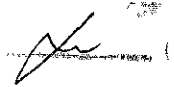


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session

8 JUL 28 A.M. 1966

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

S.B. No. 2484

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill proposes to professionalize the practice of psychology and psychometrics by setting a national standard, likewise creating a professional regulatory board to ensure excellent, globally competitive, and accountable practice of the same.

In this day and age, psychological services are being demanded by government and private sector, alike. However, it has been asserted that such services, if not rendered properly, may cause harm to the clients. There is a necessity, therefore, to afford the general public protection from such a risk.

This bill seeks to address the apprehension of harm, unintentional or intentional, that may be caused by an unregulated practice. This proposed measure will fulfill this objective through the:

1. Creation of the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and Psychometrics;
2. Definition of the scope of nature of professional practice of psychologists and psychometricians;
3. Setting up of criteria or qualifications for the licensure of practitioners; and
4. Imposition of penalties for violators of this Act.

Further, this bill proposes to provide rights to privileged communication for psychologists and psychometricians.

Through this measure, protection is extended not only to the consumers or clients of the services, but also to the practitioners as their profession will be strengthened and assured of competence and credibility.

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


LOREN LEGARDA

Senator

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session

8 JUL 28 AM 2016

S E N A T E



RECEIVED BY

[Signature]

S.B. No. 2484

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

AN ACT
TO REGULATE THE PRACTICE OF PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOMETRICS
CREATING FOR THIS PURPOSE A PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BOARD OF
PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOMETRICS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Article I - Title

SECTION 1. *Title.* This Act shall be known as the "*Philippine Psychology and Psychometrics Act of 2008.*"

Article II - Statement of Policy

SEC. 2. *Statement of Policy.* The State recognizes that psychologists and psychometricians have an important role in nation-building and development. It also acknowledges the diverse specializations of psychologists and the diverse functions specific to the varied specializations.

In particular, it recognizes the significance of the psychological services that practicing psychologists and psychometricians provide to diverse types of clients, but also recognizes the need to protect the public by preventing inexperienced or untrained individuals from offering psychological services.

Hence, it shall nurture competent, upright, and assiduous psychologists and psychometricians whose standards of practice and service shall be excellent and globally competitive through the administration of inviolable, effective and credible licensure examinations and the imposition and promotion of regulatory measures, programs and activities that enhance their professional growth and wellbeing.

Article III - Definition of Terms

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* As used in this Act, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- (a) "**Psychology**" is the scientific study of human behavior. It involves the application of scientific methods to inquire into the biological, cognitive, affective, developmental, personality, social, cultural, and individual 39 difference dimensions of human behavior;

(b) **“Professional Practice of Psychology”** consists of the delivery of psychological services that involve application of psychological principles and procedures for the purpose of describing, understanding, predicting and influencing the behavior of individuals or groups, in order to assist in the attainment of optimal human growth and functioning. The delivery of psychological services includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Psychological Interventions: psychological counselling, psychotherapy, psychosocial support, coaching, psychological debriefing, group processes, and all other psychological interventions that involve the application of psychological principles to improve psychological functioning of individuals, families, groups, and organizations;
- 2) Psychological Assessment: gathering and integration of psychology-related data for the purpose of making a psychological evaluation, accomplished through a variety of tools, including individual tests, projective tests, clinical interviews, and other psychological assessment tools, for the purpose of assessing diverse psychological functions including cognitive abilities, aptitudes, personality characteristics, attitudes, values, interests, emotions and motivations, among others, in support of psychological counseling, psychotherapy and other psychological interventions;
- 3) Psychological Programs: development, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of psychological treatment programs and other psychological intervention programs for individuals and/or groups;

(c) **“Professional psychologist”** means a natural person who is duly registered and holds a valid certificate of registration and a valid professional identification card as professional psychologist, issued by the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and Psychometrics and the Professional Regulation Commission pursuant to this Act for the purposes of delivering the different psychological services defined in this Act.

