

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5513



Introduced by 2nd District of Iloilo Representative
HON. KATHRYN JOYCE F. GORRICETA, M.D.

AN ACT
INCREASING THE EMPLOYMENT QUOTA FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITY IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS TO TWO PERCENT
(2%), AMENDING SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE "MAGNA CARTA FOR DISABLED PERSONS," AS
AMENDED

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution, under Article II, Section 11, affirms that the State shall value the dignity of every human person and guarantee full respect for human rights. Furthermore, Article XIII, Section 13 mandates the establishment of a special agency to promote the rehabilitation, self-reliance, and integration of persons with disability (PWDs) into the mainstream of society. These constitutional provisions provide the legal foundation for inclusive employment policies that recognize PWDs—including those with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders (ASD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Down Syndrome, physical disabilities such as those caused by polio, as well as sensory impairments like deafness, muteness, and blindness—as productive and active members of the workforce.

Republic Act No. 7277, or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, as amended by Republic Act No. 10524, institutionalized the principle of equal opportunity by requiring at least one percent of positions in government agencies to be reserved for PWDs, while merely encouraging private corporations with more than one hundred employees to follow suit. Despite this legislative mandate, persons with disability continue to face disproportionate barriers in the labor market. The 2020 Census reported that 8.7 percent of Filipinos aged five and older live with at least one functional difficulty, representing millions of potential workers if barriers to participation were removed. Yet, according to studies, only 57 percent of working-age PWDs were employed in 2020 compared to 93.4 percent of the general population, with formal employment rates as low as 19 percent. Poverty incidence among PWDs has been estimated between 30 to 60 percent, significantly higher than the national average of 25 percent. These figures demonstrate the inadequacy of the current one percent quota and its failure to accommodate diverse groups of PWDs.

The employment challenges faced by PWDs in the Philippines are both systemic and cultural. Discrimination, stigma, and a lack of workplace accommodations discourage employers from hiring PWDs. Many workplaces remain physically inaccessible, and few provide adaptive technologies or flexible arrangements that would allow employees with ASD, ADHD, Down

Syndrome, or physical and sensory disabilities to perform their roles effectively. Incomes are also markedly unequal; female PWDs, for instance, earn less than their male counterparts, reflecting a double disadvantage based on both gender and disability. Digital platforms have opened new avenues for employment, but online work often comes with informal arrangements, lack of protection, and increased stress for PWD workers. Adding to these difficulties, many PWDs remain unaware of their rights under existing laws, making them vulnerable to exclusion and exploitation.

These national patterns are reinforced by smaller-scale studies. A 2020 survey conducted in Metro Manila identified employment profiles classified by functional difficulties such as seeing, hearing, walking, concentrating, self-care, and communication, demonstrating that PWDs—including those with high-functioning developmental and sensory disabilities—are capable of a wide range of tasks when given the right opportunities. Regional prevalence surveys in provinces like Albay and Quezon City, which estimated disability rates between 6.5 percent and 13.6 percent, further highlight the unmet demand for support services and underscore the disadvantages PWDs face in accessing both education and employment.

The Philippines has enacted a series of laws to support PWDs, starting as early as 1954 and culminating in the Magna Carta and its amendments. However, despite these legal frameworks, implementation gaps persist. Local governments often lack the financial resources and institutional capacity to deliver auxiliary social services consistently. This fragmentation of policy and weak enforcement has allowed PWDs—particularly those with neurodevelopmental and sensory conditions—to remain marginalized in both the public and private sectors.

International experience shows that stronger quotas can deliver measurable impact. Japan, for example, has steadily raised its statutory quota for disability employment and is set to increase the private-sector requirement from 2.5 percent to 2.7 percent by 2026, with records showing more than 677,000 employed PWDs nationwide. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) has identified quota-based approaches, when properly enforced and supported by training and accommodations, as among the most effective strategies for integrating PWDs into the workforce.

Increasing the quota in the Philippines from one percent to two percent in both government and large private companies would align the country with global benchmarks while addressing the glaring gap in labor participation. This adjustment alone could generate at least 67,000 additional stable jobs nationwide and inject an estimated ₱12 billion annually into household incomes. Such a measure would reduce poverty incidence among PWDs, stimulate local economies, and decrease dependence on subsidies. Crucially, this bill transforms the language of the Magna Carta from encouragement into obligation by making compliance mandatory across both sectors, with the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Labor and Employment tasked to monitor compliance and impose administrative sanctions on violators.

By raising the employment quota to two percent, this measure strengthens the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons and fulfills the constitutional mandate to uphold the dignity and rights of persons with disability. It expands economic opportunity, ensures accountability, and demonstrates that disability inclusion is not charity but a matter of justice, equality, and national development.

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


KATHRYN JOY C. GORRICETA, M.D.
Representative
2nd District of Iloilo

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5513

Introduced by 2nd District of Iloilo Representative
HON. KATHRYN JOYCE F. GORRICETA, M.D.

AN ACT
INCREASING THE EMPLOYMENT QUOTA FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITY IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS TO TWO PERCENT
(2%), AMENDING SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE “MAGNA CARTA FOR DISABLED PERSONS,” AS
AMENDED

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 “PWD Employment Quota Act of 2025.”

SEC. 2. Section 5 of Republic Act No. 7277, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“SECTION 5. Equal Opportunity for Employment. – No person with disability shall be denied access to opportunities for suitable employment. A qualified employee with disability shall be subject to the same terms and conditions of employment and the same compensation, privileges, benefits, fringe benefits, incentives or allowances as a qualified able bodied person.

“For purposes of this section, Persons with Disability (PWDs) include those with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), including high-functioning forms; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and other neurodevelopmental disorders; intellectual disabilities such as Down Syndrome; physical disabilities, including those resulting from conditions such as polio; sensory disabilities, including those who are

deaf, hard of hearing, mute, blind, or with speech impairments; and other similar conditions as may be recognized by the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) in consultation with the Department of Health (DOH).

“At least [~~one percent (1%)~~] TWO PERCENT (2%) of all positions in all government agencies, offices or corporations shall be reserved for persons with disability: Provided, That private corporations with more than one hundred (100) employees are encouraged to reserve at least one percent (1%) of all positions for persons with disability.

“COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PROVISION SHALL BE MONITORED ANNUALLY BY THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR. FAILURE TO COMPLY SHALL BE SUBJECT TO ADMINISTRATIVE FINES AND PENALTIES UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT, WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO FINES AND PENALTIES UNDER EXISTING LAWS AND REGULATIONS.”

SEC. 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CSC and DOLE shall issue the necessary rules and guidelines within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC 4. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC 5. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC 6. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,