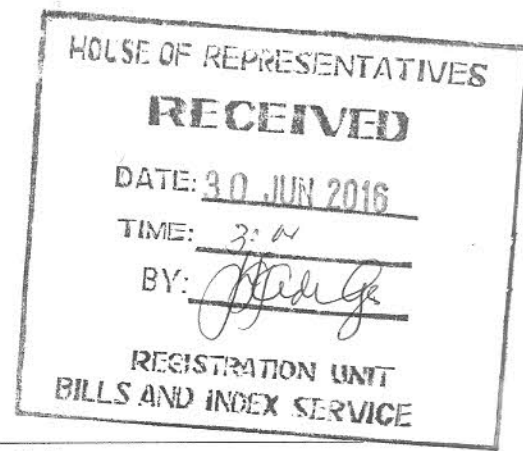


REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 109



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

Explanatory Note

At least eight separate agencies today are working and operating for the welfare of veterans and military retirees. These include the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), the Philippine Veterans Assistance Commission (PVAC), the Board of Trustees of the Veterans of World War II (BTVWWII), the Philippine Veterans Investment and Development Corporation (PHIVIDEC), the PHIVIDEC Industrial Authority (PIA), the Philippine Veterans Bank, the Veterans Federation of the Philippines (VFP), and the AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS).

Despite the number of offices working for veterans' welfare, a lot still remains to be done to uplift the status of our veterans; majority of whom are now elderly, sick, underprivileged, disabled, and poor. There are still many reported cases of delayed pensions and double-listing, and some application for old-aged pension and other benefits are still left pending in the PVAO.

In the face of these realities, the need for systematic administration of veterans' benefits is clear. This bill, therefore, seeks to integrate the agencies working for veterans' welfare which have similar functions and mandate. It proposes to abolish the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), the Philippine Veterans Assistance Commission (PVAC), and the Board of Trustees of the Veterans of World War II (BTVWWII), thereby creating the Philippine Veterans Authority (PVA).

The Authority's main function shall be to harmonize all efforts in generating and maximizing financial sources and facilities that support all veterans welfare programs designed to alleviate the plights of our veterans.

The bill, likewise, provides for the creation of a Veterans Welfare Fund which shall guarantee the continuous payment of benefits and implementation of welfare programs and projects for veterans and their dependents, especially of continuing health and medical services program.

This measure was filed by the Magdalo Party-List in the 16th Congress and was subsequently referred to the Committee on Government Reorganization.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this measure is earnestly requested.


HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

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AN ACT
INTEGRATING ALL AGENCIES AND OFFICES ON VETERANS WELFARE,
CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE PHILIPPINE VETERANS AUTHORITY (PVA),
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 "Philippine Veterans
2 Authority Act".

3
4 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** - The government recognizes the invaluable contribution
5 of the veterans as noble defenders of the State. Without whom, the nation and its people will not
6 be able to enjoy the fruits of freedom and democracy today. Such recognition goes with the
7 government's responsibility to compliment the invaluable devotion, patriotism, sacrifices, and
8 gallant deeds of veterans with the most responsive and continuing programs and projects for their
9 care, benefits, and welfare. The State also recognizes the veterans as equal partners in nation-
10 building who possess potential capabilities for economic progress and not as mere recipients of
11 government assistance

12
13 **SEC. 3. *Creation of the Philippine Veterans Authority.*** - There is hereby created a body
14 to be known as the Philippine Veterans Authority, hereinafter referred to as the Authority which
15 shall perform governmental and full propriety functions towards ensuring the provision of

16

1 immediate and adequate care, benefits, and other forms of assistance to veterans and their
2 dependents. The Authority shall be under the Office of the President and shall maintain its
3 principal office in Metro Manila and establish regional offices as may be necessary for the
4 proper conduct of its operations.