(d) **“Psychometrician”** means a natural person who holds a valid certificate of registration and a valid professional identification card as psychometrician issued by the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and the Professional Regulation Commission pursuant to this Act. As such, he or she shall be authorized to do any of the following, provided, that such shall at all times be conducted under the supervision of a licensed professional psychologist:

- (1) Administering and scoring of objective personality tests, structured personality tests, pen-and-paper intelligence, achievement, and interest tests, excluding projective tests and other higher level forms of psychological tests;
- (2) Interpreting results of the same and preparing a written report on these results;
- (3) Conducting preparatory intake interviews of clients for psychological intervention sessions.

Article IV - Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and Psychometrics

SEC. 4. *Creation and Composition of the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and Psychometrics.* There is hereby created a Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and Psychometrics, hereinafter called the Board, a collegial body under the administrative control and supervision of the Professional Regulation Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, which shall be composed of a Chairperson and two (2) members appointed by the President of the Philippines from a list of three (3) nominees for each position. The list of 96 nominees shall be submitted to the Commission by the integrated and accredited national organization of psychologists and psychometricians herein referred to as the Psychological Association of the Philippines (PAP). The Board shall be organized not later than sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Qualifications of the Chairperson and the Members of the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and Psychometrics.* The Chairperson and Members of the Board shall, at the time of their appointment and for the course of their term, possess the following qualifications:

- (a) A natural born citizen and resident of the Philippines;
- (b) At least thirty-five (35) years of age;
- (c) Possess good moral character;
- (d) Hold a Doctorate Degree in Psychology conferred by a university, college or school in the Philippines or abroad duly recognized and/or accredited by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
- (e) Have at least ten (10) years of practice in psychology and psychometrics in a duly recognized institution, clinic, or center, as well as at least five (5) years of teaching experience in the field of psychology;
- (f) Be a registered and licensed psychologist, except in the case of the first members of the Board who shall automatically be conferred a valid certificate of registration and a valid professional identification card in psychology and psychometrics upon appointment to the Board;
- (g) Is neither an officer, trustee nor member of the faculty of any university, college, institute or school where a regular course in psychology is offered or taught or review classes conducted, and shall not have any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any such institution;
- (h) Is not an officer, nor hold any position other than being a member, of the integrated and accredited national organization of psychologists and psychometricians; and
- (i) Shall not have been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude.

SEC. 6. *Term of Office.* The members of the Board shall hold office for a term of three (3) years or until their successors shall have been appointed and duly qualified. Each member of the Board may be reappointed for one (1) full term of three (3) years. The first members of the Board shall hold office for the following terms: the Chairperson for

three (3) years; one member for two (2) years; and the other member for one (1) year, which shall be specified in their respective appointments. Any vacancy occurring within the term of a member shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term only. Each member of the Board shall qualify by taking the proper oath prior to the performance of his/her duties.

SEC. 7. Powers and Duties. The Board shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) Administer and implement the provisions of this Act and promulgate as well as revise or update, as necessary, rules and regulations, resolutions and guidelines hereto: provided, that the policies, resolutions, rules and regulations issued or promulgated by the Board shall be subject to review and approval of the Commission;
- (b) Supervise and monitor the registration, licensure and practice of psychologists and psychometricians in the Philippines;
- (c) Administer oaths in connection with the administration of this Act;
- (d) Issue, and upon compliance with due process requirements suspend or revoke, and/or reinstate, the certificate of registration and professional identification card for psychologists and psychometricians;
- (e) Adopt an official seal of the Board;
- (f) Monitor the conditions and circumstances affecting 152 the practice of psychology and psychometrics in the Philippines and adopt such measures as may be deemed lawful and proper for the enhancement and maintenance of high professional, ethical and technical standards of the profession;
- (g) Issue permits to and exercise visitorial powers over agencies, institutions, associations, corporations and partnerships to verify that the persons practicing psychology and psychometrics therein are psychologists and psychometricians with valid certificates of registration and valid professional identification cards, and that they possess the necessary accreditation, skills and/or facilities to competently carrying out their functions;
- (h) Assist the Commission in the formulation and implementation of the guidelines on continuing professional education for psychologists and psychometricians;
- (i) Ensure, in coordination with the CHED, that all educational institutions offering the course/program of psychology strictly comply with the policies, standards and requirements prescribed by CHED for such course/program, especially in the areas of administration, curriculum, faculty, library and facilities;
- (j) Prepare, adopt, issue and amend, in consultation with CHED, syllabi for the licensure examination subjects;
- (k) Investigate and, when warranted, hear administrative cases involving violations of this Act, its implementing rules and regulations as hereinafter promulgated, and any applicable code of ethics and/or code of professional standards. For this purpose, it may issue *subpoena* and *subpoena duces tecum* to

