AN ACT
ADJUSTING THE MONTHLY PENSION AND DISABILITY BENEFITS
OF RETIREES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our Philippine diplomats have always been at the frontlines, to the extent that many have even risked their lives in the countries where they have been assigned. They are primarily responsible for assisting our kababayan abroad, even responding to their needs during critical times and crisis situations. They are also tasked to advance Philippine diplomatic relations through the four pillars of diplomacy, namely, the preservation and enhancement of national security, the promotion and attainment of economic security, the protection of rights and the promotion of interest of all Filipinos overseas, and the promotion of cultural diplomacy.

Cognizant of the complex responsibilities faced by our foreign service personnel, it is but fitting to provide them with decent benefits, most especially upon retirement, thus compensating them for their patriotism and the hard work they have rendered throughout their career.

This bill thus seeks to adjust the monthly pension and disability benefits of retirees of the Department of Foreign Affairs, in order to provide them with adequate support to afford a decent living, to be at par with the current pay scale enjoyed by those that are currently in active service.

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

LOREN LEGARDA
AN ACT
ADJUSTING THE MONTHLY PENSION AND DISABILITY BENEFITS
OF RETIREES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. –The Act shall be known as the “Foreign Affairs Retirement and Disability Benefits Act.

Section 2. Coverage. This Act shall apply to all retired officers and employees of the DFA who:

a. served in the Department for at least 15 years; and
b. are eligible to receive a monthly pension from the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

All other officers and employees of the DFA who have also retired after serving in the DFA but who have not complied with all the abovementioned requirements, shall be covered by applicable benefits under the GSIS Act, as amended.

Section 3. Adjustment of Monthly Pension. The monthly pension benefits of all retirees of the DFA, as provided under Republic Act No. 7157, shall be automatically adjusted at the same rate as any future or subsequent increase in the salary grade of the same rank he or she retired from.
Section 4. Additional Entitlements. All officers and employees covered by Section 1 of this Act, shall be eligible for disability and death benefits in the same manner provided under the GSIS Act, as amended, and other relevant laws.

Section 5. Retroactive Effect. The benefits under this Act shall also be granted to all retirees of the DFA who retired prior to the effectivity of this Act in the same manner provided in Section 2 hereof.

Section 6. Survivorship Benefits. In case of death of a DFA retiree or personnel who has met the requirements provided in Section 1, the following shall be entitled to receive the adjusted retirement benefits that the deceased was receiving or entitled to receive: (a) his or her surviving dependent spouse, during his or her lifetime, or until he or she remarries; and (b) dependent children. Said benefits shall be distributed or apportioned in accordance with the GSIS Act, as amended.

Section 7. Appropriation and Funding Source. - The differential funding requirements for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from any available savings of the DFA.

Thereafter, the annual differential amount necessary for GSIS to pay the adjusted monthly pension and other benefits to implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act annually, to be sourced possibly from the DFA’s annual consular income as a percentage thereof.

Section 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, DFA shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act, in coordination with relevant government agencies.

Section 9. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, executive orders, or rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 11. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette.

Approved,