (d) Generate and mobilize needed resources for the implementation of the
265 program;
- 266 (e) Resolve emerging policy and program issues and concerns; and
- 267 (f) Recommend policies to the executive and legislative department for the
268 enhancement of the program.

269 **Section 10.** *Authority to Receive Donations and/or Grants.* – The POPCOM is hereby
270 authorized to accept grants, contributions, donations, endowments, bequests, or gifts
271 in cash, or in kind from local and foreign sources in support of the development and
272 implementation of Balik Probinsya plan and strategies: Provided, That in case of
273 donations from foreign governments, acceptance thereof shall be subject to prior
274 clearance and approval of the President of the Philippines upon recommendation of
275 the Secretary of Foreign Affairs: Provided, further, That such donations shall not be
276 used to fund personal services expenditures and other operating expenses of the
277 Commission.

278 **Section 11.** *Funding Allocation for Balik Probinsya Program.* – All relevant
279 government agencies and local government units (LGUs) shall allocate from their
280 annual appropriation adequate funds for the formulation, development and
281 implementation of relevant strategies and activities to support the implementation of
282 this Act. The Balik Probinsya Program shall be funded through Program Convergence
283 Budgeting (PCB) to ensure complementation of agency activities. The PCB process
284 shall be coordinated by NEDA through POPCOM.

285 **Section 11.** *Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.* – There is hereby created a
286 Joint Congressional Oversight Committee to monitor the implementation of this Act.
287 The Oversight Committee shall be composed of five (5) Senators and five (5)
288 Representatives to be appointed by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House
289 of Representatives, respectively. The Oversight Committee shall be co-chaired by a
290 Senator and a Representative to be designated by the Senate President and the
291 Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively. Its funding requirement shall
292 be charged against the appropriations of Congress.

293 **Section 12.** *Annual Report.* – The POPCOM shall submit to the President and to both
294 Houses of Congress, not later than March 30 of every year following the effectivity of
295 this Act, or upon the request of the Congressional Oversight Committee, a report
296 giving a detailed account of the status of the implementation of this Act, a progress
297 report on the implementation of the National *Balik Probinsya* Plan and recommend
298 legislation, where applicable and necessary. Regional and Provincial/City Population

299 Offices shall submit annual progress reports on the implementation of their respective
300 action plans to POPCOM within the first quarter of the following year.

301 **Section 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** The expanded POPCOM Board of
302 Commissioners, in consultation with other relevant agencies and stakeholders from
303 public and private sector, shall formulate and issue within one hundred twenty (120)
304 working days upon the effectivity of this Act, the necessary rules and regulations for
305 the effective implementation of this policy.

306
307 **Section 14. *Appropriations.*** – The sum of One Billion Pesos (Php1,000,000,000.00)
308 is hereby appropriated as initial operating fund. The sum shall be sourced from the
309 appropriate sources. Thereafter, the amount necessary to effectively carry out the
310 provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

311
312 **Section 15. *Repealing Clause.*** All laws, decrees, orders, ordinances, rules and
313 regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified
314 accordingly.

315
316 **Section 16. *Separability Clause.*** If any provision of this Act is declared
317 unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the other provisions shall not be
318 affected thereof.

319
320 **Section 17. *Effectivity.*** This shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in at
321 least 4 two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

