



July 2013 - June 2016

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# LEAGUE OF PROVINCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

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## POSITION PAPER

House Bill No. 12 – An Act to Amend R.A. 8932 otherwise known as Philippine Passport Act of 1996

The League of Provinces supports the intent and spirit of House Bill No. 12 as it will allow greater accessibility at less cost to the issuance of passports to eligible citizens of the Republic of the Philippines thus ensuring the right to travel as provided for in the Constitution especially for those in the far-flung provinces.

In fact, some local governments, particularly the provinces and cities have and are regularly undertaking passporting activities in coordination with the Department of Foreign Affairs.

We, however, would like to register that extreme prudence must be exercised in allowing local government units to process, revoke and issue Passports as not all LGUs have the capacity to implement such function, both in terms of human and financial resources.

The League proposes the following recommendations to effectively pursue the noble objectives of the proposed legislation:

- 1) The function of processing and issuing passports shall not be a mandatory function devolved to the local government units but rather a voluntary activity which the LGU may undertake in close coordination with the Department of Foreign Affairs;
- 2) The Department of Foreign Affairs in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government and the Leagues of Local Governments (League of Provinces, League of Cities and League of Municipalities) shall establish a criteria for the selection of LGUs that may undertake passporting activities;
- 3) Since almost all LGUs have already reached their personal services ceiling, interested LGUs will resort to secondment of their personnel to the detriment of the effective and efficient performance of their existing functions. We therefore recommend that the salaries and wages of personnel to be assigned to the Passport Unit be subsidized by the DFA to allow the LGU a leeway in its PS cap.
- 4) It is a necessity for the DFA to conduct continuing capability building activities for eligible LGUs to ensure the efficient implementation of the function.

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