

SENATE

'19 JUL 25 P 4 :46

S. No. 784

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

AN ACT
CREATING ONE (1) ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
IN THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED AT THE
MUNICIPALITY OF LARENA, PROVINCE OF SIKUIJOR, FURTHER AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
"THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980", AS AMENDED, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

One court per 50,000 Filipinos.

This is the unfortunate tale of judicial administration in the Philippines. According to Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, there are only 2,000 courts of law in the entire country. Lower courts have a case load of more than one million a year or an average of 4,000 cases a day. This means that a single judge would have to try and decide an average of 644 cases a year to clear her docket.

This national data is actually worse in provinces like Siquijor. As of 2018, there is only one Regional Trial Court serving 96,000 Siquijodnons. Its increasing population and economic activity beget a burgeoning need for access to justice. In 2016 to 2017 alone, 164 new cases were added to its already clogged dockets.

This bill creates an additional branch of the Regional Trial Court for the province of Siquijor. This aims to ease the burden of the judicial system through the establishment of lower courts. This measure seeks to make justice a tangible reality for common Filipinos.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


RISA HONTIVEROS

Senator

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



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

1 Section 1. One (1) additional Regional Trial Court (RTC) branch at Larena,
2 Siquijor, with seats thereat, are hereby created in the Seventh Judicial Region

3 Sec. 2. The Supreme Court shall assign the respective branch numbers for the
4 newly 4 created branches.

5 Sec. 3. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in coordination with the
6 Secretary of the Department of Justice, shall immediately include in the Court's
7 program the implementation of this Act. The funding therefore shall likewise be
8 included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The funds necessary for the
9 operation of the additional RTC branch herein created shall be appropriated and
10 released only upon the actual organization of the court's branch and the appointment
11 of its personnel.

12 Sec. 4. Section 14(e) of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, otherwise known as "The
13 Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980", as amended, as well as other provisions that
14 may be inconsistent herewith, are hereby deemed repealed, modified and/or further
15 amended.

16 Sec. 3. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
17 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,