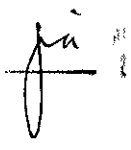




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SENATE

S. No. 165

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by Sen. Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

As an exercise of responsible citizenship, whistleblowing against corruption can help create new societal and organizational cultures and values that emphasize integrity and honesty in the workplace.<sup>1</sup> As a courageous act, whistleblowing against corruption can create inspiring stories that may, in the long run, reduce people's tolerance for questionable practices of doing business and public service.<sup>2</sup>

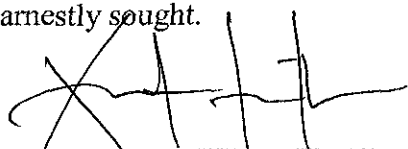
In the Philippines, initiatives to encourage whistleblowing are not new.<sup>3</sup> In fact, several laws encourage whistleblowing to curb bribery and other corrupt practices.<sup>4</sup> However, the existing legal framework barely meets the need for whistleblower's protection and support.<sup>5</sup> Considering the risks of whistleblowing in a culture that has a high tolerance for corruption, the existing legal framework fails to provide attractive incentives for actual whistleblowing.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, I filed this measure in the hope that it would help in curtailing graft and corruption in government by ensuring the security of whistleblowers who divulge the erring practices of public officials and employees. I also hope that the passage of this bill will counter the stigma of ostracism frequently suffered by whistleblowers.

As Former Senator Diokno had said:

*"Why be honest, when it pays to be dishonest? Why fight for others, when they won't fight for you? --- or even for themselves?...the answer I think lies in what life means to you. If life means having a good time, money, fame, power, security---then you don't need principles, all you need are techniques. On the other hand, if happiness counts more than a good time, respect more than fame, right more than power and peace of soul more than security; if death doesn't end life but transforms it, then you must be true to yourself and to God and to love the truth and justice and freedom that are God's other names."*<sup>7</sup>

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

  
ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV  
Senator

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<sup>1</sup> Asian Institute of Management, "Whistleblowing in the Philippines: Awareness, Attitudes and Structures" <http://www.rvrevstarr.aim.edu/Library%20CV%20Starr/Center%20Publications/Whistleblowing%20Monograph.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2013).

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*



13 JUL -1 P3:47

SENATE

S. No. 165

BY: 

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Introduced by Sen. Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

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AN ACT  
PROVIDING FOR PROTECTION, SECURITY AND OTHER BENEFITS FOR  
WHISTLEBLOWERS

*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 "*Whistleblower Protection Act of*  
2 *2013.*"

3  
4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*- Public Office is a public trust. It is the policy of the State  
5 to promote and ensure full accountability in the conduct of its officers and employees, and exact  
6 full retribution from those who shall engage in improper conduct. Toward this end, the State  
7 shall:

8 (A) Maintain honesty and promote high standards of integrity in the public service;

9 (B) Safeguard the national interest through the prosecution of corrupt and erring public  
10 officials and employees; and

11 (C) Encourage and facilitate the disclosure of corrupt conduct and practices in the public  
12 service by providing benefits prescribed under existing laws.

13  
14 SEC. 3. *Definitions.*- As used in this Act:

15 (A) "Employer" shall mean any individual, partnership, association, corporation or entity,  
16 including the government, or any person or group of persons who shall directly, or indirectly for  
17 or on behalf of said individual, partnership, association, corporation or entity, employ an  
18 employee as defined in this Act.

1 (B) "Employee" shall mean any person who is made to work by, or who renders service for, an  
2 employer. The term shall include public officers and employees as defined in this Act as well as  
3 any person considered an "employee" under the Labor Code.

4 (C) "Public officer/employee" shall refer to any person holding any office or performing any  
5 function or duty in the Government of the Republic of the Philippines by virtue of an  
6 appointment, election or contract.

7 (D) "Government" shall include the National Government, and any of its subdivisions, agencies  
8 or instrumentalities, including government-owned and controlled corporations and their  
9 subsidiaries, and Local Government Units.

