


13th CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
THIRD REGULAR SESSION)

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

SECRETARY

SENATE BILL No. 2540

21 1 1974 

Introduced by Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr.

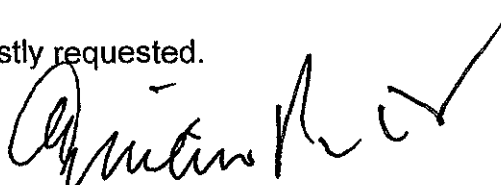
Explanatory Note

The protection of human rights is essential to any country that calls itself democratic. Governments are bound by international and domestic statutes to protect those rights. Internationally, the concept of human rights is embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) and other human rights documents and treaties that have followed in its wake.

This bill proposes the establishment of Human Rights Resource Centers, throughout the country to integrate the promotion and protection of human rights in the implementation of the criminal justice system, in the conduct of local governance and in local law enforcement. These centers shall be the repository of all human rights concerns at the provincial level, and shall, among others, monitor compliance with international treaty obligations and national legislation on human rights for the purpose of ensuring the proper enforcement of laws and observance of international obligations at the local level.

The protection of human rights promotes the dignity of every individual. It is one of the challenges that we have to face as a nation. It is only through the fulfillment of this goal can we truly claim that indeed, democracy is alive in this country if our people enjoy the freedom and rights enshrined in the Constitution.

The passage of this bill is therefore earnestly requested.


AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL, JR.

SENATE
SB 2549

Introduced by SENATOR AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL, JR.

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN PHILIPPINE COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION AND PROTECTION BY ESTABLISHING HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCE CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Human Rights Resource
2 Center Act of 2006”.

3 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State to promote the
4 dignity of every human person and guaranty full respect for human rights.

5 SECTION 3. *The Human Rights Resource Centers.* – Human Rights Resource
6 Centers are hereby established throughout the country to integrate the promotion and
7 protection of human rights in the implementation of the criminal justice system, in the conduct
8 of local governance and in local law enforcement. These centers shall be the repository of all
9 human rights concerns at the provincial level.

10 The Human Resource Centers shall be attached to the Office of the Governor but the
11 planning, policy-making and implementation shall be done with transparency and
12 accountability. However, the Regional Office of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the
13 Office of the Provincial Prosecutor, the Office of the Provincial Commander of the Armed
14 Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Office of the Provincial Director of the Philippine
15 National Police (PNP) shall collaborate and coordinate in ensuring the effective operation of
16 the HR Resource Centers including, but not limited to, the mobilization of resources and the
17 provision of technical support.

18 At the operational level, the Human Resource Centers shall be headed by a volunteer
19 lawyer from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines with support staff composed of volunteers
20 from students of law schools who are rendering paralegal services as part of their curriculum
21 requirements, people’s organizations and non-government organizations (POs and NGOs,
22 respectively) with credibility in the locality and independent of the local government.

1 SECTION 4. *Functions of the Human Resource Centers.* – The Human Resource

2 Centers shall have the following functions:

3 (a) Set up a library of international covenants and treaties to which the Philippines is a
4 signatory, has acceded to and/or has ratified;

5 (b) Provide the necessary resource persons, literary and other educational materials to
6 persons or group of persons who advocate and work for a continuing program of education
7 that enhances respect for the primacy of human rights;

8 (c) Monitor compliance with international treaty obligations and national legislation on
9 human rights for the purpose of ensuring the proper enforcement of laws and observance of
10 international obligations at the local level;

11 (d) Coordinate with various government agencies involved in the promotion and
12 protection of various aspects of human rights, as well as with the Presidential Committee on
13 Human Rights;

14 (e) Coordinate with barangay, municipal, city and provincial human rights officers, desks
15 or committees, as the case may be, and with the Regional Office of the CHR on issues
16 arising from violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the people,
17 particularly those of women and children, for purposes of referring or endorsing the same
18 through an appropriate mechanism to the proper government agencies for appropriate action
19 and immediate resolution;

20 (f) Take an active part in efforts aimed at promoting peace and development in the area
21 and serve as the convergence point for these efforts at the local level;

22 (g) Recommend the enactment of necessary local legislation that will protect and
23 promote human rights in the province; and

24 (h) Participate in the development, planning and budgeting process of the local
25 government unit concerned using the principles of rights-based development wherein
26 development plans for the locality come from the citizens who are targeted to be the direct
27 beneficiaries of the plans rather than the government imposing the plans on the citizens.

28 SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CHR, in consultation,
29 coordination and collaboration with the Supreme Court, the Department of Justice, the AFP,
30 the PNP, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and human rights NGOs and POs duly

1 recognized and accredited by the government, shall prepare the implementing rules and
2 regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

3 SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* In case any provision of this Act is declared
4 unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall
5 continue in full force and effect.

6 SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
7 regulations, issuances or any parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
8 deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

9 SECTION 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
10 publication in at least two newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,