secure the appearances of witnesses and the production of documents in connection therewith:

Provided, that the Board's decision, resolution or orders rendered in administrative cases shall be subject to review only on appeal;

- (l) Perform such other functions and duties as may be lawfully delegated to it, or as it may deem necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Compensation and Allowances.* The Chairperson and Members of the Board shall receive the same compensation and allowances as those received by the Chairperson and Members of the existing regulatory boards under the Commission, as provided in the charter of the Commission and in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *Removal or Suspension of Members of the Professional Regulatory Board of Psychology and Psychometrics.* Any member of the Board may, upon the recommendation of the Commission upon observance of due process and completion of the proper investigation, be suspended or removed by the President from office for cause, such as gross neglect of duty, incompetence, malpractice, behavior unbecoming of a psychology professional, immorality, unethical or dishonorable conduct, final conviction of any crime involving moral turpitude, any act of graft and corruption, and participation in the manipulation of or any dishonesty relative to the licensure examinations and/or the registration process.

SEC. 10. *Administrative Supervision over the Board, Custodian of its Records, Secretariat and Support Services.* The Board shall be under the administrative supervision and control of the Commission. All records of the Board, including documents relative to the licensure examinations as well as administrative and other investigative cases conducted by the Board, shall be kept in the custody of the Commission. The Commission shall designate the Secretary of the Board and shall provide the Secretariat with necessary support services to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

Article V – Licensure 209 Examinations

SEC. 11. *Examinations Required.* All applicants for registration to practice psychology and psychometrics shall be required to pass a licensure examination for psychologists and psychometricians to be conducted by the Board in such places and dates, and subject to such requirements, prescribed by the Commission.

SEC. 12. *Qualifications of Applicants for the Licensure Examination for Psychologists.* Any person may apply to take the examination for registration and licensure as a psychologist after furnishing evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant:

- (a) is a Filipino citizen, a permanent resident, or a citizen of a foreign state/country which extends reciprocity to the Philippines relative to the practice of the profession;
- (b) holds at least a Master's degree in Psychology conferred by a university, college or school in the Philippines or abroad recognized/accredited by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and has obtained sufficient credits for the subjects covered in the examination;

- (c) has undergone a minimum of five hundred hours of supervised practicum/internship/clinical experience under the auspices of a licensed psychologist or other licensed mental health professional;
- (d) is of good moral character and
- (e) has not been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude.

SEC. 13. *Qualifications of Applicants for the Licensure Examination for Psychometricians.* Any person may apply to take the examination for registration and licensure as a psychometrician by furnishing evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant:

- (a) is a Filipino citizen, a permanent resident, or a citizen of a foreign state/country which extends reciprocity to the Philippines relative to the practice of the profession;
- (b) holds at least a Bachelor's degree in Psychology 238 conferred by a university, college or school in the Philippines or abroad recognized/accredited by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and has obtained sufficient credits for the subjects covered in the examination;
- (c) is of good moral character; and
- (d) has not been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude.

