

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8209



Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution upholds social justice, human dignity, and the reintegration of individuals into society. While the penal system exists to impose accountability for criminal offenses, it also recognizes rehabilitation as a core objective of punishment. Reintegration into the workforce is one of the most decisive factors in preventing recidivism and promoting long-term public safety.

In the Philippines, formerly incarcerated individuals frequently encounter significant barriers to employment. Standard hiring procedures often require clearance from the Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation. While such clearances serve legitimate public interest functions, they may also reinforce stigma that limits employment prospects, even for individuals who have fully served their sentences or have been lawfully released.

Recent data from correctional authorities indicate that tens of thousands of persons are released annually from national prisons, jails, and community-based corrections programs. However, post-release employment placement mechanisms remain limited and largely dependent on informal networks. International studies consistently show that unemployment among formerly incarcerated individuals remains significantly higher than the general population, particularly within the first year of release—a period strongly correlated with recidivism risk.

The economic landscape has evolved in recent years, with overall employment levels recovering from the pandemic period. Nonetheless, labor market competition has intensified, and vulnerable sectors, including persons with criminal records, remain disproportionately excluded. Without structured reintegration support, former prisoners face diminished earning capacity, financial instability, and increased social marginalization.

This measure seeks to promote the employment of qualified former prisoners through structured incentives and reintegration mechanisms. By encouraging private sector participation and facilitating access to lawful employment opportunities, the State affirms its commitment to restorative justice. Meaningful employment enables

returning citizens to rebuild identity, restore family stability, contribute productively to the economy, and significantly reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

Rehabilitation cannot end at the prison gates. Sustainable reintegration requires access to dignified work. By supporting employment pathways for qualified former prisoners, this measure advances public safety, economic inclusion, and social justice.

It is for these reasons that this bill is earnestly sought.



ALFRED C. DELOS SANTOS
Representative, Ang Probinsyano Party-List

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8209

Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

AN ACT
ENCOURAGING THE EMPLOYMENT OF FORMER PRISONER IN THE PRIVATE
SECTOR AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Bagong Laya, Bagong Buhay Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to aid former prisoners to continue their reformation and help them reintegrate into society after they have been released from prison.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – For the purposes of this Act:

- a) Business establishments refer to private companies that employ former prisoners.
- b) Committee refers to the Committee on Employment Opportunities for Former Prisoners under the Department of Justice.
- c) Former prisoners refer: a) to those convicted by the final judgment and who have been released on probation, parole, pardon; b) served the sentence imposed or has been lawfully released through parole, executive clemency, or completion of sentence; c) has been issued a Certificate of Release or Completion of Sentence by the appropriate correctional authority.

SECTION 4. Tax Incentives for Private Business Establishments. – Upon the effectivity of this Act, business establishments that will employ former prisoners as employees shall be entitled to an additional deduction from their gross income, equivalent to twenty percent (20%) of the total amount paid as salaries, wages, and health benefits to former prisoners, subject to the provision of Section 34 of the NIRC,

as amended: Provided, however, That such employment shall continue for a period of at least six (6) months.

SECTION 5. Administrative Coordination. – The Department of Justice (DOJ), through the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) and the Parole and Probation Administration (PPA), shall establish a verification mechanism for purposes of certifying eligible Former Prisoners. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall ensure compliance with labor standards laws. No new permanent office shall be created under this Act.

SECTION 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Secretary of the Department of Justice and the Department of Labor and Employment shall, within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, issue such rules and regulations necessary for the proper implementation of the provisions of this law.

SECTION 7. Appropriations. – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter. An initial amount of One Hundred Million Pesos (P100,000,000.00) shall be allocated for the first year of its implementation.

SECTION 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, executive issuances, or letters of instructions, or any part thereof, inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. Separability Clause. – If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts thereof not affected shall remain valid.

SECTION 10. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,