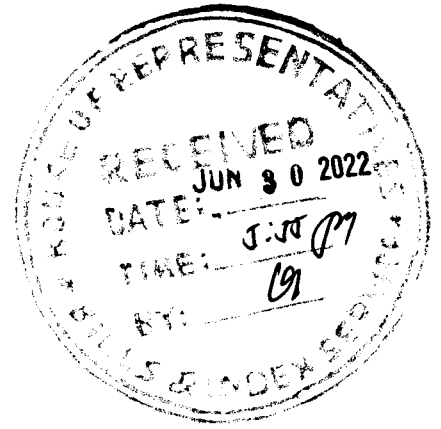


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 479



Introduced by Representative Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFW) HOSPITAL,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are the unsung modern-day heroes of the Philippines as they brave working and living in foreign lands or ocean-going vessels to support and uplift the lives of their families back home, and their regular remittances have greatly contributed to the stability and growth of the Philippine economy.

The establishment of a specialty government hospital primarily devoted for OFWs will give due recognition to this valuable contribution of Filipino migrant workers by helping to ease and relieve OFWs of their health problems and concerns.

This proposed Bill seeks to establish an OFW Hospital which delivers critical health services focused on the welfare of OFWs and their families.

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


GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
Representative, 2nd District, Pampanga

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 479

Introduced by Representative Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFW) HOSPITAL,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be referred to as the "OFW Hospital Act".

2 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:

- 3 a) Affirm labor as a primary social economic force, protect the rights of
4 workers, and promote their welfare;
5 b) Provide adequate and timely social, economic and legal services to
6 Filipino migrant workers;
7 c) Develop, support and finance specific projects for the welfare of
8 member-OFWs and their families; and
9 d) Adopt a people-oriented approach for the delivery of health services that
10 is centered on people's needs and well-being, and cognizant of the
11 differences in cultures, values and beliefs.

12 **SEC. 3. Scope.** - This Act shall apply to the establishment of the OFW Hospital
13 (OFWH).

14 **SEC. 4. Establishment of the OFW Hospital.** - The National Government shall
15 establish the OFW Hospital, to be located in San Fernando City, Pampanga, to
16 cater primarily to the health care needs of OFWs and their qualified dependents,
17 subject to the limitations under existing laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 5. Purposes and Objectives. - The OFW Hospital shall have the following purposes and objectives:

- a. To establish, operate and maintain medical facilities, including a medical and diagnostic center, for the welfare of OFWs and their qualified dependents, and as may be warranted, for the welfare of the general public;
- b. To promote, encourage, engage in and publish scientific research on the prevention, care and treatment of occupational diseases common to OFWs, including the underwriting of researches on biological, demographic, social, economic, eugenic, physiological aspects of occupational disorders of OFWs, and conduct relevant congresses, conventions, seminars and conferences;
- c. To develop and encourage public interest in, as well as the dissemination and exchange of information on:
 - (i) the prevention, treatment and control of diseases common to OFWs, and
 - (ii) OFW occupational health and physical fitness, especially the promotion of health and rehabilitation, and other related fields;
- d. To encourage and undertake the training of physicians, nurses, medical technicians, health officers and social workers on the practical and scientific conduct and implementation of OFW occupational health services; and
- e. To assist and support universities, research institutions and other hospitals or medical facilities in their studies on health-related concerns of OFWs.

SEC 6. Creation of the OFW Hospital Board of Trustees and the Director of the OFW Hospital - There is hereby created an OFW Hospital Trust, for the benefit of Filipino OFWs, to be administered by a Board of Trustees, composed of seven (7) members to be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Director of the OFW Hospital shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

The Director of the OFW Hospital shall concurrently serve as the Secretary-General of the OFW Hospital Board of Trustees. The Director shall also act as the Chief Executive Officer of the OFW Hospital, with authority among others, to appoint, remove, and fix the compensation of the personnel thereof, subject

1 to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

2 Four (4) members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum to
3 transact business and any decision of such four members on any matter shall
4 constitute a valid and binding act of the OFW Hospital.

5
6 The Composition of the OFW Hospital Board shall be as follows:

7 1) Chairperson: Secretary, Department of Migrant Workers (DMW);

8 2) Co-Chairperson: Secretary, Department of Health (DOH);

9 3) Members:

10 • Secretary, Department of Labor & Employment (DOLE);

11 • Administrator, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA);

12 • Administrator, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
13 (POEA);

14 • One (1) representative of land-based OFWs from an accredited OFW
15 organization; and

16 • One (1) representative of sea-based OFWs from an accredited OFW
17 organization.

