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

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'22 JUL 12 AIO :01

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 313

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

**AN ACT
AMENDING COMMONWEALTH ACT NO.473, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
"REVISED NATURALIZATION LAW" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Citizenship, as the legal status of being a member of a particular country or sovereign state, is an important aspect of a person's civil and political standing. Citizenship affords certain rights and protections to a person, while imposing duties upon him in exchange for being part of a cohesive civilized society and a recognized son or daughter of a nation.

With the paramount importance of citizenship in the exercise of one's civil and political rights, it is only proper to keep the laws governing the acquisition of citizenship up to date. Unfortunately, our naturalization law has been unchanged since its enactment in 1939, save for additional provisions legislated in 1950. While globalization and modern society have evolved rapidly and significantly throughout the years, it is imperative for us to bring our naturalization laws into this century and amend its outdated provisions.

Naturalization facilitates the complete integration of a foreign national into our society. Research shows that affording qualified and deserving persons the benefits of citizenship increases their productivity and consumer spending, which benefits our businesses and economy. Further, after they have signified and proven their intention to embrace Filipino laws, culture, and values, the acquisition of Filipino citizenship affords them certainty, security, and stability in their life, more opportunities to contribute to our economy, and a sense of identity and belonging to our nation.

Thus, this bill seeks to amend our naturalization laws and bring them up to date to our modern world by facilitating the process for acquiring citizenship, while still preserving the integrity and importance of being a proud Filipino citizen.

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

JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI



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**AN ACT
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THE "REVISED NATURALIZATION LAW" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Section 2 of the Revised Naturalization Law is hereby amended to
2 read as follows:

3 **"Sec. 2. Qualifications.** - Subject to section four of this Act, any person
4 having the following qualifications may become a citizen of the Philippines
5 by naturalization:

6 [First.] **1.** [He m] **Must** not be less than [twenty-one] **EIGHTEEN (18)**
7 years of age on the day of the hearing of the petition;

8 [Second.] **2.** [He m] **Must** have resided in the Philippines for a continuous
9 period of not less than [ten] **FIVE (5)** years;

10 [Third.] **3.** [He m] **Must** be of good moral character and believe[s] in the
11 principles underlying the Philippine Constitution, and must have conducted
12 himself in a proper and irreproachable manner during the entire period of
13 his residence in the Philippines in his relation with the constituted
14 government as well as with the community in which he is living;

15 [Fourth. He must own real estate in the Philippines worth not less than five
16 thousand pesos, Philippine currency, or must have some known lucrative
17 trade, profession, or lawful occupation;]

18 **4. MUST HAVE SOME KNOWN LUCRATIVE TRADE, PROFESSION,**
19 **OR LAWFUL OCCUPATION FOR A PERIOD OF AT LEAST TWO (2)**
20 **YEARS;**

1 [Fifth.] **5.** [He m] **Must** be able to speak and write in **FILIPINO**, English,
2 [or Spanish] or any one of the principal Philippine languages; **AND**
3 [Sixth.] **6.** [He m] **Must** have enrolled his minor children of school age in
4 any of the public or private schools recognized by the [Office of Private
5 Education of the Philippines,] **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OR**
6 **COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**, where the Philippine history,
7 government and civics are taught or prescribed as part of the school
8 curriculum, during the entire period of residence in the Philippines required
9 [of him] prior to the hearing of his **OR HER** petition for naturalization as
10 Philippine citizen.”
11

12 **SEC. 2.** Section 3 is hereby amended to read as follows:

13 **“Sec. 3. *Special qualifications.*** – The [ten] **FIVE** years of continuous
14 residence required under the last preceding section shall be [understood
15 as] reduced to [five] **THREE (3)** years for any petitioner having any of the
16 following qualifications:

17 [1. Having honorably held office under the Government of the Philippines or
18 under that of any of the provinces, cities, municipalities, or political
19 subdivisions thereof;]

20 [2.] **1.** Having established a new industry or introduced a useful invention
21 in the Philippines;

22 [3.] **2.** Being married to a Filipino [woman] citizen;

