

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE

Introduced by Hon. Julianne "Jam" L. Baronda

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The presence of undocumented foreign nationals in the Philippines is a longstanding reality. Many have lived here for decades—raising families, building businesses, studying in our schools, and quietly contributing to our economy and communities. They speak our languages, share our values, and are deeply woven into the fabric of our society. Yet, without legal status, they remain vulnerable to harassment, extortion, and exploitation.

This bill establishes a **Special Regularization and Administrative Naturalization Program** to provide a lawful pathway for certain long-time undocumented residents to secure legal status and, ultimately, Philippine citizenship. This is not a blanket amnesty but a targeted policy, grounded in Philippine values and constitutional principles, with strict qualifications to ensure that only those of good character, long-term residence, and proven integration benefit.

The measure acknowledges that many of these individuals have followed our laws in all respects except for their immigration status—often due to circumstances beyond their control. It seeks to end the cycle of legal uncertainty that enables abuse, while harnessing their proven loyalty and contributions to national development.

By granting them the means to regularize their status, we uphold the principles of justice, human dignity, and inclusion. We also strengthen our commitment to the rule of law by replacing vulnerability with legal certainty.

The Filipino identity is defined not solely by birthplace or bloodline, but by enduring commitment to our nation's values, culture, and progress. Approving this measure is both a moral responsibility and a practical step toward nation-building.

Hence, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

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HON. JULIENNE “JAM” L. BARONDA
Representative
The Lone District of Iloilo

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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5837

Introduced by Hon. Julianne "Jam" L. Baronda

AN ACT INSTITUTING A SPECIAL REGULARIZATION
PROGRAM FOR UNDOCUMENTED FOREIGN NATIONALS,
PROVIDING FOR THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE NATURALIZATION,
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 "**Special
Regularization and Administrative Naturalization Act of 2025.**"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – The International Covenant on Civil
and Political Rights, which was adopted by the Philippines on December 19,
1966 and ratified on October 23, 1986, provides that: “Each State Party...
undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and
subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant,
without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion,
political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other
status.”

It is the state's policy to uphold these individuals' human dignity, ensure
their social integration, and promote their economic development by
providing a lawful path to regularization and eventual naturalization after
they establish deep personal, educational, or economic ties in the Philippines
and demonstrate loyalty to the Republic.

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

- a. **Undocumented Foreign National** – A non-Filipino who resides in the
Philippines without valid immigration documentation or who entered
the country legally but has since overstayed.
- b. **Regularization** – The process of granting legal residency status to an
undocumented foreign national under this Act.

- 97 c. **Administrative Naturalization** – The grant of Philippine citizenship
98 through an administrative proceeding, as opposed to a judicial or
99 legislative process, for qualified applicants under this Act.
100

101 **SECTION. 4. Creation of the Special Naturalization and Regularization**
102 **Board (SNRB)** – To ensure the attainment of the objectives of this Act,
103 there is hereby created a Special Naturalization and Regularization Board
104 under the Office of the President, hereinafter referred to as the SNRB, which
105 shall be organized within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Act.
106 SNRB shall receive, evaluate, and decide on petitions for regularization and
107 administrative naturalization of undocumented or long-residing foreign
108 nationals in the Philippines, in accordance with the qualifications and
109 procedures provided by law.

110
111 The SNRB shall have the following powers and functions:
112

- 113 a. **Receive and Docket Applications** - Accept and docket all petitions for
114 regularization and administrative naturalization filed by qualified
115 foreign nationals under the Act.
116
117 b. **Conduct Preliminary Evaluation.** – Examine completeness and
118 sufficiency of documentary requirements, and dismiss petitions that are
119 facially defective or manifestly unqualified.
120
121 c. **Hold Hearings and Investigations.** – Conduct hearings, public or in
122 chambers, to receive evidence, hear witnesses, and verify the
123 truthfulness of claims in petitions.
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125 d. **Summon and Administer Oaths.** – Issue subpoenas, require the
126 production of evidence, and administer oaths to petitioners, affiants,
127 and witnesses.
128
129 e. **Coordinate with Government Agencies.** – Request assistance,
130 information, or verification from agencies such as the Bureau of
131 Immigration (BI), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Department
132 of Education (DepEd), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), and local
133 government units.
134
135 f. **Evaluate and Decide Petitions.** – Render decisions on petitions for
136 regularization and administrative naturalization based on compliance
137 with legal requirements, character assessment, and evidence of
138 integration and allegiance.
139
140 g. **Issue Certificates.** – Upon approval of the petition, issue a **Certificate**
141 **of Regularized Residency and Administrative Naturalization**, which
142 shall serve as proof of legal status and citizenship.
143

