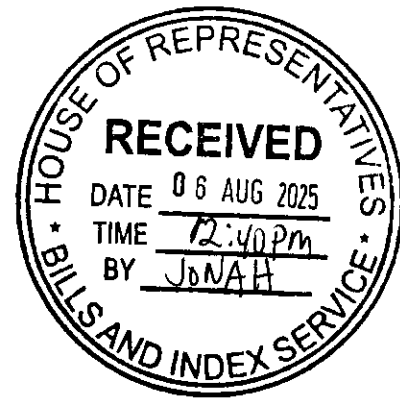


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3208



**Introduced by Rep. KENNETH PAOLO TERENG and
Rep. DANTE S. GARCIA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is home to a vibrant diaspora, with millions of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and migrants residing in various countries across the globe. Despite the challenges of living and working abroad, our kababayans strive to remain connected to their roots and rely heavily on consular offices and service attaches of Philippine government agencies for critical services such as passport renewal, contract verification, legal aid, and enrollment in social protection programs.

Ironically, however, the very days when OFWs are free from work namely, host country holidays and weekends, are the days when Philippine posts abroad are closed. This forces many OFWs to take leave from work, sometimes without pay or at risk of termination, just to access essential government services. Such an arrangement is not only inefficient but unjust, particularly for those in low-wage or precarious employment.

This bill addresses that gap. It mandates all Philippine embassies, consulates, and service attaches abroad to remain operational during official holidays of the host country, as these are the most accessible times for the Filipino migrant community. Moreover, it requires that such posts open for service at least two

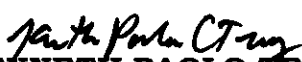
weekends per month, subject to offsetting arrangements to avoid undue burden on personnel.

The measure upholds the State's obligation to make government services accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the realities of overseas life. It embodies the principle that Filipino workers should not be penalized financially or professionally for seeking help from the Philippine government.

The bill also recognizes the indispensable role of OFWs in national development. Their remittances, which reached more than 38 billion US dollars in recent years, are a key pillar of the Philippine economy. Government services must therefore be calibrated to respect their sacrifices and to serve them with compassion and efficiency.

To ensure faithful implementation, the bill includes a penal clause that imposes administrative sanctions on officials who unjustifiably fail to comply.

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


REP. KENNETH PAOLO TERENG
KM Ngayon Na Partylist


REP. DANTE S. GARCIA
2nd District, La Union

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 3208

**Introduced by Rep. KENNETH PAOLO TERENG and
Rep. DANTE S. GARCIA**

AN ACT
MANDATING PHILIPPINE CONSULAR OFFICES AND SERVICE ATTACHES
ABROAD TO OPERATE DURING OFFICIAL HOLIDAYS OF HOST COUNTRIES
AND AT LEAST TWO WEEKEND DAYS A MONTH TO ENABLE OVERSEAS
FILIPINOS TO TRANSACT BUSINESS WITHOUT LOSS OF INCOME, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

*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 Filipinos
Consular Access Act of 2025.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to ensure that the
rights, welfare, and interests of Overseas Filipinos are protected and promoted.
The government shall endeavor to bring services closer to Overseas Filipino
Workers (OFWs) by making these accessible during the times they are most
available, without jeopardizing their employment or income.

**SEC. 3. Mandatory Consular Operations During Host Country Holidays and
Weekends.** All Philippine Embassies, Consulates General, and consular offices

abroad, including service attaches of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and other relevant government agencies, shall:

a) Remain open and provide core services during official public holidays of the host country; and

b) Open for service at least two weekend days per month, which shall be offset with equivalent rest days in accordance with the internal policies of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), DMW, and the Civil Service Commission.

SEC. 4. Flexible and Offset Work Arrangements. Heads of Posts shall adopt flexible and staggered work schedules to allow for compliance with Section 3 while ensuring that personnel are not overburdened. Personnel who work during host country holidays or designated weekends shall be granted compensatory days off and/or additional pay, consistent with government personnel policies.

SEC. 5. Scope of Services. Services to be made available during host country holidays and designated weekends shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Passport and travel document services;
- b. Authentication and notarial services;
- c. Civil registry (birth, marriage, death);
- d. Visa processing (where applicable);
- e. Legal Assistance to Nationals (LAN);
- f. Contract verification and welfare case assistance by the DMW and OWWA;
and
- g. Enrollment and inquiries related to SSS, Pag-IBIG, PhilHealth, and other social protection programs.

SEC. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DFA and DMW, in coordination with the Civil Service

Commission and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SEC. 7. Funding. Funds for the implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the respective budgets of the implementing agencies. Future funding requirements shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. Penal Clause. Failure of any consular post or service office abroad to comply with this Act without justifiable cause shall be subject to administrative sanctions under existing civil service laws and regulations, including reprimand, suspension, or dismissal, depending on the gravity of the offense.

SEC. 9. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions shall not be affected and shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, executive orders, circulars, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 11. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,