23 [4. Having been engaged as a teacher in the Philippines in a public or
24 recognized private school not established for the exclusive instruction of
25 children of persons of a particular nationality or race, in any of the branches
26 of education or industry for a period of not less than two years;] **3.** Having
27 been born in the Philippines; or

28 [5.] **4. HAVING ENGAGED IN CONSISTENT CHARITABLE, SOCIO-
29 CIVIC OR PHILANTHROPIC WORK IN THE PHILIPPINES DURING
30 THE ENTIRE PERIOD OF RESIDENCE REQUIRED AND RECOGNIZED
31 BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WHICH BENEFITED BY SUCH
32 ACTIVITY.”**

33

34 **SEC. 3.** Section 4 is hereby amended to read as follows:

35 **“Sec. 4. *Who are disqualified.*** – **X X X**

- 1 1. Persons opposed to organized government or affiliated with any
- 2 association or group of persons who uphold and teach doctrines
- 3 opposing all organized governments;
- 4 2. Persons defending or teaching the necessity or propriety of violence,
- 5 personal assault, assassination or acts of terrorism for the success and
- 6 predominance of their ideas;
- 7 3. Polygamists or believers in the practice of polygamy;
- 8 4. Persons convicted of crimes involving moral turpitude;
- 9 5. Persons suffering from mental [alienation] **INCAPACITY** or incurable
- 10 contagious diseases;
- 11 6. Persons who, during the period of their residence in the Philippines, have
- 12 not mingled socially with Filipinos, or who have not evinced a sincere desire
- 13 to learn and embrace the customs, traditions, and ideals of Filipinos;
- 14 7. Citizens or subjects of nations with whom [the United States and] the
- 15 Philippines are at war, during the period of such war;
- 16 8. Citizens or subjects of a foreign country [other than the United States]
- 17 whose laws do not grant Filipinos the right to become naturalized citizens
- 18 or subjects thereof; **AND**
- 19 **9. MEMBERS OF A JUDICIALLY DECLARED AND OUTLAWED**
- 20 **TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, ASSOCIATION OR GROUP OF**
- 21 **PERSONS, OR OF ANY PERSON CHARGED WITH OR SUSPECTED**
- 22 **OF THE CRIME OF TERRORISM OR CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT**
- 23 **TERRORISM, ACCORDING TO REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9372 OR THE**
- 24 **HUMAN SECURITY ACT."**

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SEC. 4. Section 7 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 7. *Petition for citizenship.* – X X X

**ANY APPLICANT WHO HAS RESIDED CONTINUOUSLY IN THE
PHILIPPINES FOR A PERIOD OF TWENTY (20) YEARS OR MORE
PRIOR TO THE FILING OF HIS PETITION IS NOT CONSTRAINED
FROM LEAVING THE PHILIPPINES WHILE HIS PETITION IS
PENDING IN COURT, AND THEREFORE, IS NOT REQUIRED TO
STATE IN HIS PETITION THAT HE WILL RESIDE CONTINUOUSLY
IN THE PHILIPPINES FROM THE DATE OF THE FILING OF THE
PETITION UP TO THE TIME OF HIS ADMISSION TO PHILIPPINE
CITIZENSHIP."**

1 **SEC. 5.** Section 9 is hereby amended to read as follows:

2 **"Sec. 9. Notification and appearance.** - Immediately upon the filing of
3 the petition, it shall be the duty of the clerk of court to publish the same at
4 petitioner's expense, once a week for three consecutive weeks, in the
5 Official Gazette and in one newspaper of general circulation in the province
6 where the petitioner resides, and to have copies of said petition and a
7 general notice of hearing posted in a public and conspicuous place in his
8 office or in the building where said office is located, setting forth in such
9 notice the name, birthplace and residence of the petitioner, the date and
10 place of his arrival in the Philippines, the names of the witnesses whom the
11 petitioner proposes to introduce in support of his petition, and the date of
12 the hearing of the petition[, which hearing shall not be held within ninety
13 days from the date of the last publication of the notice.] **NO PETITION**
14 **FOR PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP SHALL BE HEARD BY THE COURT**
15 **UNTIL AFTER SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THE LAST**
16 **PUBLICATION OF THE NOTICE.** The clerk shall, as soon as possible,
17 forward copies of the petition, the sentence, the naturalization certificate,
18 and other pertinent data to the [Department of the Interior, the Bureau of
19 Justice, the Provincial Inspector of the Philippine Constabulary of the
20 province and the Justice of the Peace of the municipality wherein the
21 petitioner resides] **OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, THE OFFICE OF THE**
22 **SOLICITOR GENERAL, THE PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR OF THE**
23 **PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE AND THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT**
24 **WHERE THE PETITIONER RESIDES."**

