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SENATE

S. NO. 160

BY: 

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Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

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#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

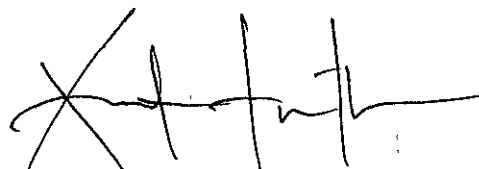
The Bill of Rights of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, particularly Article 111, Section 1, provides for "equal protection of the laws" a specific constitutional guarantee of the equality of all persons. Under it, each individual is dealt with as an equal person in the law, regardless of who he/she is or what he/she possesses. However, when this does not happen in the realities of life, like the different and adverse treatment or discrimination against Muslims, Indigenous Peoples or Lumads, Highlanders in Mindanao and elsewhere in the Philippines, then the constitutional state policy of social justice (Art. 11, Sec. 10) that those who have less in life must have more in law, steps in.

It is an established principle of constitutional law that the equal protection clause is not violated by a legislation based on reasonable classification, which rests on substantial distinctions; is germane to the purpose of the law; and is not limited to existing conditions only, and applies equally to all members of the same class. There are indeed substantial distinctions between/among the three classes of peoples in Mindanao -- the majority Christian settlers (and their descendants), the Muslims or Moro people, and the Indigenous Peoples. Unfortunately, their interrelationships have been characterized, among others, by a historical and current minoritization, marginalization, and discrimination in various areas of life. This condition must be addressed.

As part of the global community, the Philippines is aware of the United Nations declarations on religious intolerance, which have become more relevant in present times where the backlash of the September 11, 2001 terrorist act has been greatly felt by Muslims all over the world. The Muslims in Mindanao and elsewhere in the Philippines are no exception. Thus, in keeping with the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and the 1993 Resolution on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance, this Act addresses religious and other forms of discrimination.

To be sure, discriminatory attitudes or practice will not be corrected by legislation alone, even penal ones like this bill. But these legislative sanctions, which are the contribution of Congress, are part of what should be a holistic response to the fight against discrimination.

Approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV  
Senator



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SENATE

S. NO. 160

BY: *[Signature]*

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Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

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AN ACT  
PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PERSONS ON ACCOUNT OF ETHNIC  
ORIGIN AND/OR RELIGIOUS BELIEF

*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 Anti-Racial and Religious*  
2 *Discrimination Act of 2013*".

4           **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to:

5           (a) Maintain peace and order, protect life, liberty and property, and promote the general  
6 welfare for the enjoyment by all people the blessings of democracy;

7           (b) Promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and  
8 independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide  
9 adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living and an improved  
10 quality of life for all;

11           (c) Recognize and promote the lights of indigenous cultural communities within the  
12 framework of national unity and development; and

13           (d) Give the highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the  
14 right of all the people to human dignity; reduce social, economic and political inequalities; and  
15 remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common  
16 good.

17

1           **SEC. 3. *Meaning of Discrimination.*** - The term "discrimination" as used in this Act  
2 shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of ethnic origin or religious  
3 affiliation or beliefs, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition,  
4 enjoyment or exercise by them of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political,  
5 economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field, especially including, but not limited to,  
6 employment, livelihood, housing, education and basic services.

7  
8           **SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.*** -

9           (1) "Ethnic origin" includes race, national origin and ethno-linguistics origin.

10           (2) "Indigenous peoples" shall, as provided under Section 3(h), Chapter II of Republic  
11 Act No. 8371 or the "Indigenous People's Rights Act (JPRA) of 1997", refers to a group of  
12 people who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which  
13 inhabited the country, at the time of conquest or colonization, or at the time of inroads of non-  
14 indigenous religions and cultures, or the establishment of present state boundaries, who retain  
15 some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions but who may have  
16 been displaced from their traditional domains or who may have resettled outside their ancestral  
17 domains.

18           (3) "Moro people" refers to the indigenous people who have historically inhabited  
19 Mindanao, Palawan and Sulu, and who are largely of the Islamic faith.

20           (4) "Muslims" refers to those who are followers of the Islamic faith, whether from birth  
21 or by conversion.

22           (5) "Religious belief" means holding or not holding a religious belief or view and  
23 engaging in, not engaging in or refusing to engage in a religious activity.

24           (6) "Accommodation", as mentioned herein, includes a house, apartment, condominium,  
25 townhouse, flat, hotel, motel, boarding house, hostel and dormitory.

