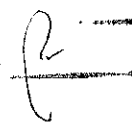


FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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SENATE

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S. B. No. 2362

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Introduced by Senator FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

It shall be the policy of the State to promote the dignity of every human person and guaranty full respect for human rights.

Internationally, the concept of human rights is embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) and other human rights documents and treaties that have followed in its wake.

This bill proposes the establishment of Human Rights Resource Centers, throughout the country to integrate the promotion and protection of human rights in the implementation of the criminal justice system, in the conduct of local governance and in local law enforcement. These centers shall be the repository of all human rights concerns at the provincial level, and shall, among others, monitor compliance with international treaty obligations and national legislation on human rights for the purpose of ensuring the proper enforcement of laws and observance of international obligations at the local level.

The protection of human rights promotes the dignity of every individual. It is one of the challenges that we have to face as a nation. It is only through the fulfillment of this goal can we truly claim that indeed, democracy is alive in this country if our people enjoy the freedom and rights enshrined in the Constitution.

The passage of this bill is therefore earnestly requested



FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

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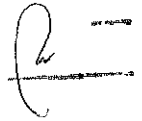
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**AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN PHILIPPINE COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION AND PROTECTION BY ESTABLISHING HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCE CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1           **SECTION 1.** Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Human Rights  
2 Resource Center Act".

3           **SECTION 2.** Declaration of Policy. - It shall be the policy of the State to  
4 promote the dignity of every human person and guaranty full respect for human  
5 rights.  
6

7           **SECTION 3.** The Human Rights Resource Centers. - Human Rights  
8 Resource Centers are hereby established throughout the country to integrate the  
9 promotion and protection of human rights in the implementation of the criminal  
10 justice system, in the conduct of local governance and in local law enforcement.  
11 These centers shall be the repository of all human rights concerns at the  
12 provincial level.  
13

14           The Human Resource Centers shall be attached to the Office of the  
15 Governor but the planning, policy-making and implementation shall be done  
16 with transparency and accountability. However, the Regional Office of the  
17 Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the Office of the Provincial Prosecutor,  
18 the Office of the Provincial Commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines  
19 (AFP) and the Office of the Provincial Director of the Philippine National Police  
20 (PNP) shall collaborate and coordinate in ensuring the effective operation of the  
21 HR Resource Centers including, but not limited to, the mobilization of resources  
22 and the provision of technical support.  
23

24           At the operational level, the Human Resource Centers shall be headed by  
25 a volunteer lawyer from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines with support staff  
26 composed of volunteers from students of law schools who are rendering  
27 paralegal services as part of their curriculum requirements, people's  
28 organizations and non-government organizations (POs and NGOs, respectively)  
29 with credibility in the locality and independent of the local government.

1           **SECTION 4. Functions of the Human Resource Centers.** - The Human  
2 Resource Centers shall have the following functions:

3  
4 (a) Set up a library of international covenants and treaties to which the  
5 Philippines is a signatory, has acceded to and/or has ratified;

6  
7 (b) Provide the necessary resource persons, literary and other educational  
8 materials to persons or group of persons who advocate and work for a  
9 continuing program of education that enhances respect for the primacy of  
10 human rights;

11  
12 (c) Monitor compliance with international treaty obligations and national  
13 legislation on human rights for the purpose of ensuring the proper enforcement  
14 of laws and observance of international obligations at the local level;

15  
16 (d) Coordinate with various government agencies involved in the promotion and  
17 protection of various aspects of human rights, as well as with the Presidential  
18 Committee on Human Rights;

19  
20 (e) Coordinate with barangay, municipal, city and provincial human rights  
21 officers, desks or committees, as the case may be, and with the Regional Office of  
22 the CHR on issues arising from violations of civil, political, economic, social and  
23 cultural rights of the people, particularly those of women and children, for  
24 purposes of referring or endorsing the same through an appropriate mechanism  
25 to the proper government agencies for appropriate action and immediate  
26 resolution;

27  
28 (f) Take an active part in efforts aimed at promoting peace and development in  
29 the area and serve as the convergence point for these efforts at the local level;

30  
31 (g) Recommend the enactment of necessary local legislation that will protect and  
32 promote human rights in the province; and

33  
34 (h) Participate in the development, planning and budgeting process of the local  
35 government unit concerned using the principles of rights-based development  
36 wherein development plans for the locality come from the citizens who are  
37 targeted to be the direct beneficiaries of the plans rather than the government  
38 imposing the plans on the citizens.

39  
40           **SECTION 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - The CHR, in  
41 consultation, coordination and collaboration with the Supreme Court, the  
42 Department of Justice, the AFP, the PNP, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines  
43 and human rights NGOs and POS duly recognized and accredited by the  
44 government, shall prepare the implementing rules and regulations necessary to  
45 carry out the provisions of this Act.

46  
47           **SECTION 6. Separability Clause.**- In case any provision of this Act is  
48 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions hereof which are not  
49 affected thereby shall continue in full force and effect.

50  
51           **SECTION 7. Repealing Clause** - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules  
52 and regulations, issuances or any parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions  
53 of this Act are deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

1           **SECTION 8.** Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after  
2 its publication in at least two newspapers of national circulation.

3

4           *Approved,*