



Office of the President
Malacañang

JUL 05 2024

THE HONORABLE SENATE PRESIDENT
and Members of the Senate

Senate of the Philippines
GSIS Building, Financial Center
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

Ladies and Gentlemen:

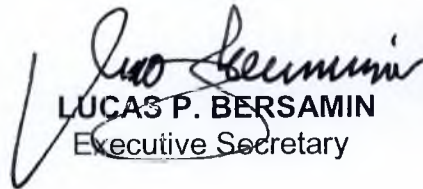
We respectfully transmit herewith the Veto Message of **President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos, Jr.**, on enrolled **Senate Bill No. 2449 / House Bill No. 8327**, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR ORGANIZATIONAL REFORMS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990,’ AS AMENDED, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8551, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE REFORM AND REORGANIZATIONAL ACT OF 1998,’”

pursuant to the provisions of Article VI, Section 27 (1) of the 1987 Constitution. The bill was returned to the Senate on 05 June 2024 and was transmitted back to this Office on 06 June 2024. Therefore, the bill will lapse into law on 07 July 2024.

Best regards.

Very truly yours,


LUCAS P. BERSAMIN
Executive Secretary



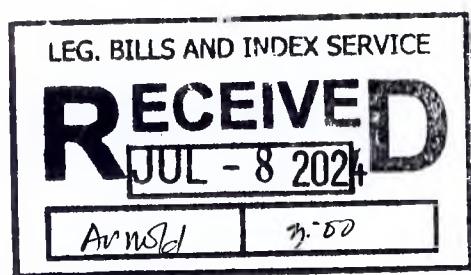
Copy furnished:

Speaker Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez
Speaker of the House
House of Representatives
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

Secretary Mark Llandro L. Mendoza
Head
Presidential Legislative Liaison Office
2/F New Executive Bldg.
Malacañang, Manila



BAGONG PILIPINAS





MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

JUL 05 2024

THE HONORABLE SENATE PRESIDENT
and Members of the Senate
Senate of the Philippines
GSIS Building, Financial Center
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to Section 27(1), Article VI of the 1987 Constitution, I am returning herewith without my signature the enrolled **Senate Bill No. 2449 / House Bill No. 8327**, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR ORGANIZATIONAL REFORMS IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990,’ AS AMENDED, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8551, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE REFORM AND REORGANIZATIONAL ACT OF 1998.’”

At the outset, I recognize and fully endorse the laudable intent of the enrolled bill to modernize the Philippine National Police (PNP), bolster its capabilities, and fully equip the organization in order to keep the peace, promote the general welfare, and serve and protect the citizenry from both internal and external threats to our country's security.

However, it is incumbent upon me as the Chief Executive to ensure that the proposed measure succeeds in delivering much-needed reforms; is compliant and adherent to the civil service laws, the salary standardization policies, and base pay schedules; and conforms with administrative budgetary policies. In addition, the bill must be supportive of the programs and policy aspirations of the present and future administrations, among which is the proposed National Government Rightsizing Program. Accordingly, while this administration recognizes the laudable objectives of the bill, I cannot approve it because the provisions run counter to administrative policy and efficiency.

First, this bill introduces desirable reforms to the PNP, starting with the initiative to elevate the status of Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) Cadets to that of Police Cadets with entry-level remuneration equivalent to Salary Grade 21, thereby ensuring their status as government employees with corresponding benefits and emoluments. Yet, the grant of remuneration to a particular class of government personnel should not cause pay distortion and disparity in relation to equivalent counterparts. Nor should the grant introduce a disproportion in the hierarchy of

THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

remuneration within the organization. Indeed, the grant of Salary Grade 21 to PNPA Cadets will distort the base pay schedule of the Military and Uniformed Personnel (MUP) by creating disparity among the several government cadetship programs. At any rate, the grant is visibly higher than the base pay the cadets will receive after graduation and appointment as Police Lieutenants.

