

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5635



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND “LRAY” F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Foreign policy is the projection of our national policies into the world arena. The core of our foreign policy lies in the areas of national security, economic diplomacy, and the promotion of the welfare of our OFWs which directly binds us to good relations with other countries.

Republic Act No. 7157, also known as “The Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991,” provides for three ways of joining the Foreign Service after passing the examinations for Foreign Service Officer (FSO), Class IV. These are the immediate assumption of post, deferment for one year from the offer of initial appointment, and “lateral entrance” which means deferment for more than one year but not exceeding six years.

The first two methods do not need confirmation by the Commission on Appointments (CA). The third method, for Title III, Section 30 (c) of the law however, requires the CA to confirm a lateral entrant’s initial appointment.

This bill repeals Sec. 30 (c) because the requirement of “CA confirmation” violates the equal protection clause. Republic Act No. 7157 intends to treat all successful examinees equally, regardless of when they accept their initial appointments. Sections 14 and 30 (d) of the law reveal this intent. Section 14 states that the President of the Republic of the Philippines shall appoint those who pass the examinations for FSO, Class IV, without the consent of the Commission on Appointments. Section 30(d) provides that a lateral entrant shall occupy a rank equal to that of his successful co-examinees who joined the Service immediately after being offered an appointment.

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


LUIS RAYMUND “LRAY” F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

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AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7157, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“PHILIPPINE FOREIGN SERVICE ACT OF 1991,” TITLE III, SECTION 30, BY
DELETING THE REQUIREMENT OF CONFIRMATION BY THE COMMISSION ON
APPOINTMENTS OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS WHO JOIN THE FOREIGN
SERVICE THROUGH LATERAL ENTRY

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – Republic Act No. 7157, also known as “The Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991,” Title III, Section 30, is amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 30. Lateral Entry- Lateral entry into the Career Foreign Service Corps shall be permitted for those individuals who have successfully passed the written and oral examinations conducted by the Board of Foreign Service Examinations but at the time when offered an appointment as foreign service officer, Class IV, decided to join another government agency, Provided, however, that:

- (a) The duration from initial offer of appointment and his request for lateral entry in the Career Foreign Service Corps shall not exceed more than six years;
- (b) He has very satisfactorily served another government agency for the same duration;
- (c) His reappointment shall be confirmed by the Commission on Appointments; and
- (d) The rank to which he is being reappointed shall not be higher than that of his successful co-examinees who have joined the Service immediately after being

offered the appointment, AND

(E) HIS REAPPOINTMENT SHALL NOT REQUIRE CONFIRMATION BY THE COMMISSION ON APPOINTMENTS (CA).”

SECTION 2. *Effect upon Lateral Entrants.* – The reappointment of successful examinees who opted for lateral entry prior to the effectivity of this Act shall not require confirmation by the Commission on Appointments.

SECTION 3. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 4. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 5. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.