18
19 The representatives of land-based and sea-based OFWs shall be appointed
20 by the President from a list of nominees of their OFW organizations as endorsed
21 by the Chairperson to the President. Such nominees shall be at least be forty
22 (40) years of age, and an OFW with at least five (5) years of work experience
23 abroad at the time of his or her nomination.

24
25 The members of the Board may elect an alternate, and submit the name to
26 the President for appointment. In case of vacancy, the head of the agency may
27 nominate, subject to official appointment by the President of the Philippines.

28
29 **SEC. 7. Powers, Duties and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees-** The Board
30 shall have the following powers, duties and responsibilities:

31 a. Determine and undertake, in coordination with the Governance
32 Commission for Government-Owned or -Controlled Corporations, the
33 appropriate steps for the formal establishment and incorporation of the
34 OFW Hospital in accordance with RA No. 10149 or the "GOCC
35 Governance Act of 2011," pertinent to the regulations and issuances of

1 the DOH, and other relevant laws, rules and regulations;

2 b. Upon incorporation of the OFW Hospital, assume, perform and carry-
3 out the functions and responsibilities of its Board of Trustees in
4 accordance with relevant laws and regulations, including the:

5 i. Formulation and implementation of measures and programs to
6 effectively and efficiently attain the objectives of the Hospital;

7 ii. Formulation and promulgation of policies for the sound
8 administration, maintenance, and operations of the Hospital upon
9 consultation with the Executive Director;

10 iii. Appointment of a qualified and competent Executive Director to
11 manage and run the operations of the Hospital and identification of
12 his/her functions and responsibilities;

13 iv. Determination of the organizational structure and staffing pattern of
14 the Hospital; and

15 v. Such other functions necessary for the attainment of the objectives
16 of this Act.

17 **SEC. 8. *Duties and Responsibilities of the Chairperson of the OFW Hospital.*** - The
18 Chairperson of the OFWH shall:

19 a. Establish an office in the OFW Hospital that shall assist in identifying,
20 documenting, processing and approving applications for benefits
21 granted to OFWs and their qualified dependents;

22 b. Through the OWWA and POEA, establish a referral system within the
23 OFW Hospital to ensure efficient delivery of medical and health care
24 services to OFWs and their qualified dependents, including the
25 facilitation and conduct of pre-employment medical examinations of
26 departing OFWs;

27 c. Subject to availability of funds and resources, ensure that existing
28 health benefits and medical assistance programs are strengthened to
29 include, among others, subsidies on hospitalization and medical
30 procedures for OFWs and their qualified dependents; and

31 d. Perform such other functions and duties as the Board of Trustees may
32 direct.

33 **SEC. 9. *Duties and Responsibilities of the Co-Chairperson of the OFWH.*** - The Co-
34 Chairperson of the OFWH shall:

35 a. Ensure that the necessary permits and licenses to operate the Hospital

are obtained, consistent with all relevant issuances, rules and regulations;

b. Endorse and encourage medical specialists in other government hospitals, such as the Philippine Heart Center, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Lung Center of the Philippines, and the Philippine General Hospital, among others, to hold clinics in the OFW Hospital, and provide professional services to OFWs and qualified dependents, and its other patients; and

c. Perform such other functions and duties as the Board of Trustees may direct.

SEC. 10. *Agency Support.* – The DMW, as well as its attached agency, the OWWA, are directed to take appropriate steps to improve the access of OFWs and their dependents to health care services, including the grant of benefits and medical assistance programs, subject to availability of funds and relevant laws, rules and regulations.

All other agencies, departments, bureaus, offices or instrumentalities of the government, including other government-owned or -controlled corporations, are directed to render assistance to the OFWH and the Board of Trustees for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Funding.* - The necessary funding for the establishment and initial operation of the OFW Hospital shall be charged against available appropriations of the DMW. Thereafter, the Board of Trustees shall coordinate with the DBM to ensure that the subsequent funding requirements, as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act, shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act, subject to the usual budget process.

SEC. 12. *Annual Report.* - The Board of Trustees with the help of the Executive Director, shall submit to the President, through the Executive Secretary, an annual report on the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* All other laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1

2 **SEC. 15. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
3 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper of general circulation.

4 Approved.