

'22 NOV 23 A11 :26

**SENATE**  
S. No. 1529

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Introduced by Senator MARK A. VILLAR

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**AN ACT**  
**ADJUSTING THE MONTHLY PENSION AND DISABILITY BENEFITS OF**  
**RETIREES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND**  
**APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PUBLIC PURPOSE**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The State recognizes the invaluable service of Philippine foreign service employees to the country which have helped advance Philippine interests, improve relations with other countries, and protect Filipinos globally. A huge burden is placed upon the shoulders of our diplomats in representing our nation across the world. Their service to the country is immeasurable and incalculable. Hence, to increase in entitlement to monthly pensions and disability benefits of retirees of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to be at par with the current pay scale enjoyed by those in active service is small price to pay for the country.

This is consistent with Section 8 of Article the 1987 Philippine Constitution which mandates that:

"The State shall, from time to time, review to upgrade the pensions and other benefits due to retirees of both the government and private sectors."

Further, Section 62 of Republic Act No. 7157, otherwise known as the Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991, in part provides that

"The President upon recommendation of the Secretary may, as soon as practicable, submit for enactment by Congress a foreign affairs retirement and disability system, taking into account the difficulties of foreign service personnel in setting aside sufficient savings to take care of their eventual retirement in the Philippines due to old age or some other disability, with the increased burden of establishing a home in the Philippines after completion of their tour of duty abroad."

Personnel of the DFA are at the frontlines of Philippine foreign relations, sometimes risking their lives under dangerous conditions in their countries of assignment. They face complex challenges of living in foreign lands with different cultures, particularly as pioneers in opening new Posts. They are primarily responsible for responding and attending immediately to Filipinos in distress especially during critical times, disasters, security threats, and other crisis situations. Their patriotism, integrity, professionalism and genuine concern for the welfare of

situations. Their patriotism, integrity, professionalism and genuine concern for the welfare of our *kababayans* here and abroad are sincere expressions of their devotion to the country in achieving the aspirations of the Filipino people.

As they conclude the years of their untiring service, contribution and representation of our country, they deserve due honor and care to compensate their faithful performance of their duties during their active service through adjusting their monthly pension, and thereby allowing them to afford a decent living in the face of inflation and rising cost of living.

This bill seeks to provide both present and future retirees of the foreign service support that is adequate and responsive to their needs, and to reassure them that their dedication and loyalty to the Filipino people is not forgotten.

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

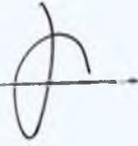


**MARK A. VILLAR**

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This act shall be known as the "*Foreign Affairs Retirement*  
2 *and Disability Act*"

3 Sec. 2. *Covered Retirees and Retirement Benefits.* – This act shall apply to all  
4 retired officers and employees of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) who:

5 a. Served in the Department for at least fifteen (15) years; and

6 b. Are eligible to receive a monthly pension from the Government Service  
7 Insurance System (GSIS)

8 They shall receive, during the residue of their natural life, an additional pension which  
9 shall be the difference between their monthly pension and the highest monthly of an  
10 incumbent officer or employee, occupying the same or equivalent rank, and subject to  
11 further adjustment as provided under this Act.

12 This Act shall also apply prospectively to the DFA officers and employees who  
13 retired prior to the effectivity of this Act.

1 All others officers and employees of the DFA, who have also retired after serving  
2 in the DFA but who have not met all the abovementioned requirements, shall instead be  
3 covered by the applicable benefits under the GSIS Act, as amended.

4 *Sec. 3. Adjustment of Monthly Pension.* - The monthly pension benefits of all  
5 retirees of the DFA, as provided under Republic Act No. 7157 or the "*Philippine Foreign*  
6 *Service Act of 1991*", shall, upon the effectivity of this Act, be automatically adjusted to  
7 the existing rate, and any subsequent increase thereof, of the salary grade of the rank  
8 they held upon their retirement.

9 *Sec. 4. Additional Entitlements.* - All officers and employees covered by Section 2  
10 of this Act, shall be eligible for disability and death benefits in the same manner provided  
11 under the GSIS Act, as amended, and other relevant laws.

12 *Sec. 5. Exemption of Pension from Income Tax , Attachment, Levy, Garnishment.-*  
13 Any pension granted to a beneficiary under this Act shall not, wholly or partly, be subject  
14 to income tax, attachment, execution, forfeiture, or retention under any legal or equitable  
15 proceedings, nor shall any lien of any kind or under any consideration be imposed  
16 thereon.

17 *Sec. 6. Survivorship Benefits.* - In case of death of a DFA retiree or personnel  
18 who has met the requirements provided in Section 2, following shall be entitled to receive  
19 the adjusted retirement benefits that the deceased was receiving or entitled to receive:

20 (a) Their surviving spouse, during their lifetime, or until they remarry; and

21 (b) Their dependent minor children.

22 Said benefits shall be distributed or apportioned in accordance with the GSIS Act,  
23 as amended.

24 *Section 7. Appropriation and Funding Source.* - The differential funding  
25 requirements for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current  
26 year's savings of the DFA. Thereafter, the annual differential amount necessary for GSIS  
27 to pay the adjusted monthly pension and other benefits to implement the provisions of

1 this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act annually, to be sourced from  
2 the DFA's annual consular income as percentage thereof.

3         *Sec. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within ninety (90) days after  
4 the effectivity of this Act, DFA shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the  
5 effective implementation of this Act, in coordination with relevant government agencies.

6         *Sec. 9. Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or  
7 invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force  
8 and effect.

9         *Sec. 10. Repealing Clause.* –All laws, executive orders, rules and contrary thereof,  
10 or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

11         *Sec. 11. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
12 publications in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulations in the  
13 Philippines.

*Approved,*