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S.B. No. 2638

SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 24, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution underscores the *"vital role of communications and information in nation-building."*

Events and developments in recent years emphasize this point. For instance, the Million People March in Luneta Park in August 2013 started in social media. Already the "texting capital of the world," the Philippines was recognized as a "Social Networking Capital of the World," with nearly 9 out of 10 online Filipinos signed into Facebook. The National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) reported that a little more than 3 out of 10 Filipinos—or 36 percent of the population—have access to the Internet, with such penetration expanding.

Many emphasize that a digital revolution is taking root throughout the country, driving fundamental changes in the way we work, communicate, play, travel, learn, participate—ultimately in the way we live.

These far-reaching transformations demand the full attention of government. The state should ensure that such innovations benefit the Filipino people and contribute to nation-building.

Hence, a Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) should be established, mostly out of a reorganization of the current Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC). The needs of the information and communications sector are distinct from transportation, and thus merit equally distinct technical expertise and governmental support.

Throughout global society, many changes have occurred because of developments in ICT. Many now speak of building up a knowledge-driven economy—a goal which the Philippines cannot achieve without proper institutional focus and adequate support.


Hence, the immediate passage of the foregoing measure is earnestly sought.


SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

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SENATE

S. B. No. 2638

RECEIVED BY: 

SENATOR SONNY M. ANGARA

AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title** – This Act shall be known as the “Department of
2 Information and Communications Technology Act of 2015 or the DICT Act.”

3 **SEC. 2. Creation of the Department-** There is hereby created the Department
4 of Information and Communications Technology, hereinafter referred to as the
5 Department.

6 **SEC. 3. Declaration of Policy-** It is the policy of the State to promote the
7 utilization of information and communications technology, hereinafter referred to as ICT,
8 as a vital tool for nation-building and economic growth that is governmental-enabled,
9 private sector-led, citizens-centric and market based. Towards this end, the government
10 shall prioritize the effective coordination and implementation of its national and local ICT
11 and ICT-enabled services, programs, projects and other related initiatives and
12 reorganize and revitalize all relevant governmental institutions in order to achieve a
13 streamlined and efficient structure that is responsive and attuned to national goals and
14 objectives. It shall likewise be the policy of the State to provide an environment that will
15 support investments in cost-efficient ICT infrastructure, systems and resources, to
16 ensure universal access and high-speed connectivity at fair and reasonable costs; a
17 level playing field for strategic alliances with investors in order to have balanced
18 investments between high-

1 level playing field for strategic alliances with investors in order to have balanced
2 investments between high-
3 growth and economically depressed areas; ensure consumer protection and welfare as
4 well as preserve the rights of individuals and entities to privacy and confidentiality of
5 information; and promote accountability through transparent governance, and effective
6 delivery of government frontline services.

7

8 **SEC. 4. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act, the following terms are
9 defined as follows;

10

11 **(a) Broadcast** refers to the sending of information to two or more receiving
12 devices simultaneously-over a data communications network, voice mail,
13 electronic mail system, local TV/radio station or satellite system. Broadcast
14 involves sending a transmission simultaneously to all members of a group. In
15 the context of an intelligent communications network, such devices could be
16 host computers, routers, workstations, voice mail systems, or just about
17 anything else. In the less intelligent world of “broadcast media”, a local TV or
18 radio station might use a terrestrial antenna or a satellite system to transmit
19 information from a single source to any TV set or radio capable of receiving
20 the signal within the area of coverage.

21

22 **(b) Chief Information Officer (CIO)** refers to a third ranking career executive in
23 charge of the information and communications technology/information
24 technology/management information systems (ICT/IT/MIS)office in a
25 department, bureau, or government-owned or controlled
26 corporation/government financial institution, including legislative judicial and
27 constitutional offices.

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1 **(c) Cybersecurity** refers to securing the cyberspace from known and unknown
2 attacks from a dos, malwares, and Trojans, among others, through the
3 creation of technical defences.

