

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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 582

Introduced by **Representative Jaime R. Fresnedi**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to exempt the registration and late registration of children born to indigent patients from all fees and charges.

A birth certificate is the basis for the legal identity of every Filipino. Without this critical document, a person cannot avail of all the services and assistance provided by the government to its citizens. Despite the importance of a birth certificate, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) estimated in 2020 that 3.7 million Filipinos lacked this document, around 1.4 million of which are children aged 0 to 14, based on estimates by the Child Rights Network. The failure to register their births arise from various factors, such as lack of information on the importance of birth certificates, uncertainty on how to acquire birth certificates, or the inability to pay for the costs of acquiring birth certificates.

The government cannot let this situation continue. The State has the mandate to protect and uphold the rights of its citizens, a duty it cannot do if it does not know who their citizens are. Thus, the government should exert every effort to ensure that all Filipinos, particularly the most vulnerable, are given this essential legal document. This bill removes the financial impediment to registration and late registration of birth for children up to five years of age born to indigent parents. It also mandates barangays to ensure that all their residents have been registered. Through this measure, we can ensure that all Filipinos are accounted for and their access to government services assured.

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


JAIME R. FRESNEDI
Representative
Lone District, Muntinlupa City

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS FOR INDIGENTS,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 referred to as the "*Batang Juan Birth Registration Act*".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to ensure that all Filipino children, most especially the marginalized, are afforded full protection of the law, given all possible opportunities to grow into productive citizens, and can enjoy all the privileges and benefits of Filipino citizenship. The State shall ensure that all Filipino children are given the full documentation necessary to establish their legal identities as soon as possible.

Towards this end, the State shall develop and implement mechanisms to ensure the registration of every Filipino upon birth.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (a) *Indigents* are defined as Filipinos who are part of the poorest of the poor as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in accordance with relevant laws;
- (b) *Late Registration* is defined as the failure to register the birth of a Filipino with the local civil registrar (LCR) within thirty (30) days as provided for by Act No. 3753, or the "Civil Registry Law of the Philippines;"

- (c) *Unregistered Filipino* is defined as Filipinos who were born in the Philippines of Filipino parents, meeting all the requirements of natural-born citizenship as defined by relevant laws, who do not have birth certificates;

SEC. 4. *Free Registration of Children Born to Indigent Parents.* – All children born to indigent parents within the Philippines shall have their births registered with the LCR for free. All fees and charges levied by both the national government and the local government unit (LGU) concerned shall be waived.

SEC. 5. *Free Late Registration of Children Born to Indigent Parents.* – All unregistered Filipino children born to indigent parents whose birth has not been registered to the LCR may avail of late registration free of charge. All fees, fines, and charges levied by both the national government and the local government unit (LGU) concerned shall be waived: *Provided*, That the child is not more than five (5) years of age at the time of registration: *Provided, further*, That

SEC. 6. *Role of the Barangay.* – All barangays shall have the following duties and responsibilities on the matter of unregistered Filipino children living within their jurisdictions:

- (a) Monitor all cases of unregistered births among residents of their barangay;
- (b) Approach and encourage parents of unregistered Filipinos to register;
- (c) Provide assistance in the collection of all necessary documents for registration and late registration; and
- (d) Endorse the cases of unregistered births to the municipal or city civil registrar.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), in cooperation and consultation with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act shall be deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected there shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All Acts, Presidential Decrees, Executive Orders and Administrative Orders, Rules and Regulations and other such issuances or parts thereof

which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity*. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,