25
26 **SEC. 6.** Section 10 is hereby amended to read as follows:

27 **"Sec. 10. Hearing of the Petition.** - No petition shall be heard within
28 thirty days preceding any election. The hearing shall be public, and the
29 Solicitor-General, either himself or through his delegate or the provincial
30 fiscal concerned, shall appear on behalf of the [Commonwealth]
31 **REPUBLIC** of the Philippines at all the proceedings and at the hearing. If,
32 after the hearing, the court believes, in view of the evidence taken, that the
33 petitioner has all the qualifications required by, and none of the
34 disqualifications specified in this Act and has complied with all requisites
35 herein established, it shall **GRANT THE PETITION** and order the [proper
36 naturalization certificate to be issued and the registration of the said

1 naturalization certificate in the proper civil registry as required in Section
2 Ten of Act Numbered Three thousand seven hundred and fifty-three]
3 **ISSUANCE AND REGISTRATION OF THE NATURALIZATION**
4 **CERTIFICATE IN THE PROPER CIVIL REGISTRY IN ACCORDANCE**
5 **WITH SECTION 12 OF THIS ACT.”**
6

7 **SEC. 7.** Section 11 is hereby amended to read as follows:

8 **“Sec. 11. *Appeal.*** – The [final sentence] **DECISION OF THE**
9 **REGIONAL TRIAL COURT** may, at the instance of either of the parties,
10 be appealed to the [Supreme Court] **COURT OF APPEALS.”**
11

12 **SEC. 8.** Section 12 is hereby amended to read as follows:

13 **“Sec. 12. *Issuance of the Certificate of Naturalization.*** – [If, after
14 the lapse of thirty days from and after the date on which the parties were
15 notified of the Court, no appeal has been filed, or if, upon appeal, the
16 decision of the court has been confirmed by the Supreme Court, and the
17 said decision has become final, the clerk of court which heard the petition
18 shall issue to the petitioner a naturalization certificate which shall, among
19 other things, state the following:] **THE DECISION RENDERED BY THE**
20 **REGIONAL TRIAL COURT, OR PROMULGATED BY THE APPELLATE**
21 **COURT, SHALL BECOME FINAL AFTER THE LAPSE OF THIRTY DAYS**
22 **FROM THE DATE OF NOTICE.**

23 **NO DECISION GRANTING THE PETITION FOR PHILIPPINE**
24 **CITIZENSHIP SHALL BECOME EXECUTORY UNTIL AFTER ONE (1)**
25 **YEAR FROM ITS PROMULGATION AND AFTER THE COURT, ON**
26 **PROPER HEARING, WITH THE ATTENDANCE OF THE SOLICITOR**
27 **GENERAL OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE, IS SATISFIED, AND SO**
28 **FINDS, THAT DURING THE INTERVENING TIME, THE PETITIONER**
29 **HAS:**

- 30 **1. NOT LEFT THE PHILIPPINES, UNLESS GRANTED A TRAVEL**
31 **AUTHORITY BY THE SECRETARY OF JUSTICE OR HIS DULY**
32 **DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE;**
33 **2. DEDICATED HIMSELF CONTINUOUSLY TO A LAWFUL CALLING**
34 **OR PROFESSION;**
35 **3. NOT BEEN CONVICTED OF ANY OFFENSE OR VIOLATION OF**
36 **GOVERNMENT PROMULGATED RULES; OR**

1 **4. NOT COMMITTED ANY ACT PREJUDICIAL TO THE INTEREST**
2 **OF THE NATION OR CONTRARY TO ANY GOVERNMENT**
3 **ANNOUNCED POLICIES;**

