

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10230



Introduced by **Rep. MANUEL “WOWO” L. FORTES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A birth certificate is the foundation of legal identity. Without it, a child is denied access to education, healthcare, and social services, and remains invisible to the State. Yet millions of Filipinos, especially children from indigent families, continue to live without this essential document due to the costs and penalties imposed for registration.

This measure seeks to remove those financial barriers by mandating free birth registration and late registration for children of indigent parents, as well as free registration for foundlings. It also empowers barangays to monitor and assist families, while directing national agencies to ensure proper implementation.

By guaranteeing free and universal birth registration, the State fulfills its duty to protect the rights of every Filipino child, uphold their dignity, and secure their access to the privileges of citizenship.

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


ATTY. MANUEL “WOWO” L. FORTES, JR.
Representative
Second District, Province of Sorsogon

Twentieth Congress of the
Republic of the Philippines
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Introduced by **Rep. MANUEL “WOWO” L. FORTES**

**AN ACT ENSURING FREE BIRTH REGISTRATION FOR INDIGENT FILIPINO
CHILDREN AND PROVIDING FUNDS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION**

*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 referred to as the "Free Birth Registration Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to ensure that all Filipino children, most especially the marginalized, are afforded full protection of the law, given all possible opportunities to grow into productive citizens, and can enjoy all the privileges and benefits of Filipino citizenship. The State shall ensure that all Filipino children are given the full documentation necessary to establish their legal identities as soon as possible. Towards this end, the State shall develop and implement mechanisms to ensure the registration of every Filipino upon birth.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (a) Indigents are defined as Filipinos who are part of the poorest of the poor as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in accordance with relevant laws;
- (b) Late Registration is defined as the failure to register the birth of a Filipino with the local civil registrar (LCR) within thirty (30) days as provided for by Act No. 3753, or the "Civil Registry Law of the Philippines";

- (c) Unregistered Filipino is defined as Filipinos who were born in the Philippines of Filipino parents, meeting all the requirements of natural-born citizenship as defined by relevant laws, who do not have birth certificates;
- (d) Timely Registration of Birth - refers to all births registered in the Office of the Civil Registrar of the city/municipality where the birth occurred or, as the case may provide, within thirty (30) days from the time of birth.

SEC. 4. *Free Registration of Children Born to Indigent Parents.* – All children born to indigent parents within the Philippines shall have their births registered with the LCR for free. All fees and charges levied by both the national government and the local government unit (LGU) concerned shall be waived.

SEC. 5. *Free Late Registration of Children Born to Indigent Parents.* – All unregistered Filipino children born to indigent parents whose birth has not been registered to the LCR may avail of late registration free of charge. All fees, fines, and charges levied by both the national government and the local government unit (LGU) concerned shall be waived: *Provided*, That the child is not more than five (5) years of age at the time of registration.

SEC. 6. *Free Registration of Children Born to Indigent Parents.* – No fees and penalties shall be imposed on Timely Registration of Births for individuals with indigent and underprivileged parents, as defined in Section 3 of this Act, and in all cases of registration of a Foundling.

SEC. 7. *Role of the Barangay.* – All barangays shall have the following duties and responsibilities on the matter of unregistered Filipino children living within their jurisdictions:

- (a) Monitor all cases of unregistered births among residents of their barangay;
- (b) Approach and encourage parents of unregistered Filipinos to register;
- (c) Provide assistance in the collection of all necessary documents for registration and late registration; and
- (d) Endorse the cases of unregistered births to the municipal or city civil registrar.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), in cooperation and consultation with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act shall be deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All Acts, Presidential Decrees, Executive Orders, Administrative Orders, Rules and Regulations, and other such issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,