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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 596



Introduced by REP. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Public Welfare and Proper Plumbing System are the concern of all. These are underscored in the plumbing works of buildings. It is necessary that plumbing design and installation be undertaken by people with adequate academic and technical background in accordance with sound engineering practice and generally accepted standards.

Some forty years ago, 1955, Congress enacted R.A. 1378, otherwise known as the Plumbing Law, which regulates the trade of master plumbers. High School graduates with five years plumbing experience used to dominate the trade. With the advent of high rise buildings their numbers are dwindling but sustaining. Master Plumbers with engineering expertise are coming about. Since then the law has become outmoded with provisions that do not harmonize with the times. To date the practice of plumbing is still considered a trade, although the act of plumbing works has become more complex with the emergence and expansion of all types of buildings design and construction, coupled by the trend of urbanization, the proliferation of urban centers, and the subsequent complexity of architectural and engineering works these all the more spell out the demand for plumbing engineer.

The burgeoning plumbing industry dramatizes the need for the participation of Plumbing Engineers with good academic background in engineering to cope up with the new technology required. The time has come, after two scores to upgrade the plumbing profession. R.A. 1378 must

give way to a new law for Plumbing Engineers. Plumbing Engineering must be accorded professional acceptance and recognition.

Section 1 (B), Item (15) of R.A. 6511, An Act Amending Republic Act 465, An Act to Standardize the Examination and Registration Fees charged by the National Examining Boards, and the other purposes, provide and lists down the Profession of Plumbing Engineers as a preparation for the regulation of the profession. For this reason, registered engineers who are holders of Master Plumbers Certificate have responded to the call of the times and bonded themselves together under one roof, the Philippine Institute of Plumbing Engineers (PIPE). Their move was backed up by colleges and universities who recognized the importance of plumbing engineering by offering it as a distinct course. Congress has to come up with the law to elevate the plumbing trade to one of professional engineering and in the interest of public welfare.

Approval of this bill is urgently requested.

FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

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AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF PLUMBING ENGINEERING IN THE PHILIPPINES

Be it enacted by SENATE and HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Title – This Act shall be known as the **"Philippine Plumbing Engineering Act"**.

SECTION 2. Definition of Terms:

(a) Practice of Plumbing Engineering – The practice of Plumbing Engineering is a professional and organized act of gathering physical data for an effective performance in the design and installation of plumbing systems of buildings and other structures. It shall embrace services, but not limited, to the following activities:

(1) Consultations, designing, preparation of plans, specifications, estimates, erection, installation and supervision of plumbing work including the inspection and acceptance of materials used therein in connection with any of the following:

a. Storm Drainage Piping Systems;

b. Soil Waste and Vent Piping Systems;

c. Hot and Cold Water Supply Piping System;

d. Private Sewage Disposal Systems; and

e. All other related piping installation within the building.

(2) Extension, alteration and modifications of all pipings for fixtures, equipment, appliances, and appurtenances in connection with any of the above scope.

(3) The enumeration of sub-section (1) and (2) above, shall not be construed as excluding any other work requiring plumbing knowledge and application.

(4) Engagement in the transfer of the knowledge and technology of plumbing engineering in any institution of learning;

SECTION 3. Creation and Composition of the Board of Plumbing Engineering – There is hereby created a Board of Plumbing Engineering, hereinafter called the Board, to be composed of a chairman and two (2) members to be appointed by the President of the Philippines from a list of three (3) recomendees of the Professional Regulation Commission, hereinafter called the commission for each position, chosen in rank in the order of preference and from the list of five (5) nominees for each position submitted by the accredited Integrated National Organization of Plumbing Engineers and Master Plumbers. The first set of nominees for the first composition may be submitted by the present association of Plumbing Engineers unless the integrated shall have been set up for the purpose. The first composition shall be organized not later than six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 4. Qualifications of Members of the Board – A member of the Board shall at the time of his/her appointment, possess the following qualifications:

(a) Natural born citizen and resident of the Philippines;