10 (E) "Retaliatory action" shall refer to any negative or obstructive response, reaction or reprisal to  
11 a disclosure made under this Act aimed at, pertaining to, or against a whistleblower or any of the  
12 members of his/her family and relatives up to the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity.  
13 Said actions shall include criminal, civil or administrative proceedings commenced or pursued  
14 against said whistleblower or any of the members of his/her family or relatives up to the fourth  
15 civil degree of consanguinity or affinity as well as any retaliatory action in the workplace.

16 (F) "Retaliatory action in the workplace" shall mean any discriminatory conduct or policies  
17 which affect promotion or job assignment including undue negative performance appraisal, close  
18 monitoring by supervisors, unwarranted criticisms or avoidance by co-employees, blacklisting  
19 from other job opportunities or prejudicial transfers by reason of a disclosure made under this  
20 Act.

21 (G) "Acts constituting improper conduct" shall mean any act or omission of a public officer or  
22 employee solely, or in cooperation, conspiracy with, or with the assistance of, private persons  
23 which is covered by or constitute a violation of:

24 (1) Presidential Decree No. 46 otherwise known as "Making it punishable for Public  
25 Officials and Employees to receive, and for Private persons to give, gifts on any  
26 occasion, including Christmas;"

27 (2) Republic Act No. 3019 otherwise known as "Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act;"

28 (3) Republic Act No. 6713 otherwise known as "An Act Establishing a Code of Conduct  
29 and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees;"

1 (4) Republic Act No. 7080 otherwise known as the " Anti-Plunder Law;"

2 (5) Title VII of Book Two of the Revised Penal Code on Crimes Committed by Public  
3 Officers; and

4 (6) All other laws which penalize or sanction any act or omission of a public officer or  
5 employee.

6 (H) "Whistleblower" shall refer to any person who has personal knowledge or access to any data,  
7 information, fact or event constituting improper conduct; *Provided*, that such person must not  
8 have any direct participation in such improper conduct, or in cases where such person  
9 participated in any improper conduct, such person is not the most guilty and shall therefore  
10 qualify as a state witness against the persons subject of such disclosure.

11 (I) "Qualified Whistleblower" shall mean a whistleblower qualified and admitted into the  
12 Whistleblower's Program of the Implementing Agency in accordance with this Act and its  
13 implementing rules and regulations.

14 (J) "Implementing Agencies or Agency" shall collectively or individually refer to the Department  
15 of Justice (DOJ), the Office of the Ombudsman, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), and  
16 the Public Attorney's Office (PAO).

17 (K) "Whistleblower Council" shall refer to the council defined under Section 31 of this Act.

18  
19 **SEC. 4. Coverage.-** Notwithstanding the provisions of law on prescription of crimes, this  
20 Act shall cover all acts constituting improper conduct irrespective of the time of commission  
21 thereof.

22  
23 **SEC. 5. Admission/Qualification for the Program.-** Whistleblowers, whether from the  
24 public or private sector, shall be entitled to the benefits provided under this Act; *Provided*, that  
25 all the following requisites concur:

26 (A) The disclosure is voluntary, in writing and under oath;

27 (B) The disclosure relates to acts constituting improper conduct; and

28 (C) The information to be disclosed is admissible in evidence.

1           **SEC.6. *Necessity of Testimony.***- The testimony of a qualified whistle blower in court  
2 shall not be necessary for the entitlement or enjoyment of the benefits of this Act. In the event  
3 that the said whistleblower's testimony is required as found by the Implementing Agency to be  
4 necessary and indispensable for a successful prosecution of a case, he/she shall be entitled to the  
5 additional benefits and protection provided under R.A. No. 6891 otherwise known as the Witness  
6 Protection Program, funding for which shall be sourced from the budget as provided under  
7 Section 32 hereof.

8  
9           **SEC. 7. *Credibility of a Whistleblower.***- In all cases, the fact of the entitlement of the  
10 qualified whistleblower to the protection and benefits provided in this Act shall not be admissible  
11 in evidence to diminish or affect his credibility.

12  
13           **SEC. 8. *Perpetuation of Testimony.***- Once admitted into the program, a whistleblower  
14 may perpetuate his/her testimony pursuant to Rule 134 of the Revised Rules of Court.

