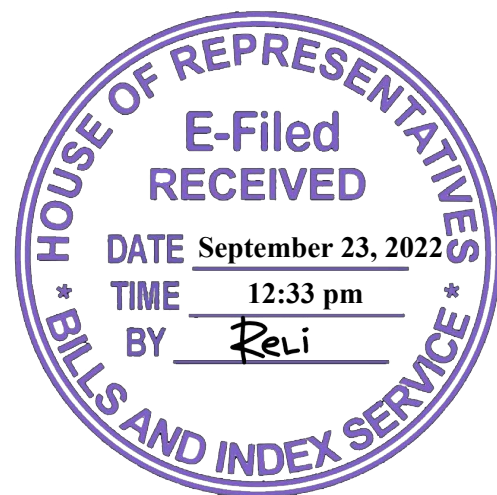


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

House Bill No. 5114



**Introduced by Representatives ERIC G. YAP, PAOLO Z. DUTERTE,
EDVIC G. YAP, JOCELYN P. TULFO, RALPH TULFO, and JEFFREY SORIANO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIII Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health, and other social services available to all people at affordable cost.

According to the National Research Council of the Philippines¹, there are over 2.2 million Filipinos working abroad as of June 2020. Upon investigation, the most common health problems among the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are the following: diseases related to cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, and urinary / excretory systems. Further, hypertension, arthritis, and hepatitis are the highest ones recorded among OFWs. According to the research, the main reasons that explain their attitude of not seeking proper medical / health maintenance are the lack of awareness of their benefits, distance between health service centers and their workplace, fear of losing their job, and reliance on self-medication to save up their income for their families.

Thus, this bill seeks to provide a comprehensive and total health care services to all migrant workers, including Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) contributors, whether active, or non-active, and their legal dependents by establishing

¹ <https://nrcp.dost.gov.ph/feature-articles/794-common-health-problems-among-overseas-filipino-workers-ofws-implications-to-prevention-and-health-services>

the Overseas Filipino Workers Hospital. It shall serve as the primary hospital for repatriated OFWs needing medical assistance and support.

The OFW Hospital shall have a tertiary level of care consistent with the health care needs of the OFW and their dependents under the full administrative and technical supervision of the Department of Health. Further, the Department of Migrant Workers shall ensure that the existing health benefits and medical assistance programs are strengthened to include subsidies on hospitalization and medical procedures for OFW and qualified dependents.

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



ERIC G. YAP



EDVIC G. YAP



RALPH TULFO



PAOLO Z. DUTERTE



JOCELYN P. TULFO



JEFFREY SORIANO

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS HOSPITAL AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the “Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) Hospital Act or OFW Hospital Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the Filipino people and to instill health consciousness among them. The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development. Further, the State shall protect the interest and promote the well-being of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in recognition of their importance and contribution to economic development and nation building.

SEC. 3. *Establishment of OFW Hospital.* - There shall be established a hospital with at least tertiary level of care to be known as "OFW Hospital", hereinafter referred to as the Hospital. The Hospital shall be developed consistent with the health care needs of the OFWs and their dependents. The Hospital shall be under the full administrative and technical supervision of the Department of Health (DOH).

The DOH shall prepare a development plan to reflect the goals of the Hospital.

SEC. 4. *Objectives.* - To ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality health care, the Hospital shall have the following main objectives:

- a. Provide comprehensive and total health care services to all migrant workers including Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) contributors, whether active or non-active, and their legal dependents;
- b. Conduct medical examinations to ensure the physical and mental capability of would-be overseas contract workers duly covered by an approved job order;

- c. Serve as primary referral hospital for repatriated OFW needing medical assistance and support;
- d. Set up systems that will effectively monitor condition of patients and to generate relevant health information and data for policy formulation; and
- e. Participate in the health care provider networks and arrangements relative to the implementation of Republic Act No. 11223, or the "Universal Health Care Act."

SEC. 5. *Medical Assistance.* - The Secretary of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), as Chairperson of the OWWA Board, shall ensure that existing health benefits and medical assistance programs are strengthened to include subsidies on hospitalization and medical procedures for OFW and qualified dependents.

SEC. 6. *Joint Executive Oversight Committee.* - There is hereby created a Joint Executive Oversight Committee to review the implementation of this Act and hospital development plans for the OFW Hospital.

The Committee shall be co-chaired by the Secretary of Health and the Secretary of Migrant Workers. It shall be composed of seven (7) members including its co-chairpersons. The members shall be appointed by the Secretary of Health upon consultation with the Secretary of Migrant Workers.

SEC. 7. *Tax Exemption.* - All grants, bequests, endowments, donations and contributions made to the OFW Hospital to be used actually, directly and exclusively by the OFW Hospital shall be exempt from donor's tax and the same shall be considered as allowable deduction from the gross income of the donor, in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

The importation of equipment, machinery and spare parts which are used solely and exclusively for the operation of the OFW Hospital and are not available locally shall be exempt from value-added tax and customs duty.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* - The Secretary of Health shall include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The OWWA shall also include in its benefits and medical assistance programs for OFW the line-item budget necessary to improve the access of OFWs and dependents to health care services.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the DOH, in coordination with DMW, OWWA, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and other stakeholders, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

SEC. 11. *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.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,