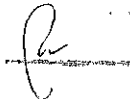


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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 2475

RECEIVED BY: 

INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This measure is a consolidated/substituted bill drafted by the Committees on Justice and Human Rights and Local Government during the 14th Congress.

Section 11, Article II of the Philippine Constitution provides that the "State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights." Further, Section 1, Article XIII states that "Congress shall give priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power of the common good." While the Constitution mandates the promotion and protection of human rights of Filipinos, our country has been accused of serious human rights abuses by international community and human rights organizations.

This bill seeks to establish Human Rights Resource Centers nationwide to integrate the promotion and protection of human rights in the implementation of the criminal justice system, in the conduct of local governance and in local law enforcement. These centers shall be the repository of all human rights concerns at the provincial level, and shall, among others, monitor compliance with international treaty obligations and national legislation on human rights for the purpose of ensuring the proper enforcement of laws and observance of international obligations at the local level.

The Human Rights Resource Centers shall be attached to the Office of the Governor giving utmost priority to the principle of transparency and accountability in the planning, policy-making and implementation of its programs and projects. The Centers shall ensure close collaboration and coordination with the Regional Office of the Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the Provincial Prosecutor, the Office of the Provincial Commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Office of the Provincial Director of the Philippine National Police.

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



JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA
Senator

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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 2475

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INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

AN ACT
TO STRENGTHEN PHILIPPINE COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS
PROMOTION AND PROTECTION BY ESTABLISHING HUMAN RIGHTS
RESOURCE CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "***Human Rights Resource Center Act of 2010***".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It shall be the policy of the State to promote the dignity of every human person and guaranty full respect for human rights.

SEC. 3. *The Human Rights Resource Centers.* - Human Rights Resource Centers are hereby established throughout the country to integrate the promotion and protection of human rights in the implementation of the criminal justice system, in the conduct of local governance and in local law enforcement. These centers shall be the repository of all human rights concerns at the provincial level.

The Human Rights Resource Centers shall be attached to the Office of the Governor but the planning, policy-making and implementation shall be done with transparency and accountability. However, the Regional Office of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the Office of the Provincial Prosecutor, the Office of the Provincial Commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Office of the Provincial Director of the Philippine National Police (PNP) shall collaborate and coordinate in ensuring the effective operation of the HR Resource Centers including, but not limited to, the mobilization of resources and the provision of technical support.

At the operational level, the Human Resource Centers shall be headed by a volunteer lawyer from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines with support staff composed of volunteers from students of law schools who are rendering paralegal services as part of their curriculum requirements, people's organizations and non-government organizations (POs and NGOs, respectively) with credibility in the locality and independent of the local government.

SEC. 4. Functions of the Human Rights Resource Centers. - The Human Resource Centers shall have the following functions:

(a) Set up a library of international covenants and treaties to which the Philippines is a signatory, has acceded to and/or has ratified;

(b) Provide the necessary resource persons, literary and other educational materials to persons or group of persons who advocate and work for a continuing program of education that enhances respect for the primacy of human rights;

(c) Monitor compliance with international treaty obligations and national legislation on human rights for the purpose of ensuring the proper enforcement of laws and observance of international obligations at the local level;

(d) Coordinate with various government agencies involved in the promotion and protection of various aspects of human rights, as well as with the Presidential Committee on Human Rights;

(e) Coordinate with barangay, municipal, city and provincial human rights officers, desks or committees, as the case may be, and with the Regional Office of the CHR on issues arising from violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the people, particularly those of women and children, for purposes of referring or endorsing the same through an appropriate mechanism to the proper government agencies for appropriate action and immediate resolution;

(f) Take an active part in efforts aimed at promoting peace and development in the area and serve as the convergence point for these efforts at the local level;

(g) Recommend the enactment of necessary local legislation that will protect and promote human rights in the province; and

(h) Participate in the development, planning and budgeting process of the local government unit concerned using the principles of rights-based development wherein development plans for the locality come from the citizens who are targeted to be the direct beneficiaries of the plans rather than the government imposing the plans on the citizens.

SEC. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The CHR, in consultation, coordination and collaboration with the Supreme Court, the Department of Justice, the AFP, the PNP, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and human rights NGOs and POs duly recognized and accredited by the government, shall prepare the implementing rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. Separability Clause. In case any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, issuances or any parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 8. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,