15  
16           **SEC. 9. *Memorandum of Agreement with the Person to be Protected.***- Before a person  
17 is provided protection and benefits as a whistleblower for the State, he/she shall first execute a  
18 Memorandum of Agreement with the Implementing Agency which shall set forth his/her  
19 responsibilities as follows:

20 (A) To provide information to and testify before all branches or agencies of government in an  
21 appropriate proceeding on facts constituting improper conduct;

22 (B) To avoid commission of crime;

23 (C) To take all necessary precautions to preclude detection by others of the facts concerning the  
24 protection provided him/her under this Act;

25 (D) To cooperate with all reasonable requests of officers and employees of the government who  
26 are providing him/her protection under this Act; and

27 (E) To regularly inform the Implementing Agency's program official concerned of his/her current  
28 activities and address.

1           **SEC. 10. Breach of the Memorandum of Agreement.-** Substantial breach of the  
2 Memorandum of Agreement, provided in Section 9 hereof shall be sufficient ground for the  
3 termination of the protection and benefits provided under this Act; *Provided*, however, that  
4 before terminating the protection and benefits extended to him/her, the Implementing Agency  
5 shall send notice to the qualified whistle blower concerned, stating therein the reason for such  
6 termination and shall give him/her sufficient opportunity to explain and respond to such notice.

7  
8           **SEC. 11. Confidentiality.-** Except insofar as allowed by this Act, during and after the  
9 disclosure, and throughout and after any proceedings undertaken thereafter, a whistleblower is  
10 entitled to absolute confidentiality as to:

- 11 (A) His/her identity;  
12 (B) The subject matter of his/her disclosure; and  
13 (C) The person to whom such disclosure has been made.

14           There shall be no such confidentiality regarding his/her identity if a whistle blower makes a  
15 public disclosure of acts constituting improper conduct unless, notwithstanding such public  
16 disclosure, he/she has taken means obviously intended to preserve his/her anonymity.

17  
18           **SEC. 12. Confidentiality of Information.-** No person to whom a disclosure has been  
19 made or referred to shall divulge any information that may identify or tend to identify a  
20 whistleblower or reveal the subject matter of such disclosure, except only as to the following  
21 circumstances:

- 22 (A) The whistleblower consents in writing prior to such a disclosure of;  
23 (B) The disclosure is indispensable and essential as determined by the Implementing Agency,  
24 taking into consideration the necessary proceedings to be had after said disclosure; or  
25 (C) The disclosure or referral is made pursuant to an obligation under this Act. The prohibition  
26 on disclosure under this Section shall apply to any person who has become privy to any  
27 confidential information, whether officially or otherwise.

1           **SEC. 13. *Violation of Confidentiality.***- Any person who shall violate the protection of  
2 confidentiality of a protected disclosure under Sections 11 and 12 of this Act, shall suffer the  
3 penalty of imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than one (1) year with the  
4 accessory penalty of temporary absolute disqualification for public office, in case of a public  
5 officer or employee, and shall be civilly liable to the whistleblower in such amount of damages  
6 as may be awarded and deemed reasonable by tile court.

7           The proceedings herein shall be independent of any action that an aggrieved  
8 whistleblower may take before the Civil Service Commission or the Department of Labor and  
9 Employment for unfair or discriminatory practices, back wages, or other labor dispute, or before  
10 other quasi-judicial agencies that may or may not have arisen from a disclosure, or a believed or  
11 suspected disclosure.

12  
13           **SEC 14. *No Breach of Duty of Confidentiality.***- A whistleblower who has made a  
14 disclosure under this Act upon whom a provision of law, regulation, issuance, practice or other  
15 convention, imposes upon him/her the duty to maintain confidentiality with respect to any  
16 information disclosed to him/her shall be considered not to have committed a breach thereof.

17  
18           **SEC 15. *Defense of Privileged Communication.***- A whistleblower who has made a  
19 disclosure under this Act shall have in any other inquiry or proceeding the defense of absolute  
20 privileged communication with respect to the subject matter of his/her disclosure or information  
21 given lo the proper authorities.

