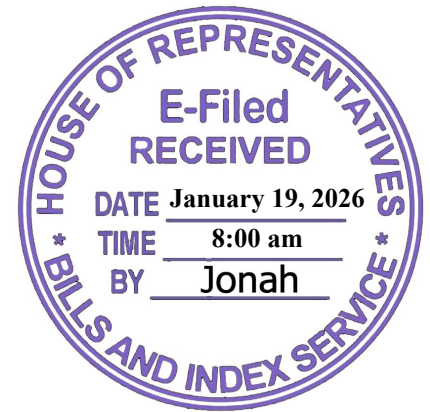




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. 7153

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Every Filipino child has the right to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with his or her education, or to be harmful to his or her health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development (Article 32 of Convention on the Rights of the Child).

Latest data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that the number of working children aged 5 to 17 has decreased to 678,000 in year 2023 from 828,000 in 2022. Though there was an improvement, more than half a million child laborers is still a huge number.¹

Republic Act No. 7610 as amended by Republic Act No. 9231 provides for the prohibition against worst forms of child labor and punishes employers for such practices, namely: (a) all forms of slavery, as defined under the "Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003"; (b) the use, procuring, offering or exposing of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illegal or illicit activities; and (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is hazardous or is likely to be harmful to the health, safety or morals of children.

Unfortunately, since the enactment of Republic Act No. 9231 in 2003, prohibiting worst forms of child labor, child labor remains prevalent in the country. Clearly, this situation shows that the penalties presently imposed are not sufficient to deter the continued illegal employment of children.

Thus, this bill seeks to provide greater penalties for violations of Republic Act No. 7610 as amended by Republic Act No. 9231 by imposing both imprisonment and fine for every instance that a child is engaged in employment other than in the instances permitted by law. This bill also proposes to raise the fines imposed on employers who continue to engage in illegal child labor practices.

¹ November 9, 2025. Ending child labor in PH. Inquirer. Available at <https://opinion.inquirer.net/187330/ending-child-labor-in-ph>. (Accessed on January 12, 2026.)

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


EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA



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HOUSE BILL NO. 7153

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EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

AN ACT
AMENDING SECTION 16 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7610, AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9231, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE SPECIAL PROTECTION
OF CHILDREN AGAINST CHILD ABUSE, EXPLOITATION AND DISCRIMINATION
ACT

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Section 16 of Republic Act No. 7610, as amended by Republic Act
2 No. 9231, otherwise known as Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse,
3 Exploitation and Discrimination Act, is hereby amended to read as follows:

4
5 Sec. 16. Penal Provisions -

- 6 a) Any employer who violates Sections 12, 12-A, and Section 14 of this
7 act, as amended, shall be penalized by imprisonment of six (6) months
8 and one (1) day to six (6) years [or] **AND** a fine of [Fifty thousand
9 (Php50,000.00) but not more than Three hundred thousand pesos
10 (Php300,000.00)] **NOT LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY**
11 **THOUSAND PESOS** (Php150,000.00) [or both at the discretion of the
12 court].
13 b) Any person who violates the provision of Section 12-D of this act or
14 the employer of the subcontractor who employs, or the one who
15 facilitates the employment of a child in hazardous work, shall suffer the
16 penalty of a fine of not less than [One hundred thousand pesos (Php
17 100,000.00) but not more than One million pesos (Php1,000,000.00)]
18 **THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS** (Php300,000.000) [or] **AND**
19 imprisonment of not less than twelve (12) years and one (1) day to
20 twenty (20) years [or both such fine and imprisonment at the discretion
21 of the court].
22

23 **SEC. 2. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within sixty (60) days from
24 the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Labor and Employment, in coordination

1 with other agencies and relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules and
2 regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

3
4 **SEC. 3. Separability Clause.** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared
5 unconstitutional, the remainder hereof or any provisions not affected thereby shall
6 remain in force and effect.

7
8 **SEC. 4. Repealing Clause.** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
9 executive order, letter of instruction, rule, or regulation inconsistent with the provisions
10 of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

11 **SEC. 5. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
12 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

13
14 *Approved,*