4
5 **(d) E-Governance or Electronic Governance** refers to the application of
6 information communications technology to the processes of government
7 functioning to bring about efficient, ethical, accountable, responsive and
8 transparent governance;

9
10 **(e) Information and Communications Technology (ICT)** refers to the totality of
11 electronic means to collect, store, process and present information to end-
12 users in support of their activities and services. I consists of computer
13 systems, office systems and consumer electronics, as well as networked
14 information infrastructure, the components of which include the telephone
15 system, the Internet, fax machines and computers;

16
17 **(f) ICT-Enabled Service Providers** refer to offshoring and outsourcing service
18 providers, including contact centers, medical or legal transcription, animation,
19 engineering or architectural design services, software development, business
20 process outsourcing services, and other providers of services that require the
21 intensive use of a networked information infrastructure;

22
23 **(g) ICT Sector or ICT Industry** refers to all telecommunications
24 carriers/operators, ICT equipment and solutions manufacturers and providers,
25 internet service providers, ICT training institutions, software developers and
26 ICT-enabled service providers;

27 **(h) M-Governance or Mobile Governance** refers to the application of mobile
28 technology to the process of government functioning to bring about efficient,
29 ethical, accountable, responsive and transparent governance.

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SEC. 5. *Mandate*- The Department shall be primarily policy, planning, coordinating, implementing, regulating and administrative entity of the executive branch of the Government that will plan, promote, and help develop the country's ICT sector and ensure reliable and cost-efficient communications facilities, other multimedia infrastructure and services.

The Department shall likewise be responsible for overseeing the Government's integrated and strategic ICT systems and improving the acquisition, utilization and optimization of Government's ICT in order to improve the productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness of national and local government programs. The Department shall furthermore be responsible for ensuring the application of information communications technology to the various processes and functions of Government.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Department shall be guided by the following strategic objectives;

- a) Ensure the provision of a strategic, reliable, cost-efficient, and citizen-centric ICT infrastructure, systems, and resources as instruments of nation-building and global competitiveness;
- b) Foster a policy environment that will promote a broader market-led ICT and ICT-enabled services sector, a level playing field, partnership between the public and private sectors, strategic alliance with foreign investors, and balanced investments between high-growth and economically-depressed areas;
- c) Foster and accelerate the convergence of ICT facilities such as, but not limited to, the development of networks;

- 1 d) Ensure universal access and high-speed connectivity at fair and
2 reasonable costs;
- 3 e) Ensure the availability and accessibility of ICT services in areas not
4 adequately served by the private sector;
- 5 f) Promote and encourage the widespread use, creative development,
6 and access to ICT with priority consideration on the requirements for
7 growth of the Philippine ICCT industry
- 8 g) Promote and assist the development of local and national content
9 application and services in the area of ICT by sourcing or providing
10 funds and construction assistance for ICT-hubs and/or technical
11 support to local-based providers in these endeavours and in the
12 marketing of the local products to the global community;
- 13 h) Establish a strong and effective regulatory and monitoring system that
14 will ensure investor and consumer protection and welfare and foster a
15 healthy competitive environment;
- 16 i) Promote the development of ICT expertise in the country's human
17 capital to enable Filipinos to compete in a fast-evolving information
18 and communication age;
- 19 j) Ensure the growth of the ICT and ICT-enabled industries including
20 mobile technologies, application and services;
- 21 k) Protect the rights of individuals to privacy and confidentiality of their
22 personal information;
- 23 l) Encourage the use of ICT in support of efforts or endeavors for the
24 development and promotion of the country's agriculture, arts and
25 culture, history, education, public health and safety, and other socio-
26 civic purposes;
- 27 m) *Sustain the development of the nationwide postal system as an integral*
28 *component of the overall development of ICT in the country;*

- 1 n) Ensure the security of ICT infrastructures and assets of individuals and
2 business, and
3 o) Empower, through the use of ICT, the disadvantaged segments of the
4 population, including persons with disabilities (PWD) or who are
5 differently-abled.
6

7 **SEC. 6. Powers and Functions.-** To carry out its mandate, the
8 Department shall exercise the following powers and functions:
9