22  
23           **SEC 16. *False and Misleading Disclosures.***- Any person found guilty of deliberately  
24 and voluntarily giving false or misleading information in connection with acts or omissions  
25 constituting improper conduct shall suffer imprisonment for a period one (1) year and one (1)  
26 day up to two (2) years at the discretion of the court as well as perpetual absolute disqualification  
27 from holding public office, in case of a public officer or employee, without prejudice to other  
28 liabilities under existing laws.

1           **SEC 17. Protection against Disciplinary Action or Reprisals and Prohibited Acts.- A**

2 whistleblower who has made or is believed or suspected to have made a disclosure under this Act  
3 shall not liable to disciplinary action for making said disclosure.

4           Prohibited acts under this section include retaliatory action in a workplace or prejudicial  
5 conduct towards a whistle blower, such as: discriminatory actions, reprimand, punitive transfers,  
6 unwarranted referral to a psychiatrist or counselor, and undue or inappropriate poor or failing  
7 performance reviews. Other prejudicial conducts include obstruction of an investigation,  
8 withdrawal of essential resources, alteration of policies and procedures, undue reports and the  
9 attachment of unfair personnel file notes.

10           Any employer who has undertaken reprisals and/or initiated disciplinary actions and/or  
11 imposed sanctions or other forms of retaliatory actions, including but not limited to workplace  
12 ostracism, questions and attacks on motives, accusations of disloyalty and dysfunction, public  
13 humiliation, and the denial of work or promotion, or who encourages, causes or commits,  
14 directly or indirectly, retaliatory action or reprisals against a whistleblower, or anyone believed  
15 or suspected to be one, shall be liable for the offense defined under this Act.

16           Any officer or employee who refuses to follow orders of superior that would cause them  
17 to violate any provision of this Act shall likewise be protected from reprisals and retaliatory  
18 action in the workplace.

19           For purposes of this protection, an applicant for employment shall be deemed an  
20 employee and entitled to such protection.

21           *Provided, however,* that an employer of a whistleblower shall be notified through a  
22 certification issued by the Implementing Agency within a period of thirty (30) days, from the  
23 date when the whistleblower last reported for work. *Provided, further,* that an employer shall  
24 have the option to remove said whistleblower from employment after securing a clearance from  
25 the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Labor and Employment, as may be  
26 appropriate, in case or a prolonged absence due to transfer or permanent relocation under this  
27 Act or R.A. No. 6891.

28



1           **SEC 18. *Protection against other Actions.***- A whistleblower who has made a disclosure  
2 under this Act shall not be subject to any liability whether administrative, civil, criminal for  
3 making such a disclosure. No action, claim or demand may be taken against a whistleblower for  
4 making such disclosure, nor shall any evidence presented be used against him/her in court.

5           This protection shall also operate as immunity in favor of a whistleblower against any  
6 action or proceeding taken against him/her by reason of his/her disclosure.

7           *Provided, however,* that the whistle blower does not appear to be the most guilty in the  
8 commission of the act or acts constituting improper conduct.

9  
10           **SEC. 19. *Discriminatory Hiring.***- Any individual, firm, corporation, office or employer  
11 who shall deny a qualified applicant of employment, or who shall reject his/her application for  
12 employment solely on the ground that the applicant is or will be a whistleblower, shall be guilty  
13 of an offense punishable by not more than six (6) months imprisonment with the accessory  
14 penalty of suspension of the right to hold public office, in case of a public officer or employee,  
15 and shall be civilly liable to indemnify the whistleblower for damages as may be awarded by the  
16 court.

17  
18           **SEC. 20. *Retaliatory Action in the Workplace.***- Any person who shall commit any  
19 retaliatory act in a workplace as defined under this Act, against an employee who is a  
20 whistleblower, or believed or suspected to be one, shall be guilty of an offense and shall suffer  
21 the penalty of not more than six (6) months imprisonment with the accessory penalty of  
22 suspension of the right to hold public office, in case of a public officer or employee, and shall be  
23 civilly liable to indemnify a whistleblower in case damages are incurred and as may be awarded  
24 by the court.

25           The aggrieved whistleblower shall be entitled to the provisional remedy of injunction  
26 against any retaliatory action in the workplace, prejudicial conduct or discriminatory treatment  
27 by reason of the said whistle blower's intended or actual disclosure.

