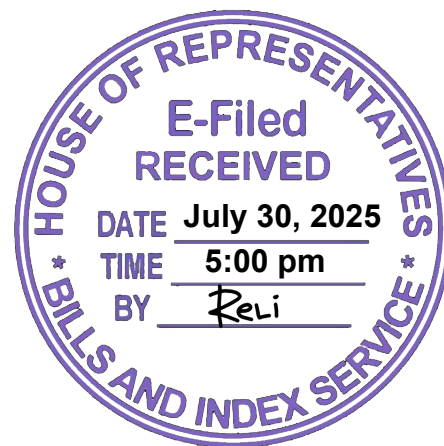


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2718**



Introduced by Representatives Bryan B. Revilla, Lani Mercado-Revilla, and Ramon Jolo B. Revilla III

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AN EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR
IMMEDIATE DEPENDENTS OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs), BOTH
SEA-BASED AND LAND-BASED, WHO DIED OR SUFFERED PERMANENT
DISABILITIES WHILE WORKING ABROAD OR OVERSEAS, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE


Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) make tremendous sacrifices to support their families and contribute to the nation's economy. Unfortunately, some lose their lives or suffer permanent disabilities while working abroad, leaving their families in hardship.

This bill seeks to provide educational scholarships to the immediate dependents of OFWs—both land-based and sea-based—who died or became permanently disabled while working overseas. It aims to help these families by ensuring access to quality education for their children or dependents.

By institutionalizing this support, the government recognizes the heroism of OFWs and helps secure a better future for the loved ones they left behind.


REP. BRYAN B. REVILLA
Representative, AGIMAT Partylist


REP. LANI MERCADO-REVILLA
Representative, 2nd District of Cavite


REP. RAMON JOLO B. REVILLA III
Representative, 1st District of Cavite

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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 “*OFW Dependents Scholarship Act.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – This Act is in furtherance of the following state policies as declared the Constitution, to wit:

1. Section 12, Article II, of the Constitution states: “The State recognizes the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. The natural and primary right and duty of parents in the rearing of the youth for civic efficiency and the development of moral character shall receive the support of the Government.”
2. Section 1, Article XV, of the Constitution provides: “The State recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development.”
3. Section 3, (2) of the same article which says: “The State shall defend:
(2) The right of children to assistance, including, proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development.”

4. Section 2, (3) Article XIV of the Constitution provides: “The State shall:
(3) Establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged.”
5. Article 149 of the Family Code refers to the family as a “basic social institution which public policy cherishes and protects.”
6. Section 18, Article II, of the Labor Code states: “The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.”

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act, the term:

- (a) “*Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW)*” shall refer to a person, whether documented or undocumented, who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a citizen, or on board a vessel navigating the foreign seas other than a government ship used for military or non-commercial purposes, or on an installation located offshore or on the high seas; to be used interchangeably with migrant worker;
- (b) “*Immediate dependent*” refers to the legitimate, legitimated or legally adopted, unmarried and not gainfully employed child of an Overseas Filipino Worker;
- (c) “*Total and permanent disability*” if as a result of the injury or sickness the person is unable to perform any gainful occupation for a continuous period exceeding 120 days.
- (d) “*Documented Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) or Migrant Workers*” refer to those:
 - i. who possess valid passports and visas, or permits to stay in the host country and whose contracts of employment have been processed by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) or
 - ii. registered by the Migrant Workers and Other Overseas Filipinos Resource Center or by the Embassy.

Those who do not fall under the preceding paragraph are considered undocumented OFWs or Migrant Workers.

- (e) “*Undocumented Filipinos*” refer to those:
 - i. who acquired their passports through fraud or misrepresentation;
 - ii. who possess expired visas or permits to stay;
 - iii. who have no travel document whatsoever;
 - iv. who have valid but inappropriate visas;
 - v. who leave the country to work abroad without any documentation from the POEA;

- vi. who initially have papers from the POEA but whose validity expired.

SECTION 4. Coverage. – This Act shall cover immediate dependents of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), whether documented or undocumented, who died or suffered total and permanent disabilities while working abroad. The said immediate dependents are interested and qualified to pursue an educational course or training primarily in the field of science and technology.

SECTION 5. Objective. – The paramount objective of this Act is to provide assistance to immediate dependents of Overseas Filipino Workers who died or suffered total and permanent disability while working abroad or overseas by providing educational scholarship programs as a form of recognition by the State of the OFWs' significant contribution to the national economy.

SECTION 6. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to effectively implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. However, for the initial budgetary requirements of this Act, the amount of One Hundred Million Pesos (Php 100,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the purpose.

SECTION 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Secretary of the Department of Migrant Workers is hereby tasked to implement this Act and shall, in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department Education (DepEd), the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), and other concerned government agencies, formulate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act within ninety (90) days after its effectivity.

SECTION 8. Non-Impairment Clause. – Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, impair, or repeal rights recognized, granted, or made available to disadvantaged, marginalized, or specific sectors under existing laws.

SECTION 9. Separability Clause. - If any part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. Repealing Clause. - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,