- 10 (a) Formulate, recommend, and/or implement national policies and
11 guidelines in the ICT sector that will promote wider use and
12 development of ICT, and its applications, such as e-commerce, in
13 coordination with Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), among
14 others;
15 (b) Initiate, harmonize and/or coordinate all ICT plans and initiatives of
16 government agencies to ensure overall consistency and harmony with
17 the objective of e-governance objectives, in particular, and national
18 objectives in general;
19 (c) Represent and negotiate for Philippine interests on matters pertaining
20 to ICT in international bodies;
21 (d) Develop and maintain national ICT development plans and establish
22 and administer comprehensive and integrated programs for ICT with
23 due consideration to advances in convergence and other emerging
24 technologies; and for this purpose, invite any agency, corporation or
25 organization, whether public or private, whose development programs
26 in ICT are integral parts thereof, to participate and assist in the
27 preparation and implementation of various programs among which are
28 an integrated National Government Portal and the National
29 Government Data Center;

- 1 (e) Leverage resources and activities in the various National Government
2 agencies for dam base building activity, information and resource
3 sharing and agency networking linkages;
- 4 (f) Design, implement and ensure the protection of an integrated
5 government information and communications infrastructure
6 development program that will coordinate all relevant government
7 entities, taking into consideration, the inventory of existing and
8 projected manpower, plans, programs, proposals, software and
9 hardware, and installed systems and programs;
- 10 (g) Provide an integrated framework in order to optimize all government
11 ICT resources and networks and the identification and prioritization of
12 all e-governance systems and applications as provided for in the
13 Government Information Systems Plan and/or the Medium Term
14 Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP)
- 15 (h) Coordinate and support the generation and/or acquisition of all
16 necessary resources and facilities as may be appropriate in and for the
17 development, marketing, growth and competitiveness of the Philippine
18 ICT and ICT-enabled services sector;
- 19 (i) Develop, implement and improve, in coordination with concerned
20 government agencies and industry associations, the government's ICT
21 application capabilities and determine the personnel qualification and
22 other standards essential to the integrated and effective development
23 and operation of government information and communications
24 infrastructure;
- 25 (j) Encourage and establish guidelines for private sector funding of ICT
26 projects for government agencies in order to fast-track said projects
27 which provide reasonable cost-recovery mechanisms for the private
28 sector, including but not limited to Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT)
29 mechanisms;

- 1 (k) Assess, review and provide direction to ICT research and development
2 programs of the government in coordination with the Department of
3 Science and Technology and other institutions concerned;
- 4 (l) Establish and prescribe rules and regulations for the establishment,
5 operation and maintenance of ICT facilities in areas not adequately
6 served by the private sector, in consultation with the private business
7 sector, local government units and the academe;
- 8 (m) Provide policy-direction and guidance on ICT related aspects for the
9 operation and maintenance of a nationwide postal system that include
10 mail processing, logistics services, money remittance and payment
11 services and other banking services in accordance with the rules and
12 regulations of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas;
- 13 (n) Administer and enforce all laws, standards, rules, and regulations
14 governing ICT;
- 15 (o) Ensure the protection of ICT-related intellectual property rights in
16 coordination with the intellectual Property Office (IPO), the Optical
17 Media Board (OMB), and other concerned agencies;
- 18 (p) Protect the rights of consumer and business users to privacy, security
19 and confidentiality in coordination with concerned agencies;
- 20 (q) Harmonize, synchronize and coordinate with appropriate agencies all
21 ICT and e-commerce policies, plans and programs;
- 22 (r) Coordinate with the Department of Trade and Industry in the promotion
23 of trade and investment opportunities in ICT-enabled services;
- 24 (s) Promote strategic partnership and alliances among and between local
25 and international ICT firms and institutions, research and development,
26 educational and training institutions, to speed up industry growth and
27 enhance global competitiveness in coordination with concerned
28 agencies;
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4 (t) Plan and/or implement such activities as may be appropriate and/or necessary
5 to enhance the competitiveness of Philippines workers, firms, and small to
6 medium enterprises in the global ICT market and ICT – enabled services
7 market in coordination with concerned agencies;

8 (u) Undertake initiatives to promote ICT and ICT – enabled services in education
9 and training and the development, promotion and application of ICT in
10 education in a manner that is consistent with national goals and objectives,
11 and responsive to the human resources needs of the ICT and ICT – enabled
12 services sector in particular in coordination with concerned agencies;

13 (v) Maximize the use of existing government assets and infrastructure by
14 encouraging private sector investments and partnerships in its operation to
15 achieve total digital inclusion and access to the global information highway;

16 (w) Formulate guidelines and policies defining the manner of cooperation
17 between Internet Services Providers (ISP), telecommunication companies
18 (Telcos) and law enforcement agencies during official investigations on
19 violations of existing laws relating to information communications technology.