28           The proceedings herein shall be independent of any action that an aggrieved person may  
29 take before the Civil Service Commission or the Department of Labor and Employment for

1 unfair discriminatory practices, back wages, or other labor dispute, or before other quasi-judicial  
2 agencies that may or may not have arisen from a disclosure, or a believed or suspected  
3 disclosure.

4 **SEC 21. *Penalty for Retaliatory Acts against a Whistleblower.***- Any person who  
5 commits any of the retaliatory acts as defined in this Act against a whistleblower and/or who  
6 hinders, delays, prevents or dissuades a whistleblower from:

7 (A) Attending, assisting or testifying, before any investigating agency and/or judicial or quasi-  
8 judicial body;

9 (B) Reporting to a law enforcement agency, public official and/or the judiciary the commission  
10 or possible commission of an offense or a violation of conditions of probation, parole, or release  
11 pending judicial proceedings;

12 (C) Seeking the arrest of another person in connection with the offense;

13 (D) Causing a criminal prosecution, or a proceeding for the revocation of a parole or probation;  
14 or

15 (E) Performing and enjoying the rights and benefits under this Act, or who attempts to do so  
16 shall be fined not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 100,000.00) and/or suffer  
17 imprisonment of or not less than six (6) months but not more than six (6) years or both at the  
18 discretion of a court and shall also suffer the penalty of perpetual disqualification from holding  
19 public office in case of a public officer or employee.

20  
21 **SEC. 22. *Benefits and Security and Protection of a Qualified Whistleblower.***- A  
22 qualified whistleblower shall be entitled to an allowance sufficient for his/her daily basic  
23 financial requirements considering his personal circumstances, provided he/she requests for said  
24 allowance and the Implementing Agency determines and approves the reasonableness of such  
25 request, in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

26 A qualified whistle blower shall likewise be entitled to housing and personal security  
27 regardless of whether the disclosure is made in confidence or in public. Accordingly, the  
28 Implementing Agency is hereby authorized to allocate funds and resources as provided for in

1 Section 32 hereof for the full satisfaction of the benefits and security and protection of a  
2 qualified whistle blower, in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

3 This section is without prejudice to any benefits a qualified whistleblower may be  
4 entitled to under R.A. No. 6891 provided that the necessary amount shall be sourced from the  
5 budget as provided for in Section 32 hereof and that no duplication of benefit shall ensue.

6 **SEC. 23. *Financial Rewards for Whistleblower.***- A qualified whistleblower shall be  
7 entitled to a monetary reward on a contingency basis, equivalent to at least ten percentum (10%)  
8 of the amount which may be recovered as a result of his disclosure or the amount of One Million  
9 Pesos (Php 1,000,000.00), whichever is lower.

10  
11 **SEC. 24. *Abstract.***- All government agencies, offices, bureaus and local government  
12 units, including government owned or controlled corporations, whether or not with original  
13 charters, shall conspicuously display an abstract of this Act and the rights and protections of  
14 whistleblowers, including the obligations of employers under this Act. Such abstract shall be  
15 provided in the implementing rules and regulations.

16 All government agencies, offices, bureaus and local government units, including  
17 government owned and controlled corporations, whether or not with original charters, shall  
18 likewise put in place internal procedures for dealing with whistleblowers consistent with the  
19 provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations. Said internal procedure shall  
20 be widely disseminated to all employees.

21 All other employers, specifically those in the private sector, shall also conspicuously  
22 display notices of their employees' protections and their obligations under this Act and its  
23 implementing rules and regulations.

24  
25 **SEC. 25. *Failure of an Employer to Post Abstract.***- The failure to post an Abstract or to  
26 adopt internal procedures as required under Section 24 of this Act shall constitute an offense and  
27 shall be penalized with a fine in the amount of One Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php100,000.00)  
28 for the first offense. Said amount shall be doubled for every succeeding offense/s.

1

2           **SEC. 26. *Failure to Act or Report to the Implementing Agency.***- Any person under  
3 obligation to report a disclosure under this Act to the Implementing Agency but who fails to do  
4 so within the period of two (2) months, or who fails to act thereon or cause an investigation  
5 thereof, shall be guilty of an offense and shall suffer the penalty of not more than six (6) months  
6 imprisonment, and/ or a fine amounting to not more than Three Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php  
7 300,000.00) without prejudice to any other liability that may be imposed upon such person under  
8 existing laws.

