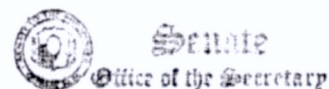


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )



'18 FEB 21 A8 52

SENATE  
SENATE BILL NO. 1699

RECEIVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

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Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

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**AN ACT  
TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT  
THE RIGHTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS**

**Explanatory Note**

The 1987 Constitution in Article II, Section 11 provides that, “[t]he State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights.” The Constitution in Article II, Section 14 also provides that, “[t]he State recognizes the role of women in nation building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men.”

The Philippines is a State Party to eight (8) human rights treaties of the United Nations, and it has accepted two (2) individual complaints procedure, and two (2) inquiry mechanisms. It also has various laws on human rights, which include *inter alia*, Republic Act No. 9745 or the “Anti-Torture Act of 2009”, Republic Act No. 9710 or the “Magna Carta of Women Act of 2009”, and Republic Act No. 10353 or the “Anti-Enforced Disappearance Act of 2012”.

There is the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the national human rights institution of the Philippines, created under the 1987 Constitution and is a mechanism that helps the State bring to the level of domestic implementation, human rights promotion and protection found in treaties to which it is a State Party. Besides the CHR, there are also offices established in the Executive Department that advocate for human rights or advise the government on the same, and these include the Presidential Human Rights Committee, the Human Rights Office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the Philippine National Police Human Rights Affairs Office.

However, it is alarming that despite legal standards and mechanisms in place, the issue of human rights defenders being under threat was repeatedly raised in the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) reporting of the Philippine government before the UN Human Rights Council. In the Report of the Working Group on the Philippine’s UPR Submission, eleven (11) recommendations referred to