20 **SEC. 7. Composition.** – The Department shall be headed by a Secretary to be
21 appointed by the President, subject to the confirmation by the Commission on
22 Appointments. The President shall also appoint not more than four (4) Undersecretaries
23 and four (4) Assistance Secretaries.

24 Any person appointed as Undersecretary or Assistant Secretary of the
25 Department must be a citizen and resident of the Philippines, of good moral character,
26 of proven integrity, and with experience or expertise in either of the following: electronic

1 governance, cyber services, information technology infrastructure, e-commerce, cyber
2 security, data privacy or human capital development.

3 At least one (1) of the Undersecretaries and one (1) of the Assistant Secretaries
4 shall be a member of the Philippine Bar. The Assistant Secretaries referred to herein
5 shall be career officers with appropriate eligibilities as prescribed by the Civil Service
6 Commission.

7 **SEC. 8. Secretary of Information and Communications Technology.** – The
8 authority and responsibility for the exercise of the mandate of the Department and for
9 the discharge of its powers and functions shall be vested in the Secretary of Information
10 and Communications technology, hereinafter referred to as the Secretary, who shall
11 have supervision and control over the Department. For such purposes, the Secretary
12 shall:

- 13 a) Provide executive direction and supervision over the entire operations of the
14 Department and its attached agencies;
- 15 b) Establish policies and standards for the effective, efficient, and economical
16 operation of the Department, in accordance with the programs of
17 Government;
- 18 c) Rationalize delivery systems necessary for the effective attainment of the
19 objectives of the Department, including the creation of such offices as may be
20 necessary to ensure the fulfillment of the Department's mandate, subject to
21 the approval of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM);
- 22 d) Review and approve requests for financial and manpower resources of all
23 operating offices of the Department;
- 24 e) Designate and or appoint all officers and employees of the Department,
25 except the Undersecretaries, Assistant Secretaries and Regional and
26 Assistant Regional Directors, in accordance with Civil Service laws, rules and
27 regulations;

- 1 f) Establish coordinative mechanisms to ensure the successful implementation
2 of the National ICT policies, initiatives and guidelines in coordination with
3 concerned government units, local government units (LGUs), public and
4 private interest groups, including non-government organization (NGOs) and
5 people's organization (POs);
- 6 g) Advise the President on the promulgation of executive and administrative
7 orders and regulatory and legislative proposals on matters pertaining to ICT
8 development and promotion;
- 9 h) Serve as a member of the Government Procurement Policy Board as
10 established by Republic Act No. 9184 otherwise known as Government
11 Procurement Reform Act;
- 12 i) Serve as the Chairperson of the Board of the Philippine Postal Corporation in
13 accordance with Republic Act No. 7354 otherwise known as Postal Service
14 Act of 1992, and the Corporation Law;
- 15 j) Formulate such rules and regulations and exercise such other powers as may
16 be necessary to implement the objectives and purposes of this Act; and
- 17 k) Perform such other tasks as may be provided by law or assigned by the
18 President from time to time.

19 **SEC. 9. Regional Offices.** – The Department shall be authorized to establish,
20 operate and maintain a Regional Office in each of the administrative regions of the
21 country as the need arises. The regional office shall be headed by a Regional Director,
22 who may be assisted by one (1) Assistant Regional Director. The Regional Offices shall
23 have, within their respective administrative regions, the following functions:

- 24 a) Implement laws, policies, plans, programs, projects, rules and regulations of
25 the Department;
- 26 b) Provide efficient and effective service to the people;
- 27 c) Coordinate with regional offices of other departments, offices, agencies;

1 d) Coordinate with LGUs;

2 e) Perform such other functions as may be provided by law or assigned by the
3 Secretary.

