

Comments/suggestions on Senate Bills on MAGNA CARTA OF FILIPINO SEAFARERS

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Being a researcher myself on labor migration, I commend the legislature for their commitment in promoting the welfare of Filipino seafarers, who play a very crucial role in the maritime industry worldwide and in the local economy.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

On Sec. 3. Coverage - I support the definition/coverage of seafarers that is consistent with the coverage used by DMW which uses the coverage set in the 1995 Convention that we ratified. I agree that for purposes of clarity, “to be engaged” or “engaged” should be limited to those who have been contracted already. This clarity is important for purposes of implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and research for program development. It would be very difficult operationally to account for those groups beyond this definition. I maintain though that the policy ecosystem must also help those who are yet to be contracted via fair and just mechanisms of skills training and other related efforts.

On Section 68. role of Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) – I would like to propose that we become more active in the evaluation of programs to ensure that objectives and goals are achieved and that efforts are further developed and refined if necessary. So, I advocate for the insertion of the following words:

68.e. Department of Migrant Workers

“It shall strengthen its research capability to provide studies/resources for evidenced-based policy decision-making and program **evaluation and** development, and continuously address gaps in the protection and welfare of the seafarers.”

68.h. National Maritime Polytechnic

“DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A RESOURCE CENTER FOR FILIPINO SEAFARERS THAT INCLUDES A DATABASE OF SEAFARERS, **OTHER INDUSTRY**

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STAKEHOLDERS, AND RELATED STATISTICS AND INFORMATION TO AID IN EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING AND PROGRAM EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDES THE SEAFARERS WITH REAL-TIME UPDATED INFORMATION ON MATTERS AFFECTING THEIR EMPLOYMENT AND HELPLINE SUPPORT."

Ensuring that we create databases and statistical resources not only for seafarers but also other industry players and in the industry as a whole would help in the assessment of the entire ecosystem within which seafarers are embedded in. It allows us to examine their welfare from a systemic point of view and not just on the seafarers themselves. Improving and promoting the welfare of seafarers entail not only assessing the conditions of seafarers but also the whole industry as a whole because the development of the industry is necessary in the promotion of employment and welfare of seafarers.