(b) Must be at least forty (40) years of age;

(c) Must be a Plumbing Engineer holding a valid Certificate of Registration and a valid Professional License as a Plumbing Engineer having a degree of Bachelor of Science in Engineering and an active practitioner in Master Plumber/Plumbing Engineering for not less than ten (10) years prior to appointment;

(d) Must not be a member of the faculty of any school, academy, institute, college or university where a regular course in Plumbing Engineering is being taught, nor have pecuniary interest in or administrative supervision over any such institution of learning;

(e) Must not, for a period of three (3) consecutive years prior to appointment, be connected with a review center or with any group or any association where review classes or lectures in preparation for the licensure examination are offered or conducted at the time of appointment; and

(f) Must not have been convicted of any offense involving moral turpitude.

SECTION 5. Term of Office – The members of the Board shall hold office for a term of three (3) years and until their successors shall have been appointed and qualified. Of the members of the Board first appointed under this Act, one (1) member shall be appointed and hold office for three (3) years; and one (1) member for two (2) years, one (1) member for one year.

The Chairman or member of the Board may be re-appointed for another term but in no case shall he serve continuously for more than six (6) years. Each member of the Board shall qualify by taking the proper oath of office prior to the assumption in the performance of duties.

Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the board within the term of a member shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term only.

SECTION 6. Compensation of the Board Members – The Chairman and members of the Board shall receive compensation and allowances comparable to the compensation and allowances received by existing Professional Regulatory Boards with Professional Regulation Commission

(PRC), hereinafter referred to as the Commission, as provided for in the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 7. Vacancy and Removal of Board Members – Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the Board within the term of a member shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term only. The President may remove any member of the Board, upon the recommendation of the Commission, on the following grounds:

(a) Neglect of duty or incompetence;
(b) Violation or tolerance of the violation of this Act or the Code of Ethics or Technical Standards for Plumbing Engineers;
(c) Final judgment of a crime involving moral turpitude.

He/She shall be given due notice and hearing where his/her right to be heard and to defend him/herself, assisted by counsel, shall be respected in a proper administrative investigation the commission shall conduct.

SECTION 8. Powers and Duties of the Board – The Board shall exercise the following specific powers, functions, duties and responsibilities:

(a) To promulgate and adopt the rules and regulations necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Act;

(b) To supervise the examination, registration, licensure and practice of Plumbing Engineering and Master Plumbing in the Philippines;

(c) To administer oaths in connection with the successful examinees entering the practice of Plumbing Engineering and Master Plumbing;

(d) To issue the Certificate of Registration to successful examinees;

(e) To issue, suspend, revoke, or reinstate the Certificate of Registration and Professional License for the practice of the Plumbing Engineering profession;

(f) To adopt an official seal of the Board;

(g) To look into the conditions affecting the practice of the professions and whenever necessary, adopt such measures as may be deemed proper for the enhancement and maintenance of high professional and ethical standards of the professions;

(h) To ensure, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), that all educational institutions offering Plumbing Engineering education comply with the policies, standards and requirements of the course prescribed by CHED in the areas of curriculum, faculty, library and facilities;

(i) To prescribed and/or adopt a Code of Ethics and a Code of Technical Standards for the practice of the Plumbing Engineering professions;

(j) To hear and try administrative cases involving violations of this Act, its implementing rules and regulations, the Code of Ethics / Technical Standards and for the purpose, to issue subpoena and subpoena duces tecum to secure the appearances of witnesses and the production of documents in connection therewith;

(k) To prescribe guidelines for the Continuing Professional Education (CPE) program in coordination with the accredited integrated National Association of Professional Plumbing Engineers;

(l) To prepare, adopt issue or amend the syllabi of the subjects for examination.