26  
27           **SEC. 5. *Acts of Discrimination.*** - Discrimination is committed when a person treats  
28 another less favorably on the basis of ethnic origin and/or religious affiliation or belief than the  
29 person treats or would treat another without that attribute, or with a different attribute, on the

1 same or similar circumstances in employment, education, housing and delivery of basic services,

2 to wit:

3 (a) Discrimination in Employment. - An employer or his agents must not  
4 discriminate against an applicant for a job by refusing employment to the  
5 person or by imposing on that person onerous terms and conditions on the  
6 basis of his ethnic background and/or religious affiliation or beliefs. Likewise,  
7 an employer or his agents shall be liable for discrimination by denying or  
8 limiting access of the employee to opportunities for promotion, transfer or  
9 training, or to any other benefits connected with the employment or by  
10 dismissing the employee, or by subjecting the employee to any other detriment  
11 on the basis of ethnic background and/or religious affiliation or beliefs;

12 (b) Discrimination in Education - A public or private educational institution, their  
13 officers or employees, or any person acting on their behalf shall be liable for  
14 discrimination by refusing, or failing to accept, another for application for  
15 admission as a student or by denying or limiting access of a student to any  
16 benefit or privilege provided by the said institution, or by expelling the  
17 student, or by subjecting the student to any other detriment on the basis of  
18 ethnic background and/or religious affiliation or beliefs;

19 (c) Discrimination in the Delivery of Goods and Services - Any person who, by  
20 reason of ethnic background and/or religious affiliation or belief, shall be  
21 liable for discrimination if he refuses to provide goods or services to another;  
22 or imposes onerous terms on which goods or services are provided; or subjects  
23 another to any other detriment in connection with the provision of goods or  
24 services to him;

25 (d) Discrimination in Accommodation - A person or his agents shall be liable for  
26 discrimination by refusing, or failing to accept or process the application for  
27 accommodation of another by providing onerous terms and conditions not  
28 similar to other applicants, or by subjecting another to any other detriment in  
29 connection with the provision of accommodation to that person on the basis of  
30 ethnic background and/or religious beliefs; and

1 (e) Any other analogous act which has the effect or purpose of impairing or  
2 nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of the person's human rights  
3 and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural and civil  
4 spheres on the basis of ethnic background and/or religious beliefs.

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6 **SEC. 6. *Persons Liable.*** - Any person, natural or juridical, including any government or  
7 private corporation, institution or company, who commits discrimination against any person on  
8 account of ethnic origin and/or religions affiliations or beliefs, as provided for above, shall be  
9 liable under this Act.

10 Any person who requests, instructs, induces, encourages, authorizes or assists another to  
11 commit acts of discrimination shall also be liable under this Act. Likewise, a person who is duty-  
12 bound to act on complaints of discrimination under this Act but fails, or refuses to do so, shall be  
13 deemed to have sanctioned the discriminatory act, and shall consequently be held equally liable  
14 for discrimination.

15  
16 **SEC. 7. *Equal Opportunity*** - It shall be the duty of every person, natural or juridical,  
17 public or private, to ensure that there is equal opportunity for all persons in relating to actual or  
18 prospective employees, students, tenants, customers or clients, and that no discriminatory acts, as  
19 defined herein, is committed by them or their agents in the areas of employment, housing,  
20 education and delivery of basic goods and services.

21 For this purpose, every agency, corporation, company and educational institution, as well  
22 as any other person providing employment, housing, education and delivery of basic goods and  
23 services, shall issue an equal opportunity policy, including the creation of an Equal Opportunity  
24 Committee, as provided for in Section 8 hereof Failure to do so shall be deemed refusal to  
25 address discrimination, and shall be penalized as an act of discrimination.

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27 **SEC. 8. *Equal Opportunity Committees.*** - In order to ensure the compliance of this Act,  
28 agencies, corporations, companies and educational institutions, whether private or public, shall  
29 create an Equal Opportunity Committee which shall have administrative jurisdiction over cases  
30 involving discrimination under this Act.

1           The committee shall be tasked, among others, to conduct the investigation of alleged  
2 cases constituting discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin and/or religious affiliation or  
3 beliefs.

4           Administrative sanctions shall not be a bar to any prosecution in the proper courts or any  
5 act of discrimination committed on the basis of ethnic origin and/or religious affiliation or  
6 beliefs, or to any civil claims for damages caused by said act.

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8           **SEC. 9. Penal Clause.** - Any person liable under this Act shall be penalized by  
9 imprisonment for a period of not less than thirty (30) days nor more than six (6) months and/or a  
10 fine of not less than Ten thousand pesos (PhP10,000.00) nor more than One hundred thousand  
11 pesos (PhP100,000.00), taking into consideration the circumstances and gravity of the offense.

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13           **SEC. 10. Duty of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).** - It shall be the duty of the  
14 Commission on Human Rights (CRR), in coordination with the Office on Muslim Affairs  
15 (OMA) and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to prevent or deter the  
16 commission of acts of discrimination and to provide the procedures for the resolution, settlement  
17 or prosecution of acts of discrimination. Towards this end, the CRR shall:

- 18           (a)           Promulgate appropriate rules and regulations prescribing the procedure for  
19 the investigation of discrimination cases against their people and the  
20 administrative sanctions therefore;
- 21           (b)           Ensure the creation of committees on equal opportunity III different agencies,  
22 corporations, companies and educational institutions, whether private or  
23 public; and
- 24           (c)           Require and supervise the agencies, corporations, companies and educational  
25 institutions, whether private or public, in the implementation of this Act.

26  
27           **SEC. 11. Separability Clause.** - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared void or  
28 unconstitutional, the remaining portions or provisions hereof shall not be affected by such  
29 declaration.

1           **SEC. 12. Repealing Clause.** - Any provision of law or regulations inconsistent herewith  
2 is hereby repealed, revoked or modified accordingly.

3  
4           **SEC. 13. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in  
5 two (2) newspapers of general circulation.\

*Approved,*