Second, the rightsizing policy of the government must be given significant importance. As much as possible, we need to prevent overlapping functions and redundancies, and must adhere to the basic rightsizing principles. Yet, the bill aims to institutionalize the Directorial Staffs, Area Police Commands (APCs), Special Offices, and Support Units. The reorganization established under the bill does not consider the functional relationships of the different offices and fails to clarify reporting lines. Different offices performing the same or related functions, all headed by high ranking officials, will definitely be counterproductive and will defeat the purpose of enhancing the span of supervision and administrative control of the PNP Chief.

Instead of coordinated working relationships, the result may be bureaucratic inefficiencies. We cannot allow the organization to be bloated and overstaffed with the creation of redundant, overlapping, and ambiguous offices.

Third, the APCs were activated through PNP General Orders DPL 09-11 in order to plan, direct, and supervise the conduct of inter-regional and trans-regional police operations and disaster response operations.¹ The establishment of the APCs was patterned after that of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. However, since their creation, the effectivity of the APCs has not been demonstrated but they have instead been criticized as redundant positions.

Considering that various police offices (Regional, Provincial, Cities, or Municipalities) are already covering various aspects of police operations and with the adoption of the Directorate System, the APCs may be superfluous. Besides, let us not wait for the time when there will be misencounters among our police forces due to their overlapping functions.

Fourth, the bill creates the Liaison Office for the Office of the President (OP) and the Liaison Office for the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). However, the Liaison Office for the OP may pose security and confidentiality risks to the OP, while the Liaison Office for DILG may insulate the PNP Chief from the DILG Secretary.

Also, the creation of the liaison offices runs counter to the national government's rightsizing program. The PNP being civilian in nature is already under the supervision of the DILG Secretary, who is the Chairman of the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) and who acts as an alter-ego of the President. Given this, the President or the DILG Secretary, or their duly authorized representatives, can directly communicate and coordinate with the Office of the Chief PNP. Creating two separate

¹ Development Administration Committee (DAC) XI Endorses Establishment of PNP Area Police Command - Eastern Mindanao Headquarters at <https://nro11.neda.gov.ph/development-administration-committee-dac-xi-endorses-establishment-of-pnp-area-police-command-eastern-mindanao-headquarters/>.

liaison offices that will each be headed by a Police Brigadier General is plainly unwarranted.

Fifth, the purported enhancement of the Internal Affairs Service (IAS) consists of adding the ground of the alleged involvement of police personnel in crimes like murder for the IAS's *motu proprio* investigation. However, the Integrity Monitoring and Enforcement Group, supposedly intended to be responsible for information gathering and enforcement operations against PNP personnel reported to be involved in illegal activities, is brought under the National Operational Support Units. This may lead to questions about its independence.

The need to ensure independence and impartiality in the appointment of members of the Legal Service Unit or the IAS is quite an important issue. While the bill specifies that the Inspector General heading the IAS must be a civilian, the Deputy Inspector General and the Regional Internal Affairs Officer are both star-ranked officials. An independent and fully functional IAS is essential in maintaining the highest standards of integrity and competence in the PNP. The same likewise applies to the Legal Service.

The bill has not added any significant measure that would bolster and enhance the capability of the PNP leadership to implement the highest standards of integrity and accountability in the police force. There can be no true reform if these issues are not prioritized.

Sixth, the bill seemingly tolerates the possible encroachment by the NAPOLCOM into the Civil Service Commission's (CSC) functions. The administrative relationships among the CSC, DILG, and PNP, including the procedures for disciplinary measures, are not clarified.

Lastly, the provision providing for the retroactive application of the bill as to the "rights and benefits granted by virtue of appointments, promotions or resignations prior to its effectivity" is ambiguous and at the same time vague. It needs clarifications and omits comprehensible standards. For instance, what are the rights and benefits contemplated and how can the rights and benefits be retroactively applied to individuals who had already been separated from service? The provision may breed confusion.

With all due respect to Congress, this bill should not be a missed opportunity to implement genuine transformative reforms that will allow the PNP to be more effective and efficient in the performance of its mandate to maintain peace and order, protect lives, and ensure public safety.

In view of these considerations, I am constrained to veto the above-mentioned Enrolled Bill.

Very truly yours,



Copy furnished:

Speaker Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez

Speaker of the House

House of Representatives

Batasan Hills, Quezon City

Secretary Mark Llandro L. Mendoza

Head

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