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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 976

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INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article 129 of the Labor Code, as amended, provides that when the aggregate money claims of an employee or house helper amounts to Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) or below, the matter involving the recovery of wages and other monetary claims and benefits, including legal interest, owing to an employee or person employed in domestic or household service, arising from employer-employee relations, except when it includes a claim for reinstatement, shall be heard and decided by the Regional Director of the Department of Labor and Employment. Otherwise, the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) has the jurisdiction over the labor-related claims.

Operating under this provision, the claimants of P5,000.00 and above are suffering unnecessary delays due to the distance of NLRC Offices. Apart from this fact, cases are continually piling up in NLRC beyond the capacity of the institution resulting in more pending cases, more petitioners waiting for their claims, and most significantly, more time being wasted.

To be able promote efficiency, especially in this concern, where money is involved, this bill proposes to remove the P5,000.00 ceiling in the amount of claims that will be attended to by the DOLE Regional Offices. Through this amendment, the offices rendering the needed services will be more accessible and the process will be improved. It will not only enhance the efficiency of the institution but will also result to the delivery of quality service to the public.

Apart from the above amendment, the bill also proposes the re-allocation of the jurisdiction of labor arbiters in handling all money claims to reduce the inflow of cases to the NLRC.

This bill aims to expedite the administration and enforcement of cases involving recovery of wages, money claims and other benefits. In effect, not only will there be a speedy disposition of labor-related cases but the claimants, as well as their dependents, can anticipate a better and more responsive service from the institution.

The approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA
Senator

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 976

INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

AN ACT
DEFINING JURISDICTION OVER LABOR CASES BETWEEN THE NATIONAL
LABOR RELATIONS COMMISSION AND THE REGIONAL OFFICES OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, AMENDING FOR THIS
PURPOSE, ARTICLES 129 AND 217 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE FOUR
HUNDRED FORTY-TWO (PD 442), AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

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

SECTION 1. Article 129 of the Labor Code is hereby further amended, to
read as follows:

*“Art. 129. Recovery of wages, simple money claims and
other benefits. - Upon complaint of any interested party, the
Regional Director of the Department of Labor and Employment or
any of the duly authorized hearing officers of the Department,
REGARDLESS OF THE AMOUNT OF CLAIM, is empowered
through summary proceedings and after due notice, to hear and
decide any matter involving the recovery of wages and other
monetary claims and benefits, including legal interest, owing to an
employee or person employed in domestic or household service or
household helper under this Code, arising from employer-employee
relations; Provided, That such complaint does not include a claim
for reinstatement; [Provided further, that the aggregate money
claims of each employee or household helper does not exceed five
thousand pesos (P5,000.00).] X X X”*

SEC. 2. Article 217 (a) (6) of the Labor Code is hereby further amended to
read as follows:

“Art. 217. Jurisdiction of Labor Arbiters and the Commission.

“(a) XXX

- 1. xxx*
- 2. xxx*
- 3. xxx*
- 4. xxx*
- 5. xxx*

"6. Except claims for Employees Compensation, Social Security, Medicare and maternity benefits, all other claims, arising from, employer-employee relations, including those of persons in domestic or household service, involving [an amount exceeding five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) regardless of whether] ALL MONETARY CLAIMS accompanied with a claim for reinstatement.

"(b) xxx

"(c) xxx"

SEC. 3. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby modified and repealed.

SEC. 4. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in at the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,