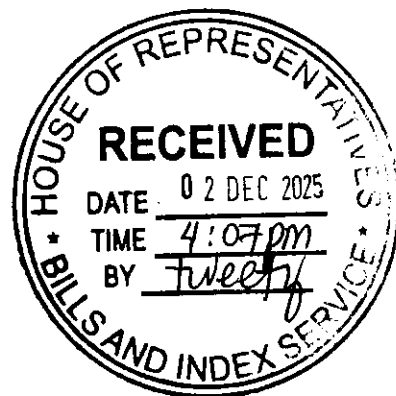




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6558



Introduced by Honorable Roger G. Mercado

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article III, Section 6 of the 1987 Constitution accords to the Filipino the fundamental right to travel; this is further reinforced by virtue of Republic Act No. 8239, otherwise known as the Philippine Passport Act. In the era of globalization and a rising middle class, outbound travel has become increasingly important for many Filipinos, whether it be for business or pleasure. Evidently, in 2024, departing Filipinos cleared by the Bureau of Immigration reached a total of 8, 348,283, a steady increase since travel restrictions resulted to a severe drop in outbound travel during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In recognition of this growing reality, this representation, seeks to improve access to passport and related consular services that will enable our constituents to further exercise their right to travel. Presently, there exists single DFA Consular Office in Tacloban City servicing the provinces of Leyte, Southern Leyte, Biliran, Samar, Northern Samar and Eastern Samar. For these reasons, this bill shall aim to establish a Passport Service Satellite Office in the City of Maasin, Province of Southern Leyte.

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

ROGER G. MERCADO



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AN ACT

ESTABLISHING A PASSPORT SERVICE SATELITE OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA) IN THE CITY OF MAASIN, PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Establishment of a DFA Passport Service Satellite Office-*
There shall be established, under the supervision of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), a Passport Service Satellite Office in the City of Maasin, Province of Southern Leyte, to provide passport and related consular services to the residents of the area and the adjacent local government units (LGUs).

SEC. 2. *Staffing,* - The Secretary of Foreign Affairs shall assign the necessary personnel and provide the appropriate equipment, facilities, and material for the effective operation of the Passport Service Satellite Office.

SEC. 3. *Appropriations.* - *The amount necessary for the establishment and operation of the Passport Service Satellite Office shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) following the enactment of this Act.*

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - *Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Foreign Affairs shall issue necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.*

SEC. 5.- *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,