4 ***PROVIDED*, THAT THE DECISION GRANTING THE APPLICATION IS**
5 **IMMEDIATELY EXECUTORY UPON FINALITY THEREOF IF THE**
6 **PETITIONER HAS RESIDED CONTINUOUSLY IN THE COUNTRY FOR**
7 **A PERIOD OF TWENTY (20) YEARS OR MORE BEFORE FILING HIS**
8 **OR HER PETITION.**

9 **UPON A FINDING THAT THE ABOVE CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN**
10 **SATISFIED, THE ORDER OF THE COURT GRANTING CITIZENSHIP**
11 **SHALL BE REGISTERED AND THE APPLICANT SHALL, IN OPEN**
12 **COURT, TAKE THE FOLLOWING OATH, WHEREUPON, AND NOT**
13 **BEFORE, HE WILL BE ENTITLED TO ALL THE PRIVILEGES OF A**
14 **FILIPINO CITIZEN:**

15 **"I, _____, SOLEMNLY SWEAR THAT I RENOUNCE**
16 **ABSOLUTELY AND FOREVER ALL ALLEGIANCE AND FIDELITY TO**
17 **ANY FOREIGN PRINCE, POTENTATE, STATE OR SOVEREIGNTY,**
18 **AND PARTICULARLY TO THE _____, OF WHICH AT**
19 **THIS TIME I AM A SUBJECT OR CITIZEN; THAT I WILL SUPPORT**
20 **AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THAT**
21 **I WILL OBEY THE LAWS, LEGAL ORDERS AND DECREES**
22 **PROMULGATED BY THE DULY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES OF**
23 **THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.**

24 **SO HELP ME GOD."**

25 **THE CLERK OF COURT WHICH HEARD THE PETITION SHALL**
26 **ISSUE A NATURALIZATION CERTIFICATE WHICH SHALL, AMONG**
27 **OTHER THINGS, STATE THE FOLLOWING:** The file number of the
28 petition, the number of the naturalization certificate, the signature of the
29 person naturalized affixed in the presence of the clerk of the court, the
30 personal circumstances of the person naturalized, the dates on which his
31 declaration of intention and petition were filed, the date of the decision
32 granting the petition, and the name of the judge who rendered the
33 decision. A photograph of the petitioner with the dry seal affixed thereto of
34 the court which granted the petition must be affixed to the certificate."

35 **[X X X]**

36

1 **SEC. 9.** Section 15 is hereby amended to read as follows:

2 **"Sec. 15. *Effect of the naturalization on spouse and children.*** – Any
3 [woman] **PERSON** who is now or may hereafter be married to a
4 **NATURAL-BORN** citizen of the Philippines, and who might **HIMSELF OR**
5 herself be lawfully naturalized shall be deemed a citizen of the Philippines.

6 **X X X"**

7

8 **SEC. 10.** Section 16 is hereby amended to read as follows:

9 **"Sec. 16. *Right of [widow] SURVIVING SPOUSE and children of***
10 ***petitioner[s] who [have] HAS died.*** – In case a petitioner should die
11 before the final decision has been rendered, his **OR HER** [widow]
12 **SURVIVING SPOUSE** and children may continue the proceedings. The
13 decision rendered in the case shall, so far as the [widow] **SURVIVING**
14 **SPOUSE** and minor children are concerned, produce the same legal effect
15 as if it has been rendered during the life of the petitioner.

16

17 **SEC. 11. *Transitory provision.*** – Upon the effectivity of this Act, its provisions
18 shall apply to cases pending in court and to those where the applicant has not
19 yet taken the oath of citizenship.

20

21 **SEC. 12. *Separability clause.*** – If any provision, section or part of this Act
22 shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect,
23 invalidate or impair any other provisions, sections or parts hereof.

24

25 **SEC. 13. *Repealing clause.*** - Republic Act No. 530, and such other laws,
26 decrees, orders, rules and regulations as are inconsistent with this Act are
27 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

28

29 **SEC. 14. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days after
30 its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,