

## **Press Release**

**Department of Labor and Employment  
Bureau of Working Conditions  
26 February 2018**

### **DOLE LAUDS APPROVAL OF SAFER WORKPLACE BILL ON THIRD READING**

On Monday 19 February 2018, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) welcomed the passage of the Senate Bill 1317 otherwise known as “An Act Strengthening Compliance with Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Standards” as this will guarantee compliance of establishments to labor standards, including OSH and ensures establishments’ productivity.

Occupational safety and health is every workers’ right. The neglect or denial of it may amount to infringement of a workers’ rights to decent work. Thus, the drive is for a state of economic and social well-being and conditions where all work is carried out in a safe, healthy environment and in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity.

One of the gaps that was identified in the enforcement of occupational safety and health in the country is the inadequate penalties for violators. Experienced practitioners, policy analysts, and researchers have long agreed that mandatory penalties in all their forms is considered as a major deterrent for OSH violators and would be violators. Countries with successful OSH implementation have stiffer penalties in their statutes. Senate Bill 1317 which was passed recently in its 3<sup>rd</sup> and final reading at the Senate intends to solve this gap.

Voting 20-0, the senators approved the Bill requiring compliance by employers to the Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHS), to promote the right of Filipino workers to a healthy and safe workplace.

Under the proposed measure, any erring employer will be served a fine of up to Php100,000.00 administrative penalty for every day of non-correction of violation. The Bill also guaranteed the payment of workers’ wages and income during work stoppage or suspension of operation due to imminent danger as a result of the employer’s violation or fault.

The DOLE fully supports the passage of the Senate Bill as it believes that the Senate Bill shall ensure that employers will follow the standards in protecting their workers and providing safe working conditions. And most importantly, this shall contribute immensely to the safety and health culture the DOLE is espousing.

Before the measure could be enacted as a law, it has still to pass the bicameral session of the House and the Senate where dissonance on the two versions will be ironed out before it will be sent to the President for his signature.

/JBG/