



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 5429



Introduced by **HONORABLE ERNESTO “ERNIX” M. DIONISIO, JR.**

AN ACT
INSTITUTING THE EX-OFFENDERS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

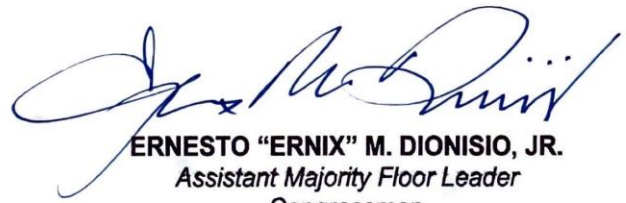
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The goal of punishment in our justice system is to reform and rehabilitate offenders and endeavor their reintegration into society. However, there is an existing stigma against ex-offenders that due to their past transgressions, there is fear of a repetition of committing their past offenses. In a study, it was observed that ex-convicts face challenges after being released from prison among them being discrimination, unemployment, and difficulty in adjusting to life beyond the prison walls.¹ These unfortunate instances, sadly, hinder them from participating as productive members of our society and live out their second chance in life, and prevent us from utilizing their skills and capabilities.

As such, this proposed measure seeks to ensure that ex-offenders are given the opportunity to earn their living through the creation of a government body that will help facilitate their search for job opportunities. It also seeks to give them training that will better their chances of finding employment.

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

¹ *Walking a New Beginning: A Case Study on the Chronicles of Ex-Offenders in Surpassing the Challenges of Living Outside the Bars*. Palgan and Apolinario (2022). American Journal of Qualitative Research 2022, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 178-187. <https://www.ajqr.org/download/walking-a-new-beginning-a-case-study-on-the-chronicles-of-ex-offenders-in-surpassing-the-challenges-11963.pdf>.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ernesto M. Dionisio, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

ERNESTO "ERNIX" M. DIONISIO, JR.

Assistant Majority Floor Leader

Congressman

First Congressional District of Manila



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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Ex-Offender Employment Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to afford full protection to labor and promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities for all. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to enact measures that will safeguard the enjoyment of ex-offenders to employment and allow them to participate as members of society.

SECTION 3. Office of Employment Opportunities for Former Prisoners. – The Office of Employment Opportunities for Former Prisoners under the Department of Justice, here in after referred to as the Office, is hereby created with the task of drafting provisions for the training and employment of former prisoners.

SECTION 4. Structural and Personnel Organization. – The Office shall be headed by the Chairperson and assisted by a Vice Chairperson, who shall both be appointed by the President, upon the recommendation of the Secretary of the Department of Justice. Appointees to the positions of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson must be holders of a doctoral/master's degree in business or public administration and/or lawyers with at least one (1) year of experience in penology management. The Office shall have a Technical Service Arm to assist it to carry out its duties and functions.

SECTION 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Department of Justice, Department of Labor and Employment and such other relevant government agencies and instrumentalities shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this act, issue such rules and regulations necessary for the proper implementation of the provisions of this law.

SECTION 6. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to carry out the provision of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.,

SECTION 7. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 8. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in any national newspaper of general circulation or in the Official Gazette.

Approved,