(m) To approve, issue, limit or revoke temporary special permit license to practice Plumbing Engineering;

(n) Discharge such other duties and functions as may be deemed necessary for the enhancement of the Plumbing Engineering professions and the upgrading, development and growth of Plumbing Engineering education in the Philippines;

SECTION 9. Supervision of the Board, Custodian of its Records, Secretariat and Support Services – The Board shall be under the administrative supervision of the Commission. All records of the Board, including the application for examination, examination papers and results, minutes of deliberation, administrative cases and other investigations involving Plumbing Engineers shall be kept by the Commission.

The Commission shall designate the Secretary of the Board and shall provide the secretariat and other support services to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 10. Annual Report – The Board shall, at the close of each calendar year, submit an annual report to the President of the Philippines through the Professional Regulation Commission, giving detailed account of its recommendation for the adoption of measures that will upgrade and improve the conditions affecting the practice of Plumbing Engineering in the Philippines.

SECTION 11. Examinations Required – All applicants for registration for the practice of Plumbing Engineering shall be required to undergo and pass a written technical examination provided for in this Act.

SECTION 12. Qualifications of Applicant for Plumbing Engineering Examination – Every applicant for Plumbing Engineer examination shall establish the following:

(a) He/she is a citizen of the Philippines or a foreigner whose country state has reciprocity with the Philippines in the practice of the profession;

(b) Of Good Moral Character and;

(c) Within five yeas upon approval of this Act, a graduate of any BS degree in Engineering or Architecture may qualify for the examination provided.

(d) That he/she is a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Plumbing Engineering in a school, academy, institute or college duly recognized by the Government.

SECTION 13. Fraudulent Application – The Board may suspend or revoke a Certificate of Registration obtained through misrepresentation made in the application for examination.

SECTION 14. Scope of Examinations – The examination for Plumbing Engineering shall basically cover the following subjects:

a. *Mathematics;*
b. *Theory and Practice of Plumbing*
c. *Hydraulic and Plumbing Principles*
d. *Plumbing Laws and National Codes*
e. *Plumbing Design and Installation*
f. *Laws on Obligations and Contracts;*
g. *Code of Ethics of the Profession*

The said subjects and their syllabi maybe amended by the Board so as to conform to technological changes brought about by continuing trends in the profession.

SECTION 15. Rating in the Board Examination – To be qualified as having passed the board examination for Plumbing Engineers, a candidate must obtained a weighted general average of seventy (70%) with no grade lower than fifty-five percent (55%) in any given subject must take the examination in the subject or subjects where he/she obtained a grade below fifty-five percent (55%).

SECTION 16. Report of Ratings – The board shall submit to the commission the rating obtained by each candidate within twenty (20) calendar days after the examination, unless extended for just cause. Upon the release of the results of the examination, the board shall send by mail the rating received by each examinee at his given address using the mailing envelope submitted during the examination.

SECTION 17. Re – examination – An applicant who fails to pass the examination for the third time shall be allowed to take another examination only after the lapse of one year.

SECTION 18. Oath – All successful candidates in the examinations shall be required to take an oath of profession before the Board or any PRC Official authorized by the PRC to administer oaths, prior to entering upon the practice of the Plumbing Engineering profession.

SECTION 19. Certificate of Registration and Professional License – A Certificate of Registration shall be issued to applicants who pass the examination for Plumbing Engineers subject to payment of registration fees.

The Certificate of Registration of a Professional Plumbing Engineer shall bear the signatures of the Chairman of the Board and its member attested by the Secretary of the Professional Regulation Commission and stamped with the official seal of the Board indicating that the person named therein is a registered Plumbing Engineer.

A professional license bearing the registration number, date of issuance, expiry date and duly signed by the Chairman of the Board, shall likewise be issued to every registrant, upon payment of the professional fees. No person shall practice Plumbing Engineering in the manner contrary to herein provided. A license is entitled to practice the profession with all the privileges appurtenant thereto until the expiration of the validity of his license.

