



03 October 2016

SENATOR ALAN PETER S. CAYETANO

Chairperson
Committee on Foreign Relations
Senate of the Philippines
Roxas Blvd., Pasay City

Dear **Senator Cayetano**:

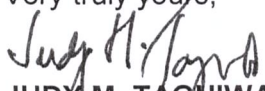
The Department of Social Welfare and Development supports **Senate Bill No. 397** entitled “**An Act to Amend Republic Act No. 8239, Otherwise Known as the Philippine Passport Act of 1996**” introduced by Senator Loren Legarda, and **Senate Bill No. 943** or the “**New Philippine Passport Act**”, introduced by Senator Sonny Angara, which seek to expedite the application processes and simplify the passport documentation requirements of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

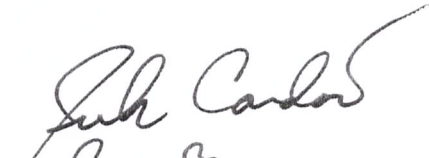
We also support the proposal of Senator Cynthia Villar in Senate Bill No. 324, “**An Act Extending the Validity of the Regular Philippine Passport Issued to Adult Applicants to Ten (10) Years, Amending for this Purpose Republic Act No. 8239 or the Philippine Passport Act of 1996**” which seeks to lengthen passport validity for a period of ten (10) years but we qualify that this will be for adults, eighteen (18) years and above while we also support the proposed five (5) year passport validity of the same for minors (those who are below eighteen years old).

However, we have reservations to the requirements enumerated in **Section 5 (h)** of SBN 397 inasmuch as it tends to contradict the legal effects of the issuance of a decree of adoption. Once a child is legally adopted, he or she acquires all the rights of a legitimate child by operation of law, thus, no longer necessitating the need to submit the enumerated documents mentioned in the proposed amendment. Instead, we suggest that for purposes of issuance of a passport to a minor who has already been adopted (whether by Filipinos or by aliens), the applicant filing in behalf of the minor be only required to submit the child’s birth certificate and proof that the person applying on behalf of the child is authorized to do so. This will also be in harmony with the requirements for passport issuance provided under Section 6 of Senator Angara’s SBN 943.

Moreover, as for SBN 397’s Item 5 (g), we support the same with some minor modifications that is on the required affidavit of consent to be executed by DSWD in cases where a child is still under foster care.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

JUDY M. TAGUIWALO
Secretary *see ch*


Com Sec
Senate CFR
3 Oct 16