SEC. 14. *Examination Subjects for Psychologists.* The licensure examination for psychologists shall cover the following subjects:

- (a) Advanced Theories of Personality
- (b) Advanced Abnormal Psychology
- (c) Advanced Psychological Assessment
- (d) Psychological Counseling and Psychotherapy

SEC. 15 *Examination Subject for Psychometricians* .The licensure examinations for psychometricians shall cover the following subjects:

- (a) Theories of Personality
- (b) Abnormal Psychology .
- (c) Industrial Psychology
- (d) Psychological Assessment

SEC. 16. *Registration without Examination for Psychologists.* A person who possesses the qualifications required to take the examination for registration as a psychologist pursuant to the provisions of this Act may be registered without examination: Provided, that the applicant files with the Board within three (3) years after its creation

an application for registration and issuance of certificate of registration and professional identification card by submitting credentials satisfactory to the Board that the applicant had, prior to the effectivity of this Act, fulfilled the requirements under either subparagraph (1), (2), or (3) herein:

- (1) Obtained a doctoral degree in Psychology and had accumulated three (3) years of work experience in the practice of psychology in the Philippines.
- (2) Obtained a Master's degree in Psychology and accumulated a minimum of five (5) years of work experience in the practice of psychology in the Philippines;
- (3) Government psychologists or government employees who hold plantilla positions as psychologists presently employed in various government agencies, who have a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, accumulated a minimum of ten (10) years of work experience in the practice of psychology as a government psychologist, and who have obtained continuing professional education in various psychology-related functions.

SEC. 17. *Registration Without Examination for Psychometricians.* A person who possesses the qualifications required to take the examination for registration as a psychometrician may be registered without examination: Provided, that the applicant files with the Board within three (3) years after its creation an application for registration and issuance of a certificate of registration and professional identification card by submitting credentials satisfactory to the Board that the applicant before the effectivity of this Act had obtained a bachelor's degree in Psychology and had accumulated a minimum of two (2) years' full time work experience in the practice of psychometrics in the Philippines.

SEC. 18. *Ratings in the Examination.* To be qualified as having passed the licensure examination for psychologists and psychometricians, a candidate must have obtained a weighted general average of at least seventy-five percent (75%) for all subjects, with no grade lower than sixty percent (60%) in any given subject. An examinee who obtains a weighted general average of seventy-five percent (75%) or higher but obtains a rating below sixty percent (60%) in any given subject may retake such subject or subjects within the next two (2) years, and upon obtaining a rating of at least seventy-five percent (75%) in each such subject, shall then be deemed to have passed the licensure examination.

SEC. 19. *Report of Ratings.* The Board shall submit to the Commission an official report detailing the ratings obtained by each examinee within ten (10) calendar days after the examination, unless such period is extended for just cause.

Article VI - Registration

SEC. 20. *Oath of Psychologists and Psychometricians.* All successful examinees qualified for registration and all qualified applicants for registration without examination shall be required to take an oath to uphold the profession before any member of the Board or any officer of the Commission authorized to administer oaths, prior to entering into the practice of psychology or psychometrics in the Philippines.

SEC. 21. *Issuance of Certificates of Registration and Professional Identification Card.* A certificate of registration and professional identification card shall be issued to all

successful examinees and registrants without examination upon compliance with all the legal requirements, including payment of fees, prescribed by the Commission. The certificate of registration shall bear the signature of the Chairperson of the Commission and Members of the Board, indicating that the person named therein is entitled to practice the profession with all the privileges and concomitant responsibilities appurtenant thereto. The said certificate shall remain in full force and effect until suspended or revoked in accordance with this Act. A professional identification card bearing the registration number, date of issuance and validity term of three years, duly signed by the Chairperson of the Commission, shall likewise be issued to every registrant who has paid the prescribed registration fee. Upon expiration of the professional identification card, the psychologist and psychometrician may renew the same upon proof of compliance with continuing education requirements prescribed by the Board and/or Commission.

SEC. 22. *Disclosure of Registration Information.* The psychologist or psychometrician shall be required to indicate his/her registration and professional identification card number and date of issuance, the duration of validity, including the professional tax receipt number on each document signed, used or issued in connection with the practice of his/her profession.