9

10           **SEC. 27. *Confidentiality of the Proceedings.***- All proceedings involving application  
11 and/or enjoyment of the benefits under this Act, including any action taken thereon, shall be  
12 confidential in nature. No information or documents given or submitted in support thereof shall  
13 be released except upon written order of the Implementing Agency, and provided such disclosure  
14 shall not endanger the life of a qualified whistle blower.

15

16           **SEC. 28. *Powers and Functions of the Implementing Agencies or Agency.***- In addition  
17 to their respective powers and functions under existing laws, the Implementing Agencies shall:

18 (A) Supervise, monitor and coordinate all efforts relative to the implementation and enforcement  
19 of the provisions of this Act;

20 (B) Investigate all disclosures made under this Act, prosecute or recommend prosecution of the  
21 same when warranted;

22 (C) Evaluate the qualification of whistleblowers for coverage under this Act, and whenever  
23 appropriate, make the appropriate decision on their entitlement to the benefits and security and  
24 protection extended herein;

25 (D) Undertake, in coordination and cooperation with the private and public sectors, an  
26 information campaign to educate the public on the provisions and benefits of this Act;

27 (E) Develop plans and implement programs to further encourage whistleblowers with a view for  
28 effective deterrence and/or prosecution of improper conduct as well as acts amounting to graft  
29 and corrupt practices;

1 (F) Control and administer, through coordination and consistent with the provisions and purpose  
2 of this Act, the protection and benefits of whistleblowers and the funds necessary to carry out the  
3 provisions of this Act;

4 (G) Call upon, or deputize any department, bureau, office or any other government agency or  
5 public official to assist in the effective implementation and enforcement of this Act; and

6 (H) Grant immunity in accordance with the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and  
7 regulation.

8

9 **SEC. 29. *Implementing Agency, Option of Whistleblower.***- A whistleblower shall have  
10 the right to indicate his preference as to the Implementing Agency he/she intends to be admitted  
11 and/or qualified in as a whistleblower. The Implementing Agency so chosen shall have the  
12 primary jurisdiction and authority to exercise the powers and functions provided for under  
13 Section 28 of this Act.

14

15 **SEC. 30. *Congressional Whistleblower Program.***- The Senate and the House of  
16 Representatives may have their own Whistleblower's Program for resource persons and/or  
17 whistleblowers appearing before them or their respective committees.

18 The resource person and/or whistleblower, with his/her express consent, may be admitted  
19 into the program upon the recommendation of the legislative committee where his/her testimony  
20 is needed when in its judgment there is pressing necessity therefor: *Provided*, that such  
21 recommendation is approved by the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House,  
22 whichever the case may be.

23 The Senate or the House of Representative, as the case may be, shall have primary  
24 jurisdiction in the administration and implementation of the program independent from any other  
25 agency of government when the investigation or the safety of the resource person or  
26 whistleblower shall be prejudiced.

27

1           **SEC. 31. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.***- There is hereby created a  
2 Whistleblower Council which shall be composed of the Implementing Agencies and headed by  
3 the Office of the Solicitor General.

4           The Council shall be primarily and solely responsible for the drafting and promulgation  
5 of the necessary Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the effective implementation of  
6 this Act. The Council's submission to Congress of the approved IRR and the causing of its  
7 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation shall render the council *functus*  
8 *officio*.

9           **SEC. 32. *Funding.***- The amount One Hundred Million Pesos (Php100,000,000.00) is  
10 hereby authorized to be appropriated out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise  
11 allocated to carry into effect the purpose of this Act.

12           Other funding schemes or sources that may be authorized under existing laws shall be  
13 allowed in furtherance hereof.

14           **SEC. 33. *Separability Clause.***- If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or  
15 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provisions not otherwise affected thereby shall  
16 remain valid and subsisting.

17           **SEC. 34. *Repealing Clause.***- Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order,  
18 letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the  
19 provisions of this Act, is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.  
20

21           **SEC. 35. *Effectivity Clause.***- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
22 publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.  
23  
24

Approved,