

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5959



Introduced by **Representative Ryan S. Recto**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This legislative measure seeks to exempt the payment of fees and charges for all children born to indigent parents. This bill seeks to eliminate the financial cost of obtaining these essential documents, which reinforces the government's commitment to inclusive development and to the protection of the most vulnerable sectors of society.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reports that over 3.7 million people born in the Philippines have no registered birth certificates. Of this number, 1.4 million are children aged 0 to 14 are living in remote and disadvantaged areas where acquiring birth certificates remains difficult. Without a birth certificate, children remain unrecognized by the government, making them invisible in official records. As a result, they are deprived of vital public services that uphold their basic rights, such as access to healthcare and education, as well as social protection programs designed to safeguard them from exploitation and abuse. According to a study, the data gathered from birth records enables governments to determine how and where to allocate resources effectively and to identify priority areas for development programs such as education and immunization. Accurate registration information allows policymakers to assess community needs and make informed decisions on resource distribution.

It is therefore imperative that we establish a framework that shall henceforth afford these to all individuals born to indigent parents. In this way and manner, we are able to remove the primary financial barrier to official documentation.

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


Ryan S. Recto
Representative
6th District, Batangas

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AN ACT
EXEMPTING THE PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE ISSUANCE OF
BIRTH CERTIFICATES FOR INDIGENTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Free Birth Certificate*
2 *Act.*”
3

4 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The state shall promote and maintain an
5 efficient, responsive, inclusive and accessible civil registration. Toward this end,
6 standardization and modernization of registration procedures are necessary to
7 establish the identity of an individual for administrative and legal purposes. The State
8 has the mandate to protect and uphold the rights of the citizens, a duty it cannot fulfill
9 if it does not know who its citizens are.
10

11 Sec 3. Coverage. – All indigent Filipino citizens shall be eligible for this act. This
12 shall cover members of Indigenous Cultural Communities or Indigenous Peoples
13 (ICCs/IPs).
14

15 Sec 4. *Free Registration of Children Born to Indigent Parents.* – All children
16 born to indigent parents within the Philippines shall have their birth rights registered
17 with the Local Civil Registry (LCR) free of charge. All fees and charges levied by both
18 the national government and the local government unit (LGU) shall be waived.
19

20 Sec. 5. *Free Delayed Registration of Birth to Indigent Parents.* – All unregistered
21 Filipino children born to indigent parents whose birth has not been registered to the
22 LCR may avail themselves of late registration, free of charge. The Sangguniang
23 Barangay shall assist in the implementation of the program through the Barangay Civil
24 Registration System.
25

26 In addition, the Office of Civil Registrar-General (OCRG), the Department of
27 Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the National Commission on Indigenous
28 Peoples (NCIP) shall jointly prepare a Free Delayed Registration Program for
29 Indigenous Peoples (FDRIP), which the local government units and the NCIP regional
30 or local offices in the localities concerned shall implement.

31
32 Sec. 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of the
33 provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act
34 following its enactment into law.

35
36 Sec. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety days (90) after
37 the effectivity of this Act, the National Statistician and Civil Registrar-General of the
38 PSA shall promulgate the IRR for the effective implementation of this Act. Within
39 ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the OCRG shall issue implementing
40 rules and regulations for the free delayed registration program, as mandated in
41 Section 5 of this Act.

42
43 Sec. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any provision of this Act is
44 declared unconstitutional or invalid, such parts or portions not affected thereby shall
45 remain in full force and effect.

46
47 Sec. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
48 issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of
49 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

50
51 Sec. 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
52 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the Official
53 Gazette.

54
55 *Approved,*