

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 633

INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article III Section 7 of the 1987 Constitution provides, "The right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access of official records and documents, and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law." The right of the people to information is a basic precept to a democracy. Thus, the better informed our people are, the better they can participate and involve themselves in the workings of the government. And the more they can actively involve and participate; our government becomes better and more efficient.

This bill seeks to underscore the principle of transparency in government transactions and business. This is one way to rid our government of graft and corruption, because, by putting a window through which the people can look into the comings and goings in every agency of the government, we can subject government policies, programs and activities to public scrutiny.

The creation of the Public Information and Media Relation Office in every branch, subdivision, instrumentality or agency of the government will provide a window where people can take a closer glance upon our government. This office is mandated to provide the public access to information, especially those affecting them.

It is for the foregoing reasons that passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA
Senator


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Senate Bill No. 633

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INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

AN ACT

CREATING A PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS OFFICE (PIMRO) IN ALL BRANCHES, SUBDIVISIONS, INSTRUMENTALITIES AND AGENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Creation. There is hereby created a Public Information and Media Relation Office (PIMRO) in all branches, subdivision, instrumentalities and agencies of the government.

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the Policy of State to promote the right of the people to information on matters of public concern. Thus, citizen shall be afforded access to official records and documents and papers pertaining top official acts, transaction or decision through the creation of an office that shall facilitate public information and enhance media relations.

SEC. 3. Duties and Responsibilities. The PIMRO shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- a) Provide the general public access to official records, documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, and all other information on matters of public concern;
- b) Prepare, distribute, and disseminate performance report bi- annually to inform the public of the various accomplishments of the branch, subdivisions instrumentality, and agency of the of the Government concerned:
- c) Facilitate and coordinate media coverage, media conference, press release requirements of he branch, subdivisions, instrumentality, and agency of the Government concerned:
- d) Provide linkages between the public, the press and the branch, subdivision, instrumentality and agency of the Government concerned for the proper coordination of information dissemination to the public; and
- e) Perform other functions as may be directed by the head of the branch, subdivision, instrumentality, and agency of the Government in relation to its public information and media relations mandate.

SEC. 4. Organizational Structure. The Public Information and Media Relations Office herein created shall be headed by a Public Information and Media relations Officer who shall have the same rank, salary and privileges as a Division Chief. Thus, he shall exercise supervision and control of said office. Each branch, subdivision, instrumentality and agency of government shall prescribe and define the position structure and staffing pattern of its PIMRO subject to existing civil service laws, rules and regulations. The positions subsequently created herein shall be filled by the regular appointments. Provided, that appointments must comply with the qualifications standards set by Civil Service Commission.

SEC. 5. Appropriations. The amount of Fifty Million Pesos (P50,000,000.00) not otherwise appropriated shall be initially appropriated out of the funds of the National Treasury. Subsequent appropriations shall be provided by Congress in the Annual Budget of each government agency under the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. Separability. If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions.

SEC. 7. Repealing Clause. Any provisions of law, Presidential decree, executive order, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with any of the provision of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. Effectivity Clause. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,