

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
First Regular Session

'04 JUN 30 P6:17

SENATE
S. No. **512**

RECEIVED BY: *Delia*

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State plays a crucial role in ensuring effective and sufficient protection to consumers. This role becomes more pronounced during periods of calamity and emergency, when hoarding, profiteering and cartels with respect to the supply, distribution, marketing and pricing of basic necessities and prime commodities are widespread.

The Price Act, or Republic Act No. 7581 lists hoarding, profiteering and cartel among the illegal acts of price manipulation. Such illegal acts carry the penalty of imprisonment of not less than five (5) years and not more than fifteen (15) years and fines ranging from five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) to two million pesos (P2 M).

Cartel is usually committed by big influential groups of traders and businessmen, causing extensive damage and hardship to our people. Thus, it is a more grave offense than hoarding and profiteering.

This bill proposes to impose stiffer penalty of life imprisonment and higher amounts of fines for unscrupulous traders and economic saboteurs who will conspire to unreasonably increase or manipulate prices. It also proposes stiffer penalties for any government official or employee found to be in collusion with the unscrupulous traders in the commission of the cartel.

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


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

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SENATE
S. No. 512 RECEIVED BY: *Adler*

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**AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR ILLEGAL ACTS OF PRICE
MANIPULATION COMMITTED BY A CARTEL, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7581, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PRICE ACT, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Section 15 of Republic Act No. 7581, otherwise known as the
"Price Act," is hereby amended by adding at the end of said section the following
paragraph:

"PROVIDED, THAT WHENEVER ANY SUCH ACT OF ILLEGAL
PRICE MANIPULATION CONSTITUTES A CARTEL, AS DEFINED UNDER
PARAGRAPH 3, SECTION 5 HEREOF, THE PERPETRATORS SHALL
SUFFER THE PENALTY OF *RECLUSION PERPETUA* AND SHALL PAY A
FINE OF NOT LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS
(P100,000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN FIVE MILLION PESOS
(P5,000,000.00)."

SECTION 2. Section 19 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 19. Violation by Government Officials or Employees. - Any
public official or employee who, by reason of his office, with or without
consideration, conspires in the commission or knowingly conceals
violations of any of the provisions of this Act, INCLUDING THE
COMMISSION OF A "CARTEL", AS THIS ACT IS DEFINED UNDER
PARAGRAPH 3 SECTION 5 HEREOF, shall likewise be principally
responsible for the violation and shall suffer the additional penalty of
permanent disqualification to hold public office."

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,