SECTION 20. Seal and Use of Seal – (a) Each registrant shall, upon registration, obtain the seal of such design as the Board of Plumbing Engineering may adopt. Plans and specifications prepared by, or under the direct supervision of a registered Plumbing Engineer, shall be stamped with said seal during the validity of the professional license. No person shall stamp or seal any document with the seal of a registrant after his professional license has expired, lost its validity, unless he has been reinstated at the practice and/or unless his license has been renewed.

(b) *No officer or employee of the government, chartered cities, provinces and municipalities now or hereafter charged with the enforcement of laws, ordinances or regulations relating to all Plumbing Engineering practices shall accept or endorse any plumbing plans or documents which have not been prepared and submitted in full accord with the provisions of this Act, nor shall any payment be approved by any such officer for any work, the plans and documents of which have not been prepared, signed and sealed by a duly licensed Plumbing Engineer.*

(c) *No Plumbing Engineer shall sign his name, affix his seal or use any other method of signature on plans, specifications or other documents made by under another Plumbing Engineer's supervision unless the same is made in such manner as to clearly indicate the part of such work actually*

performed by him; and no person, except the Plumbing Engineer in charge, shall sign for any branch of work or any function of Plumbing Engineering practice not actually performed by him. The Plumbing Engineer in-charge shall be fully responsible for all plans, specifications and other documents issued under his seal or authorized signature.

The Board shall formulate, adopt and promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of the provisions relating to the design of the seal, the signing and sealing of drawings, specifications, reports and other documents by Plumbing Engineers.

(d) *Plans and documents duly signed, stamped or sealed as instruments of service are the property and documents of the Plumbing Engineer.*

SECTION 21. Indication of License and Professional Tax Receipt – The Plumbing Engineer shall be required to indicate his professional license number, the duration of validity, including the professional tax receipt number and the official receipt number of the payment of his/her annual dues with the duly accredited organization on the documents he signs, uses in connection with the practice of his profession.

SECTION 22. Grounds for Suspension and Revocation of License, Cancellation of Temporary / Special Permit – The Board shall have the power, upon due notice and hearing, to revoke or suspend the license of a Plumbing Engineer, or to cancel a temporary / special permit for any cause specified in the proceeding section, including but not limited to:

(a) The use or perpetration of any fraud deceit in obtaining a certificate of registration;

(b) For incompetence, negligence, or for abatement of the illegal practice of Plumbing Engineering;

(c) Violation of the provisions of this Act, its implementing rules and regulations and/or violation of the policies of the Board including the Code of Ethics for Plumbing Engineers.

Provided, however, that such action of the Board shall be subject to appeal to the Commission, within fifteen (15) days from written notice.

SECTION 23. Vested Rights: Automatic Registration of Practicing Registered Master Plumbers / Plumbing Engineers – All practicing Master Plumbers / Plumbing Engineers who are registered at the time this Act takes effect shall automatically be registered. As per qualification enumerated in Sec. 30 sub-section (c).

SECTION 24. Practice Not Allowed for Firms and Corporations – The practice of Plumbing Engineering is a professional service, admission to which shall be determined upon the basis of an individual's personal qualifications, for which the Plumbing Engineer is responsible for the correctness of the plumbing work.

No firm, company, partnership, association or corporation may be registered or licensed as such for the practice of Plumbing Engineering. Provided, however, that persons properly registered and licensed as Plumbing Engineering may among themselves or with a person or persons properly registered and licensed as Plumbing Engineer may form and obtain registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) of a firm, partnership or association using the term "Plumbing Engineer", but nobody shall be a member, partner or associate unless he is a duly registered and licensed Plumbing Engineer, and the members who are Plumbing Engineers shall only render work and services proper for a Plumbing Engineers as defined in this Act.

SECTION 25. Integration of Membership To One National Organization – Upon registration with the Board, the Registered Plumbing Engineers shall be integrated to one National Organization in accordance with the Rules of Integration adopted by the Supreme Court in integrating the members of the Philippine Bar. The members shall receive the benefits and privileges appurtenance thereto. Those who have been registered with the Board but not yet a member of the accredited organization at the time of the effectivity of this act, shall be allowed to register as member of the said organization within three(3) years after the effectivity of this act.