4 **SEC. 10. *Periodic Performance.*** – The Secretary is hereby required to
5 formulate and enforce a system of measuring and evaluating periodically and
6 objectively the performance of the Department and to submit the same annually to the
7 President and to appropriate Congressional Committees.

8 **SEC. 11. *Council of Chief Information Officers.*** – Every department and
9 agency of the National Government or its equivalent office in any constitutional body,
10 state college or university, and government – owned and controlled corporation, is
11 hereby directed to appoint or designate at least a third ranking official as a Chief
12 Information Officer.

13 The Council of Chief Information Officers shall be composed of eleven (11)
14 members with fixed terms of office, to be appointed by the Secretary from sectoral
15 representatives of government departments, constitutional bodies, academe, and the
16 LGUs and private sector ICT-oriented NGOs. The Secretary shall be the Chairperson of
17 the Council.

18 The Council shall serve as a coordinating body to assist the Secretary in the
19 establishment of policies, standards, rules and guidelines for the provision and other
20 ICT e-governance initiatives. It shall also assist the Secretary in the monitoring and
21 evaluation of the Government Information System Plan.

22 The Secretary shall convene the Council en banc or by sector at least once every
23 semester within a calendar year.

24 **SEC. 12. *E-government Fund.*** – There shall be an e-government fund to be
25 appropriated annual under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) to be administered by
26 the Department, specifically to fund cross-agency government ICT project which shall
27 be used to support and co-finance projects that enable the government to expand its

1 ability to conduct activities electronically and provide frontline services through the
2 development and implementation of innovative uses of the internet or other emerging
3 technologies: *Provided*, That the fund shall not be used to cover personal services
4 expenditures: *Provided, further*, That the rules and regulations on the utilization of the
5 fund shall be jointly formulated by the Department of the DBM.

6 The Department may accept donations, contributions and grants from various
7 sources, domestic or foreign: *Provided*, That in case of donations from foreign
8 governments, acceptance thereof shall be subject to the prior clearance or approval of
9 the President of the Philippines upon recommendation of the Secretary of Foreign
10 Affairs. Receipt from donations shall be accounted for in the books of the Department in
11 accordance with the pertinent accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

12 In order to ensure full transparency, accountability and integrity on the use of e-
13 government funds, a set of guidelines for the disbursement and management of the
14 fund, including the monitoring and evaluation system of projects funded under the e-
15 government fund, shall be formulated, developed, and published by the Department, in
16 coordination with the DBM. In the preparation of said guidelines, consultations shall
17 also be made with the respective umbrella organizations of the ICT sector.

18 The implementing agencies which are granted funding under the e-government
19 fund shall maintain primary responsibility over the use and management of the allocated
20 funds. The agencies concerned shall regularly submit performance and monitoring
21 reports on the use of said funds to the Department.

22 In connection with the implementation of the e-government fund, the Department
23 shall provide or arrange the appropriate or relevant ICT education or training program in
24 order to enable the trainees to comprehend the ICT development cycle appropriate to a
25 given project, as well as to ensure that government project managers shall acquire
26 expertise for the timely delivery of systems according to a prescribed content and
27 budget.

1 However, internal IT systems meant to support the agencies IT and operations
2 shall be charged against the agencies won budgetary allocation.

3 **SEC. 13. *Transfer of agencies and personnel.* –**

4 a) The following agencies are hereby abolished, and their powers and functions,
5 applicable funds and appropriations, records, equipment, property, and personnel
6 transferred to the Department:

- 7 1) All operating units currently existing in the Commission on Information and
8 Communications Technology (CICT);
9 2) National Computer Center (NCC);
10 3) Telecommunications Office (TELOF);

11 All offices, services, divisions, units and personnel not otherwise covered by this
12 Act for transfer for absorption into the new Department shall continue to perform
13 their transportation-related functions and therefore, shall be retained under the
14 Department on Transportation and Communication (DOTC), which is hereby
15 renamed the Department of Transportation.