SEC. 23. *Non-issuance of Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card.* The Board shall not register nor issue a certificate of registration or professional identification card to any person convicted of a criminal offense involving moral turpitude, has been found guilty by a judicial or other duly constituted tribunal of immoral or dishonorable conduct, or has been medically diagnosed to be of unsound mind. In the event of non-issuance of the certificate for any reason, the Board shall furnish the applicant a written statement setting forth the reasons for such denial, which statement shall be incorporated to the records of the Board.

SEC. 24. *Foreign Reciprocity.* No foreigner shall be admitted to the Psychology or Psychometrics licensure examinations unless he/she proves that the country of which he/she is a citizen either:

- (1) admits Filipino citizens to the practice of psychology or psychometrics without need for registration and issuance of a certificate of registration/professional identification card;
- (2) allows Filipino citizens to practice psychology or psychometrics without restriction; or
- (3) allows Filipino citizens to practice the same after an examination on terms of strict and absolute equality with nationals of said country.

SEC. 25. *Practice Through Special Temporary Permit.* Special temporary permits may be issued by the Board, subject to the approval by the Commission and payment of appropriate fees, to the following persons:

- (1) Licensed psychologists or psychometricians from foreign countries/ states who are internationally acknowledged specialists or outstanding experts in psychology or psychometrics, provided that their services are important and necessary either due to the lack or inadequacy of available local specialists/experts or in recognition of their potential contribution to the promotion/advancement of the practice of psychology or psychometrics through transfer of technology;

- (2) Licensed psychologists or psychometricians from foreign countries/ states whose services shall be free and offered exclusively to indigent patients in a particular hospital, center or clinic; and
- (3) Licensed psychologists or psychometricians from foreign countries/states employed as exchange professors to teach psychology or psychometrics in schools, colleges, universities offering psychology or psychometrics courses or programs.

The permit shall detail the conditions thereof which shall, among other things, include the effectivity period of not more than one (1) year subject to renewal, and the specific place of practice such as the clinic, hospital, center, school, college, university offering the course of psychology or psychometrics. The Board, subject to the approval by the Commission, shall prescribe rules and regulations on the implementation of this particular section.

SEC. 26. *Suspension or Revocation of Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card or Cancellation of a Special Temporary Permit.*

The Board shall have the power, after notice and hearing, to suspend or revoke the certificate of registration and professional identification card or to cancel special temporary permits granted pursuant to this Act on any ground set forth in Section 30 of this Act or any of the instances hereunder:

- (a) Procurement of a certificate of registration and/or professional identification card, or special temporary permit by fraud or deceit
- (b) Allowing an unqualified person to advertise or to practice the profession by using one's certificate of registration or professional identification card or special temporary permit
- (c) Violating or conspiring to violate any of the provisions of this Act, its implementing rules and regulations, the code of ethics or code of professional standards promulgated hereinafter by the Board
- (d) Manifest physical or mental incompetence to render psychological services with reasonable skill and safety to his/her clients/patients
- (e) Professional misconduct or negligence in the performance of duties as a psychologist or psychometrician
- (f) Engaging in the practice of the profession during the period of one's suspension.

SEC. 27. *Reinstatement.* A psychologist or psychometrician whose certificate of registration has been revoked may apply to the Board for reinstatement at any time after two (2) years from the date of revocation of said certificate. The application shall be in writing and shall conform to requirements hereinafter prescribed by the Board. No certificate of registration or professional identification card shall be reinstated unless the Board is satisfied that a good cause exists to warrant such reinstatement.

Issuance of a new certificate of registration or professional identification card, or special temporary permit in lieu of one that has been lost, destroyed or mutilated shall be subject to applicable rules prescribed by the Commission.

SEC. 28. *Appeal from Judgment.* The decision of the Board shall *ipso facto* become final fifteen (15) days from receipt of the decision by the respondent unless an appeal has been filed with the Commission within the same period. The Commission's decision on appeal may be further appealed before the Court of Appeals within fifteen (15) days from receipt thereof.