SECTION 26. Foreign Reciprocity – No foreign Plumbing Engineer shall be issued a temporary license to practice the Plumbing Engineer shall be issued a temporary license to practice the Plumbing Engineering profession or consultancy thereof or be entitled to any of the rights and privileges under this Act unless the country of which he is a subject or citizen specifically permits Filipino Plumbing Engineers to practice within its territorial limits on the same basis as the subjects or citizens or such foreign state or country.

ARTICLE VI

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 27. Implementing Rules and Regulations – Subject to the approval of the Commission, the Board shall adopt and promulgate such rules and regulations, including the Code of Ethics for Plumbing Engineers to carry out the provisions of this Act, which shall be effective after thirty (30) days following their full publication in the Official Gazette or in a major daily newspaper of general circulation.

SECTION 28. Funding – Such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter. Provided, however, that fifty percent (50%) of the fees derived from examination, registration and licenses shall be utilized by the Board of defray its administrative and other operational expenses, including the enhancement of the Plumbing Engineering profession.

SECTION 29. Enforcement – The Professional Regulation Commission shall be the enforcement agency of the Board. As such, enforce its implementing rules and regulations as adopted by the Board, conduct investigations upon complaints, including violations of the Code of Conduct of the profession and prosecute when so warranted.

SECTION 30. Transitory Provisions – (a) The existing Board of Master Plumbing shall continue to function in the interim until time as the new Board shall be duly constituted pursuant to this Act.

(b) Examination for Master Plumber shall cease to be conducted upon effectivity of this Act.

(c) Certificate of Registration without Examination shall be issued within a grace period of two (2) years by the Board first constituted to applicant who meet the qualifications and requirements enumerated hereunder:

(d) Registered Master Plumber to Professional Plumbing Engineer:

d.a That he is a citizen of the Philippines and at least twenty one (21) years old;
d.b That he is of good moral character;
d.c That he is a physically and mentally healthy;

d.d That he is a registered and licensed Master Plumber at the same time he is registered and licensed engineer and architect;

d.e That he is a registered and licensed Master Plumber with at least two (2) years of college in Engineering and Architecture, two (2) years of plumbing experience acceptable to the Board; or

d.f That he is a registered and licensed Master Plumber with at least three (3) years of college in Engineering or Architecture and one (1) year experience acceptable to the Board; or

d.g That he is a registered and licensed Master Plumber with at least four (4) years experience in plumbing acceptable to the Board; or

d.h That he is a registered and licensed Master Plumber with at least two (2) years plumbing experience and CPE units earned as prescribed by the CPE Council and approved by the Board;

d.i That he is a registered and licensed Master Plumber with a combination of college works, plumbing experience and CPE units earned as shall be prescribed and approved by the Board.

(e) A registered and licensed Master Plumber who does not qualify for automatic registration for Plumbing Engineer as provided for in the preceding paragraph (d), sub-section (c.c), Section 30, Article VI are therefore required to take the Bachelor Science in Plumbing Engineering course to qualify for the Plumbing Engineering examination.

SECTION 31. Penalties – In addition to the administrative sanctions, any of the provisions of this Act, upon conviction, be penalized by a fine of not less than Fifty thousand pesos (₱ 50,000.00) nor more than Two hundred thousand pesos (₱ 200,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than six (6) years, or both such fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the court.

SECTION 32. Separability Clause – If any clause, provision, paragraph or part hereof shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect, invalidate or impair any other part thereof, but such judgment shall merely be confined to the clause, provision, paragraph or part directly involved in the controversy upon which such judgment has been rendered.

SECTION 33. Repealing Clause – Republic Act No. 1378 is hereby repealed. All other laws, decrees, National Codes, executives orders, letter of instructions and other administrative issuances and parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby modified, suspended or repealed accordingly.

SECTION 34. Effectivity – This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in full in the Official Gazette or major daily newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines, whichever is earlier.

Approved,