



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

'13 JUL 30 P2:56

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: *ja*

S. No. 1163

Introduced by Senator Antonio "SONNY" F. Trillanes IV

Explanatory Note

Section 5 of Republic Act No. 6713, otherwise known as the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees", enjoins all public servants to respond or act promptly on letters, telegrams or other means of communication sent by the public.

The law gives such officials a period of fifteen (15) working days within which to respond or take action on the request. However, not a few government officials are remiss in this obligation whether due to oversight or deliberate failure. In most instances, it takes an unreasonably long time for a response to come along.

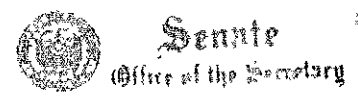
The failure to respond may not necessarily be a conscious and deliberate act to ignore a letter-request because some officials are really mired in work. Yet the wisdom of the law is beyond cavil. Public office is a public trust, and all government officials and employees must at all times be accountable to the people. Certainly, a citizen however ordinary deserves nothing less than public service discharged with utmost responsibility, integrity and efficiency.

It is within this context that this measure is being proposed. This bill provides stiffer penalties for the failure of public officials to respond or act on letters and other communications from the public if only to put more teeth to the law.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is strongly recommended.

ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV
Senator

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**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR STIFFER PENALTIES AGAINST PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND
EMPLOYEES WHO REFUSE OR NEGLECT TO ACT PROMPTLY ON THE
PUBLIC'S PERSONAL TRANSACTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS AS REQUIRED
UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6713, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "CODE OF
CONDUCT AND ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND
EMPLOYEES"**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Prompt Action on Letters and Requests.*** - All public officials and
2 employees shall, as a great rule, respond to letters, telegrams, or other means of communication
3 sent by the public within fifteen (15) working days from receipt thereof, in accordance with the
4 provisions of Section 5 of Republic Act. No. 6713, otherwise known as the "Code of Conduct
5 and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees". The reply must contain the action
6 taken on the request.

7
8 **SEC. 2. *Exceptions.*** - In cases where the subject matter of the written requests, petitions
9 or motions sent by means of letters, telegrams or the like, is non-routine or the issues involved
10 are not simple or ordinary or where the action desired cannot be acted upon in the ordinary
11 course of business of the department or agency concerned, action on such cases shall be made in
12 accordance with the procedures prescribed under Rule VI, Section 3 of the Implementing Rules
13 of R.A. 6713 promulgated by the Civil Service Commission.

14
15 **SEC. 3. *Other Duties.*** - All public officials and employees are likewise under obligation
16 to see to it that all official papers and documents are processed and completed within a
17 reasonable time from the preparation thereof and that public documents are made accessible to

1 and readily available for inspection by the public within reasonable working hours. In the
2 discharge of the abovementioned duties and responsibilities, public officials and employees
3 shall be guided by the procedures prescribed under Rule VI, Section 4 to 7 of the Implementing
4 Rules of R.A. 6713 referred to in the preceding section.

5
6 **SEC. 4. Penalties.** - Any public official or employee, regardless of whether or not he
7 holds office or employment in a casual, temporary, hold-over, permanent or regular capacity,
8 who commits any violation of this Act shall, after due notice and hearing by the appropriate
9 body or agency, be punished with a fine of not less than the equivalent of three (3) months
10 salary but not exceeding the equivalent of six (6) months salary or suspension for a period of
11 not less than six (6) months but not exceeding one (1) year, or removal from office, depending
12 upon the gravity of the offense and taking into consideration other aggravating factors, such as
13 recidivism on the part of the respondent officials or employee.

14
15 **SEC. 5. Repealing Clause.** - The provisions of Section 11 of R.A. 6713, other laws,
16 decrees, orders, rules or regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent herewith, are repealed or
17 modified accordingly.

18
19 **SEC. 6. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
20 the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,