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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1551

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Introduced by Senator FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

AN ACT
AMENDING SECTION 1 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO.
1606, AS AMENDED, OR THE LAW CREATING THE
SANDIGANBAYAN

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1 This bill is remedial and confirmatory in nature.
2

3 Republic Act (RA) No. 10660 is the latest amendment to Presidential Decree (PD)
4 No. 1606, as amended.¹ By its language in specifically amending Section 3 of PD No.
5 1606, it is meant to increase the number of members in the Sandiganbayan, from fifteen
6 (15) to twenty-one (21) Justices, viz:

7
8 "SEC. 3. Constitution of the Divisions; Quorum. - The Sandiganbayan
9 shall sit in seven (7) divisions of three (3) members each.

10
11 X x x."
12

13 Verily, RA No. 10660 intends to increase the number of members in the
14 Sandiganbayan. Obviously, a division of 7 of 3 members each only means 21 Justices.

15
16 However, and this is why this corrective measure is being proposed, RA 10660
17 fails to amend Section 1 of PD 1606, as amended. Currently, Section 1 still reads:

18
19 "Section 1. Sandiganbayan; composition; qualifications; tenure;
20 removal; and compensation. - A special court, x x x, to be known as the
21 Sandiganbayan is hereby created composed of a Presiding Justice and fourteen
22 Associate Justices x x x."(underscoring supplied)
23

24 Hence, this bill seeks to amend Section 1 of PD 1606, as amended, not only to
25 confirm and remedy what RA No. 10660 intends to provide but also to avoid any
26 questions in the law to subvert its purpose and intent.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED.




FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

¹ Amended by RA Nos. 7975 and 8249 in 1995 and 1997, respectively.

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

1 **Section 1.** Section 1 of Presidential Decree No. 1606, as amended, is hereby
2 further amended as follows:

3 *“Section 1. Sandiganbayan; composition; qualifications; tenure; removal;*
4 *and compensation. -- A special court, of the same level as the Court of Appeals*
5 *and possessing all the inherent powers of a court of justice, to be known as the*
6 *Sandiganbayan is hereby created composed of a Presiding Justice and [fourteen]*
7 **TWENTY** Associate Justices who shall be appointed by the President.

8 X x x.”

9 **Section 2.** All laws, decrees, orders, regulations and policies inconsistent with
10 the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed and/or amended accordingly.

11 **Section 3.** This Act shall have a retroactive effect on 28 July 2014 or the date
12 when Republic Act No. 10660 took effect after its publication in two (2) newspapers of
13 general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*.

14 *Approved,*

15
16