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SENATE

S. No. 3229

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 1, Article XIII of the Constitution is clear in stating that the Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity. Sadly, even with this provision enshrined in our Constitution, discrimination still exists in the country, and its effects in the employment context can not be concealed.

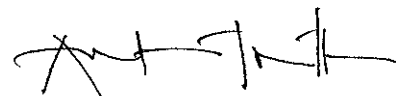
Every year, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) recruits batches of Filipino soldiers who are eager to defend and serve the country. Through the years, the AFP has maintained its standards in recruiting future members of the country's armed forces.

In 2010, the AFP has lowered its height requirements to make recruitment easier and increase the pool of candidates available. The Department of National Defense approved the amendment to the height requirement of five-foot (1.52-meter) tall for soldiers in 2009 from the previous minimum height requirement of 5'4" for males and 5'2" for females¹. According to the AFP, the lowering of minimum height requirement in the three major services of the armed forces aimed to boost its ranks with quality officers and troops, which includes those who would otherwise be considered "vertically-challenged"². The AFP also emphasized that height is no longer a strategic requirement for the military as there could be many 'shorter' Filipinos with the same amount of commitment and patriotism³. While this initiative is laudable, it still signifies height discrimination and takes away opportunity to those who are not gifted with height but are equally-competent candidates.

Height restrictions irrefutably limits employment opportunities in our country. In most cases, vertically-challenged individuals are being *handicapped* by physical and social barriers which hamper their full participation, specifically, in the armed forces.

Recognizing that all persons have their own skills and potentials that will enable them to compete favorably for available opportunities in the armed forces, this bill seeks to lift all height restrictions for application to the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.



ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV
Senator

¹ Dumlao, A. *PMA studying military's new height requirement*. February 25, 2010. Retrieved on 05 June 2012, from <http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=552639&publicationSubCategoryId=67>.

² Uy, J. Military 'lowers' standards for recruits. February 04, 2010 Retrieved on 04 June 2012, from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/inquirerheadlines/nation/view/20100204-251197/Military-lowers-standards-for-recruits>.

³ *Ibid.*

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AN ACT
LIFTING THE HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS FOR APPLICANTS TO THE ARMED
FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

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 *AFP Height Equality Act of*
2 *2012*”.

3
4 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to give
5 utmost support to measures that protect and enhance the right of all people. It is also the policy
6 of the State to promote fairness and impartiality by providing equal opportunity for employment
7 to qualified individuals in the armed forces of the country.

8
9 **SEC. 3. *Lifting Height Restrictions for Application to the Armed Forces of the***
10 ***Philippines.*** – Based on the principle of equal opportunity for employment in the country, all
11 height restrictions relating to applicants for the Armed Forces of the Philippines are hereby
12 lifted; *Provided*, That candidates shall still undergo the same fundamental military training and
13 basic requirements imposed upon taller recruits to qualify to become members of the AFP.

1 **SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Department of National Defense
2 shall, within sixty (60) days after the approval of this Act, issue the necessary rules and
3 regulations to implement the provisions hereof.

4
5 **SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.*** - Should any provision of this Act be found
6 unconstitutional by a court of law, such provision shall be severed from the remainder of this
7 Act, and such action shall not affect the enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Act.

8
9 **SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, and rules
10 and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified
11 accordingly.

12
13 **SEC. 7. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
14 any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,