
Introduced by SENATOR VICENTE C. SOTTO III ^{REC} 

AN ACT
INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR THE CRIME OF PERJURY, AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 183 OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE, AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Every now and then, we hear stories of people being charged with the crime of perjury – it could be in the news or just in the neighborhood. Perjury in layman’s term is the act of lying under oath – either verbally in a proceeding or written, through an affidavit executed before a person authorized to administer an oath. It is an act which undermines the solemnity of the oath that one has undertaken to “*tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.*”

In the advent of the internet and social media, discovering the inconsistent and untruthful statements made in public of the perjurer could easily be done. Yet, a lot of people – prominent or otherwise – would subsequently and without batting an eyelash change their stories made under oath like it was not a big deal. People committing such an act are not mindful of the possible consequences of their vile act. This may be partly due to the imposable penalty that goes with the crime of perjury.

Under Article 183 of the Revised Penal Code, the crime of false testimony in other cases and perjury in solemn affirmation has an imposable penalty of *arresto mayor* in its maximum period to *prision correccional* in its minimum period. This is equivalent to an imprisonment of six (6) months to two (2) years and two (2) months. Such a penalty is just light as compared with other jurisdictions.

In the United States, particularly in the State of California, it considers perjury as a capital offense – same with murder or attempted murder. In Queensland, Australia, perjury is punishable by up to life imprisonment.

With all of these being said, it is high time that the penalty for the crime of perjury be increased to *prision mayor* in its minimum to medium periods – which is equivalent to an imprisonment of six (6) years and one (1) day to ten (10) years. This is for the purpose of preventing the commission of the same.

Thus, the approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


VICENTE C. SOTTO III

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SENATE
S.B. No. 8

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Article 183 of the Revised Penal Code is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 “Art. 183. *False testimony in other cases and perjury in*
4 *solemn affirmation.* The penalty of **PRISION MAYOR IN**
5 **ITS MINIMUM PERIOD TO PRISION MAYOR IN ITS**
6 **MEDIUM PERIOD** shall be imposed upon any person,
7 who knowingly makes untruthful statements and not
8 being included in the provisions of the next preceding
9 articles, shall testify under oath, or make an affidavit,
10 upon any material matter before a competent person
11 authorized to administer an oath in cases in which the
12 law so requires.”

1 **SECTION 2.** *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential
2 decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule or
3 regulation inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby
4 repealed or modified accordingly.

5 **SECTION 3.** *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect
6 after fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the
7 Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.