SEC. 29. *Rights of the Respondent.* The respondent psychologist or psychometrician shall have the right to be represented by counsel at all stages of the proceedings as well as to speedy disposition of his/her case. He/she shall have the right to confront witnesses against him/her in addition to such other rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

Article VII – Privileged Communication and Professional Integration

SEC. 30. *Rights to Privileged Communication for Psychologists and Psychometricians.* A psychologist or psychometrician cannot without the consent of the client/patient, be examined on any communication or information disclosed and/or acquired in the course of giving psychological services to such client. The protection accorded herein shall extend to all pertinent records and shall be available to the secretary, clerk or other staff of the licensed psychologist or psychometrician. Any evidence obtained in violation of this provision shall be inadmissible for any purpose in any proceeding.

SEC 31. *Integration of the Profession.* The profession shall hereinafter be integrated by consolidating all practitioners into one national organization of registered and licensed psychologists and psychometricians, which shall be recognized and accredited by the Board, subject to approval of the Commission. A psychologist or psychometrician duly registered and licensed by the Board and the Commission shall automatically become a member of said organization and shall receive the benefits and privileges, as well as be subject to all responsibilities and obligations, appurtenant thereto upon payment of the required fees and dues. Membership in the integrated organization shall not be a bar to membership in any other association of psychologists and/or psychometricians.

Article VIII – Prohibited Acts and Penalties

SEC 32. *Prohibited Acts.*

(1) No person shall:

- (a) Engage in the professional practice of psychology or psychometrics nor represent himself/herself as a professional practicing psychologist or psychometrician without a valid certificate of registration/valid professional identification card, or a valid special temporary permit granted by the Board pursuant to this Act
- (b) Represent himself/herself to be a licensed and authorized practicing psychologist or psychometrician during the time that his/her certificate of registration has been suspended or revoked or professional identification card without being renewed, or special temporary permit cancelled

- (c) Allow any other person to use his/her certificate of registration and professional identification card or special temporary permit for any purpose, regardless of whether such act actually enables the unqualified individual to engage in the practice of psychology or psychometrics
 - (d) Use, exhibit and/or misrepresent as his/her own the certificate of registration and/or professional identification card or special temporary permit of another
 - (e) Give any false, inaccurate, misleading or incomplete information to the Board in order to obtain a certificate of registration or professional identification card or special temporary permit
- (2) No corporation, partnership, association or entity shall operate a psychology or psychometrics office, center, clinic, or otherwise engage in the practice or allow the practice psychology or psychometrics within its premises, without securing a permit therefore from the Board. Such permit shall be issued only after the Board is satisfied that such establishment is competently staffed by a psychologist and equipped with sufficient and adequate psychology-related instruments and facilities
- (3) A violation of any provision of this Act or of its implementing rules and regulations shall be penalized accordingly.

SEC. 33. Penalties. Any person who violates any provision of this Act or its implementing rules and regulations shall be punished with imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than three (3) years, or a fine of not less than Ten Thousand Pesos (P10, 000.00) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100, 000.00), or both, at the discretion of the Court.

SEC. 34. Injunction. The Board may initiate action to enjoin, restrain, and/or prosecute any individual, corporation, association, partnership or entity engaging in the practice of psychology and psychometrics in violation of this Act.

SEC. 35. Funding Provision. The Chairperson of the Commission shall immediately hereinafter include in the Commission's programs the prompt implementation of this Act, funding of which shall be provided for in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 36. Enforcement. It shall be the duty of all duly constituted law enforcement agencies and officers of national, provincial, city or municipal governments to uphold and enforce the provisions of this Act and to investigate and prosecute or cause the investigation and prosecution of any person violating the same.

SEC. 37. Implementing Rules and Regulations. Within ninety (90) days after the constitution of the Board, it shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations, subject to approval of the Commission, to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 38. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act shall at any time be found to be unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 39. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, rules or regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 40. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,