- 144 h. **Deny or Revoke Applications.** – Deny petitions based on fraud,
145 ineligibility, or misrepresentation, and recommend revocation of
146 certificates previously granted upon discovery of such grounds.
147
- 148 i. **Maintain a Registry and Archive.** – Maintain an official registry of
149 all applications filed, approved, or denied, and submit periodic reports
150 to Congress and the Office of the President.
151
- 152 j. **Promulgate Internal Rules.** – Adopt and implement internal
153 procedural rules and guidelines necessary to carry out its functions
154 effectively and efficiently, subject to the Implementing Rules and
155 Regulations (IRR).
156
- 157 k. **Recommend Policy Improvements.** – Submit to Congress and
158 relevant agencies policy recommendations to improve future
159 naturalization and immigration processes.
160
- 161 l. **Perform Other Functions Necessary or Incidental.** – Exercise such
162 other powers and functions as may be necessary or incidental to
163 carrying out its mandate under the law.
164

165 **SECTION 5. Composition of the SNRB.** – The SNRB shall be headed
166 by a Director to be appointed by the President of the Philippines, as
167 recommended by the Secretary of Justice. The Director shall oversee the
168 day-to-day operations of the SNRB and shall be assisted by an Assistant
169 Director. The Secretary of the DOJ shall determine the organizational
170 structure and staffing pattern of the SNRB in accordance with the existing
171 compensation and position classification system, subject to the evaluation
172 and approval of the Department of Budget and Management.
173

174 **SECTION 6. Coverage.** – This Act shall apply to foreign nationals who:
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- 176 a. Have continuously resided in the Philippines for **at least ten (10) years**
177 **and completed their primary education in the Philippines** prior to
178 the effectivity of this Act; **OR**
- 179 b. Were **born in the Philippines** and have completed **primary and**
180 **secondary education** in Philippine schools recognized by the
181 government.
182

183 **SECTION 7. Requirements for Regularization.** – To qualify under this
184 Act, an applicant must:
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- 186 a. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of filing;
187 b. Have no derogatory record involving crimes punishable under
188 Philippine law, except when the offense charged relates to their being
189 undocumented aliens and their efforts to hide this status;
190 c. Demonstrate that they are of good moral character and have conducted
191 themselves as proper and law-abiding residents;

- d. Possess a working knowledge of Philippine history, civics, and the English or Filipino language;
- e. Possess some known and lawful trade, profession, or occupation, or sufficient means to support themselves and their dependents.

SECTION 8. Petition and Procedure. – A petition for regularization and administrative naturalization shall be filed with the SNRB, which shall be constituted under this Act. The petition shall include:

- a. Affidavits of two credible Filipino citizens vouching for the applicant's character;
- b. Proof of continuous residence or proof of birth and education in the Philippines;
- c. NBI, police, and immigration clearances;
- d. Certificate of employment, business permit, or other evidence of means of livelihood;
- e. Certification of non-pendency of deportation or exclusion proceedings from the Bureau of Immigration, excluding proceedings relating to overstaying and misrepresentation as Filipinos in their papers.

The Bureau of Immigration shall issue the needed clearance despite the applicant's previous offense of concealing or misrepresenting his undocumented status.

SECTION 9. Processing and Recommendation by the SNRB – The SNRB shall prepare and finalize a recommendation on applications filed with it within ninety (90) days from the date of filing of all the requirements. All recommendations on applications shall be transmitted within five (5) days from finalization thereof to the Secretary of Justice. The Secretary of Justice shall act on the SNRB recommendation within sixty (60) days from receipt thereof.

SECTION 10. Effect of Approval. – Upon approval of the petition by the Secretary of Justice, the applicant shall be issued a **Certificate of Regularized Residency and Administrative Naturalization (CRRAN)**, which shall serve as proof of lawful residence and grant the rights of a Filipino citizen, subject to the provisions of the Revised Naturalization Law and applicable laws. The issuance of the CRRAN shall extinguish any criminal and administrative liability directly arising from any violation of the applicant relating to his being an undocumented alien and his efforts to hide such status.

SECTION 11. Rights and Privileges. – Successful applicants shall enjoy all civil and political rights accorded to Filipino citizens, except those reserved under the Constitution to natural-born citizens. The foregoing notwithstanding, successful applicants who were born here in the Philippines and who have resided here for more than ten (10) years shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of a natural-born Filipino citizen.

241 **SECTION 12. Revocation.** – The grant of naturalization may be revoked if
242 it is later discovered that it was obtained through fraud, misrepresentation, or
243 concealment of material facts.

244
245 **SECTION 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within **sixty (60)**
246 **days** from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Justice, in
247 consultation with the Bureau of Immigration and relevant stakeholders, shall
248 promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

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250 **SECTION 14. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary to carry out the
251 provisions of this Act shall be included in the budget of the Department of
252 Justice under the General Appropriations Act.

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254 **SECTION 15. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is
255 declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force
256 and effect.

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258 **SECTION 16. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, executive orders, rules, and
259 regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed
260 or modified accordingly.

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262 **SECTION 17. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
263 after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of
264 general circulation.

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266 **Approved,**

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