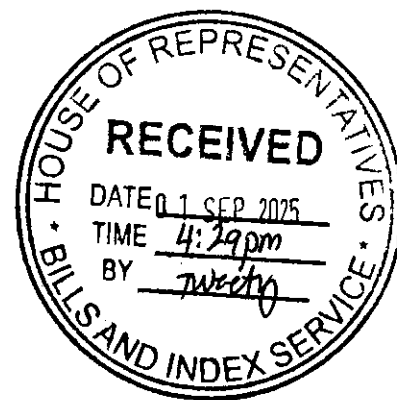


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4278



Introduced by Representative Jan Rurik D. Padiernos, GP (Galing sa Puso) Party-List

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) are indispensable to governance, public administration, and the protection of citizens' rights. Birth, marriage, and death certificates are essential for education, employment, social protection, inheritance, and political participation. However, the Philippines, continues to rely on manual processes, fragmented records, and weak verification, leaving it vulnerable to fraud.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), almost 14.89 million late birth registrations were filed between 2010 and 2024. PSA also blocked 1,501 fraudulent birth registrations linked to foreign nationals, while the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) uncovered at least 1,576 fake certificates issued through late registration from 2018 to 2021. These cases show how delays and fraudulent entries undermine identity integrity, elections, and financial transactions.

There is an urgent need to bring civil registration into the digital age. Digitalization makes registration and issuance of documents faster and more reliable. It reduces backlogs, prevents errors, and strengthens safeguards against fraud. Most of all, it allows government to keep pace with the demands of the digital era where efficient, secure, and technology-driven systems are necessary for protecting rights and delivering services.

In today's digital age, the Philippines cannot afford to lag behind. Modernization of CRVS is also crucial for evidence-based policymaking. Many Filipinos still lack registered birth certificates, which bars access to schools, healthcare, voting, social services, and financial systems. A modern CRVS will ensure universal coverage, protect the right to identity, and provide real-time data for tracking epidemics, maternal mortality, and other public health concerns.

This bill seeks to modernize and strengthen the CRVS system by mandating:

- (1) Complete digitalization of civil registry documents;
- (2) Centralized and secure national databases managed by the PSA;
- (3) Stricter reporting and verification protocols, including biometric validation;

- (4) Linkages with the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) to establish a single, verifiable identity framework; and
- (5) Enhanced penalties for fraudulent registrations and falsification.

This measure also supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16.9 on legal identity for all by 2030. It will secure, simplify, and universalize access to civil registration for all Filipinos.

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



ATTY. JANRURIK D. PADIERNOS
GP (Galing sa Puso) Party-List

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AN ACT
MODERNIZING THE PHILIPPINE CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL
STATISTICS SYSTEM

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 “*Philippine Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Modernization Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to ensure universal, accessible, accurate, and fraud-resistant civil registration by adopting modern technologies, centralizing vital records, and establishing strong identity verification systems consistent with data privacy and human rights standards.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* - This Act shall cover the registration, storage, and issuance of birth, marriage, death, annulment, adoption, legitimation, recognition, divorce, if legalized, and other vital events, including foreign-issued documents that must be registered in the Philippines.

SEC. 4. *Modernization of Civil Registration.* - The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) shall lead the modernization and shall:

- (1) Establish a fully digital, paperless civil registration system;
- (2) Maintain a centralized, encrypted national civil registry database;
- (3) Develop an online platform for registration, verification, and issuance of vital documents;
- (4) Integrate biometric and demographic verification using Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) data;
- (5) Provide interoperability with government agencies between and among the eGov of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Commission on Election (COMELEC), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Social Security System (SSS), Government Security Insurance System (GSIS),

Philippine Health Insurance, Inc. (PhilHealth), and others relevant government agencies.

Provided, That all local civil registry offices (LCROs) shall be connected to the national database and shall implement real-time digital registration and reporting.

SEC. 5. Reporting and Verification Protocols. - All registrations shall undergo PhilSys-based verification, including biometric validation when applicable: *Provided*, That late or delayed registrations shall be subject to stricter scrutiny, affidavit requirements, and approval by the PSA: *Provided, however*, That duplicate and fraudulent records shall be flagged and invalidated through the national system.

SEC. 6. Protection of Data and Privacy. - All civil registration records shall be subject to the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, with strict access controls, audit trails, and penalties for unauthorized disclosure.

SEC. 7. Linkage with PhilSys.- Every registered vital event shall be automatically linked to the registrant's PhilSys Number (PSN). The PSA shall ensure synchronization between civil registry data and PhilSys records: *Provided*, That government transactions shall gradually transition to requiring digitally verifiable civil registry documents.

SEC. 8. Accessibility of Services. - Every Filipino citizen shall have the right to request certified digital copies of civil registry documents through PSA-authorized platforms. Physical copies may only be available upon request and that registration services shall be made accessible in remote and underserved areas through mobile registration units.

SEC. 9. Cybersecurity Safeguards - The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and the National Privacy Commission (NPC), shall implement and enforce cybersecurity measures consistent with national and international best practices to protect the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of civil registration and vital statistics records.

For this purpose, the PSA shall:

1. Implement recognized encryption and security standards for the storage, processing, and transmission of civil registry data;
2. Conduct periodic and independent security audits, vulnerability assessments, and penetration testing to proactively address potential risks;
3. Establish an incident response framework, including the timely notification of affected individuals and relevant government bodies in the event of a security breach;
4. Impose binding cybersecurity and data protection obligations upon any private contractors, service providers, or third parties engaged in the CRVS system; and

5. Undertake continuous capacity-building programs to enhance the cybersecurity awareness and technical competence of personnel at national and local civil registry offices.

SEC. 10. *Offenses and Penalties.* - Any person who knowingly submits false or fraudulent documents for civil registration shall suffer a penalty of imprisonment of prison mayor and a fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱500,000.00) to One Million Pesos (₱1,000,000.00): *Provided*, That any public officer who connives in fraudulent registrations shall be dismissed from service, permanently disqualified from public office, and subject to the same penalties.

SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The PSA is authorized to use income from civil registry services to fund modernization efforts.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The PSA, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), National Privacy Commission (NPC), and relevant agencies, shall issue the IRR within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain valid and in full force.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, rules, or regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,