16 b) The following agencies are hereby attached to the Department for policy and
17 program coordination, and shall continue to operate and function in accordance
18 with the charters, laws, or orders creating them, insofar as they are not
19 inconsistent with this Act;

- 20 1. National Telecommunications Commission (NTC);
21 2. Philippine Postal Corporation

22 The Department shall not exercise any power which will have the effect of
23 modifying the exercise by the NTC of its quasi-judicial function.

24 c) The laws and rules on government reorganization as provided for in Republic Act
25 No. 6656, otherwise known as the Reorganization Law, shall govern the
26 reorganization process of the Department.

1 **SEC. 14. *Postal Regulatory Authority.*** – The exclusive power and authority to
2 regulate the postal delivery services industry, as provided for under Presidential Decree
3 No. 240 and Republic Act No. 7354, is hereby transferred to the Department.

4 **SEC. 15. *Sectoral and Industry Task Forces.*** – The Department may create
5 sectoral and industry task forces, technical working groups, advisory bodies or
6 committees for the furtherance of its objectives. Additional private sector
7 representatives, such as from academe and federation of private industries directly
8 involved in ICT, as well as other NGAs, LGUs and government-owned and controlled
9 corporations (GOCCs), may be appointed to these working groups. Government IT
10 professionals may also be tapped to partake in the work of the Department through
11 these working groups.

12 **SEC. 16. *Structure and Staffing Pattern.*** – The Department shall determine its
13 organizational structure and create new divisions or units as it may deem necessary,
14 subject to the approval of the DBM, and shall appoint officers and employees of the
15 Department in accordance with the Civil Service Law, rules and regulations.

16 **SEC. 17. *Magna Carta.*** – Employees of the Department shall be covered by
17 Republic Act No. 8439, which provides a magna carta for scientists, engineers,
18 researchers and other science and technology personnel in the government.

19 **SEC. 18. *Separation from Service.*** – Employees separated from the service as a
20 result of the reorganization shall, within ninety (90) days therefrom, receive the
21 retirement benefits to which they may be entitled under existing laws, rules and
22 regulations.

23 Incumbents whose positions are not included in the new position structure and
24 staffing patter of the Department, or who are not re-appointed shall be deemed
25 separated from the service, whether permanent, temporary, contractual or casual
26 employees, and shall within ninety (90) days therefrom, receive the retirement benefits
27 to which they may be entitled to under existing laws, rules and regulations.

1 **SEC. 19. Appropriations.** – The amount needed for the initial implementations of
2 this Act shall be taken from the current year’s appropriations of the Commission on
3 Information and Communications Technology and all government agencies herein
4 absorbed or attached to the Department. Thereafter, the amount needed for the
5 operation and maintenance of the Department and its line agencies shall be included in
6 the annual General Appropriations Act: *Provided*, That the amount to be appropriated
7 for the new Department shall be based on the organizational structure and staffing
8 pattern approved by the DBM.

9 The budget of the Philippine Postal Corporation shall be charged from its internally
10 generated funds.

11 **SEC. 20. Transitory Provisions.** – Within sixty (60) to ninety (90) days after the
12 approval of this Act, the organizational structure including the creation of new offices,
13 divisions or units as may be deemed necessary for the Department to carry out its
14 powers and functions under this Act, shall be determined by the Secretary through a
15 Committee that shall be established for the purpose.

16 The authorized positions created under the organizational or reorganization plan
17 shall be filled with regular appointments as the exigencies of the service will require and
18 depending upon the position involved, by the President or the Secretary of the
19 Department as the case may be, in accordance with the Civil Service rules and
20 regulations.

21 **SEC. 21. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The Department shall
22 promulgate and issue such rules and regulations and other issuances as may be
23 necessary to ensure the effective implementation of this Act within one hundred twenty
24 (120) days from the approval thereof.

25

26 **SEC. 22. Repealing Clause-** All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
27 regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are
28 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

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2 **SEC. 23. Separability Clause-** If any provision of this Act shall be declared
3 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full
4 force and effect.

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6 **SEC. 24. Effectivity Clause-** This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its
7 publication in at least two (2) papers of general circulation.

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9 Approved