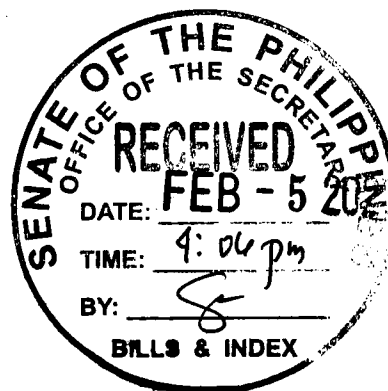


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*Third Regular Session* )



**SENATE**

**P.S. RES. NO. 1312**

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Introduced by Senator **PIA S. CAYETANO**

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**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE VISA-RELATED ISSUES FACED BY PHILIPPINE NATIONAL ATHLETES AND THEIR COACHES, WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECT THEIR TRAINING AND PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, Article II, Section 17 of the 1987 Constitution declares that "[t]he State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), together with the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) and the National Sports Associations (NSAs) play an important role in sports development, not only in preparing athletes and their coaches for international competitions, but also in ensuring their overall welfare;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Article II, Section 17 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution

<sup>2</sup> Citizen's Charter Handbook CY 2023 (3rd Edition). 2023. *Philippine Sports Commission*. <https://psc.gov.ph/Transparency%20Seal/2022/PSC-Citizens-Charter-2023-3rd-Edition.pdf>

**WHEREAS,** Filipino athletes, as well as their coaches, face Visa-related issues, when participating in international competitions, particularly in countries with stricter immigration policies;

**WHEREAS,** complex and time-consuming Visa application processes, such as the submission of extensive documentary requirements, divert time from their schedules which should be devoted to their training and preparation;

**WHEREAS,** these Visa issues result in missed local and international trainings and tournaments, thereby adversely affecting the athletes' performance and rankings;

**WHEREAS,** in September 2020, Filipino pole vaulter and Olympian, Ernest John "EJ" Obiena, encountered Visa issues that prevented him from competing in the Doha Leg of the Diamond League, just one day after setting a new personal season best of 5.80 meters and securing the bronze medal in the Rome Leg of the same League;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Villar, J. (2020). Visa woes sidelines Obenia from Doha pole vault tourney. *Philippine Star*. <https://www.philstar.com/sports/2020/09/19/2043643/visa-woes-sidelines-obiena-doha-pole-vault-tourney>

**WHEREAS,** similarly, Filipino Dota 2 player, Erin Jasper "Yopaj" Ferrer, was also unable to participate in the 2024 PGL Wallachia tournament in Romania due to Visa issues;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS,** the instances mentioned highlight the urgency of addressing these concerns as such barriers significantly limit Filipino athletes' ability to represent the country and compete on the global stage;

**WHEREAS,** there is a need to examine the current procedures of the PSC, POC, NSAs, and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in assisting athletes to acquire Visas and other necessary travel documents, with the goal of identifying issues and exploring solutions to streamline these processes and prevent delays, ensuring that athletes can focus on their local and international trainings and competitions without unnecessary hindrances;

**WHEREAS,** national athletes, together with their coaches, when competing internationally, represent the country akin to diplomats, as such, they should be provided with adequate government support that would allow them to focus, free from Visa-related stress and uncertainties;

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<sup>4</sup> Zulkiflee, S. (2024). GH and SumaiL to play for Shopify Rebellion in PGL Wallachia. *Esports GG*. <https://esports.gg/news/dota-2/gh-and-sumail-stand-in-for-shopify-rebellion/>

**WHEREAS**, while there are existing laws, such as Republic Act (RA) No. 9064, as amended by RA No. 10699, otherwise known as the "*National Athletes and Coaches Benefits and Incentives Act*,"<sup>5</sup> there remains an urgent need to strengthen and enhance these laws and other relevant policies in order to provide them with sufficient assistance, particularly in relation to travel and Visa concerns;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Senate of the Philippines hereby urges the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the Visa-related issues faced by Philippine National Athletes and their coaches, which adversely affect their training and participation in international tournaments.

*Adopted,*

  
PIA S. CAYETANO

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<sup>5</sup> Jur. (2001) Republic Act No. 9064.  
<https://jur.ph/law/summary/sports-benefits-and-incentives-act-of-2001>