5

6 **SEC. 4. Powers and Functions of the Authority.** - The Authority shall have the
7 following powers and functions:

8 1) Initiate and formulate policies on recognition and welfare of Filipino veterans;

9 2) Formulate and implement a continuing, integrated, and comprehensive privileges and
10 benefits for veterans and their dependents that will restore the honor and dignity of veterans here
11 and abroad;

12 3) Discharge all responsibilities of government as may come from treaties, agreements,
13 and other commitments relative to veterans affairs;

14 4) Enter into contracts, either domestic or foreign, under such terms and condition that
15 are reasonable, just and advantageous to the Government in the pursuit of its objectives and
16 goals,

17 5) Receive and hold bequests, devises, gifts, purchases, or lease, either absolutely or in
18 trust for any of its purposes from foreign and domestic sources, any asset, grant or property, real
19 or personal, subject to such limitations as are provided in existing laws and regulations;

20 6) Convey such assets, grants or properties, invest and re-invest the same, as well as deal
21 with and expand its assets and income in such manner as will best promote its objectives;

22 7) Call on other agencies and instrumentalities of the government and the private sector
23 for cooperation, support and assistance in the performance of its assigned tasks and functions;

24 8) Pursue the satisfactory resolution of the World War II Filipino veterans' outstanding
25 issues with the U.S. Government;

1 9) Formulate and implement a continuing information dissemination program that will
2 ensure that all veterans and their dependents are aware and knowledgeable of the ready program
3 of privileges and benefits available to them;

4 10) Inculcate into minds of the people a strong sense of nationalism, unity, and love of
5 country through a national consciousness program focusing on the virtues of veterans as true
6 patriots who fought for their cherished freedom;

7 11) Adopt rules and regulations for the transaction of its business and enforcement of its
8 policies, orders, and decisions;

9 12) Formulate and promulgate policies, rules, and regulations as may be found necessary
10 to govern the adjudication of claims for veterans benefits;

11 13) Formulate policies, plans, programs, and projects for the administration of a
12 hospitalization, medical care, and treatment program for the veterans and their dependents;

13 14) Coordinate with any department, bureau, office, agency, or instrumentality of the
14 government and private entities or organizations for the purpose of allowing the veterans to avail
15 themselves of opportunities, facilities, and assistance in pursuit of their projects, business
16 enterprises, and other economic activities in line with the national development goals;

17 15) Administer and develop national shrines of military significance and cemeteries for
18 veterans and, for that purpose, enter into agreements or coordinate with the Department of
19 Tourism, Department of Public Works and Highways, and other departments, agencies, and
20 instrumentalities of the government, for the interdepartmental or inter-agency planning, funding,
21 and execution of the development plans for said shrines and cemeteries; and

22 16) Perform such other functions which are not inconsistent with this Act as are
23 necessary for the effective exercise of the aforementioned functions.

24
25 ***SEC. 5. The Administrator; Qualifications.*** - The Administrator shall manage the day-
26 to-day conduct of operations of the Authority. He shall be assisted by a Deputy Administrator.

1 The Administrator and Deputy Administrator shall be appointed by the President and shall be
2 entitled to the salary and emoluments of an Undersecretary and Bureau Director, respectively.

3 No person shall be appointed Administrator and Deputy Administrator of the Authority
4 unless they are veterans or military retirees known for their dedication and service, citizens and
5 residents of the Philippines, of good moral character and with proven competence in public
6 administration and management, and familiarity with veterans affairs.

7
8 ***SEC. 6. Appointment of Officials! Employees of the Authority.*** - The Administrator
9 shall have the power to appoint all officers and employees of the Authority whose appointment
10 shall be based on merit and fitness and be shall be governed by the Civil Service Laws and other
11 related laws.

12
13 ***SEC. 7. Abolition of Agencies and Offices on Veterans Welfare.*** - The existing agencies
14 administering benefits to veterans such as the Philippines Veterans Office (PVAO), the
15 Philippine Veterans Assistance Commission (PV AC), and the Board of Trustees of the Veterans
16 of World War II (BTVWWII) are hereby abolished. The powers, functions, all applicable funds
17 and appropriations, records, assets, and properties of the abolished agencies are hereby
18 transferred or absorbed by the Authority.

19
20 The Authority shall, by virtue of this Act, succeed to all rights and assume all contracts
21 and liabilities of PV AD, PV AC, and BTVWWII which shall be acted upon in accordance with
22 the Auditing Code and other pertinent laws, rules, and regulations.

23 Employees separated from the service as a result of the abolition of PVAO, PVAC,
24 BTVWWII shall, within six (6) months from their separation from the service, receive the
25 separation benefits to which they are entitled under existing laws and regulations: Provided, That
26 in hiring applicants to the newly-created agency, priority shall be given to existing employees to
27 be affected by the reorganization.

