


Republic of the Philippines
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
Quezon City

**THIRTEENTH CONGRESS**

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 740

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**Introduced by REP. JUDY J. SYJUCO**

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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, through a Malacañang press statement, expresses her plan to grant a general amnesty to political leaders and individuals in an effort to bring about reconciliation and to heal deep divisions in the country.

Malacañang acknowledged that the country has been totally divided after the impeachment issue of Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr. and that such devisiveness has been preventing the country from moving forward.

The President has been pushing for a "principled reconciliation"---mending fences with Former President Joseph Estrada, the Marcoses, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and reform elements in the military---so as to move the country forward.

This proposed bill seeks to establish a National Healing, Reconciliation and Unity Commission to be created under the Office of the President. The Commission shall have the sole power to discuss and resolve political conflicts, and to implement and monitor a National Reconciliation and Unity Program. Likewise, the Commission shall formulate a more effective plan and mechanism to recover ill-gotten wealth of certain individuals, and to implement a mechanism for redress of victims of political conflicts and to determine who should be entitled to a political amnesty.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this proposed measure is earnestly sought.

**JUDY J. SYJUCO**

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**AN ACT**
**CREATING THE NATIONAL HEALING, RECONCILIATION AND UNITY COMMISSION AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

**Sec. 1. Short Title**. This Act shall be known as the "National Healing, Reconciliation and Unity Act of 2003".

**Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is henceforth the policy of the State to undertake a national reconciliation program with the intent to resolve and heal deep rooted divisions and controversies, as a result of political ideologies, rivalry and opposition in the country.

**Sec. 3. Creation of the National Healing, Reconciliation and Unity Commission.** In pursuance of the above-mentioned policy, the National Healing, Reconciliation and Unity Commission, herein after referred to as the Commission, is hereby created under the Office of the President.

The Commission shall have the sole power to discuss and resolve political conflicts, and to implement and monitor a National Reconciliation and Unity Program.

**Sec. 4. Composition of the Commission.** The President shall appoint the regular members of the Commission. They shall be individuals who possess the highest degree of integrity and shall have the endorsement of their respective political group.

The President shall appoint a Chairman of the Commission from among the nine (9) Commissioners who shall serve for a period of two (2) years. The Chairmanship of the Commission shall then rotate among the nine (9) Commissioners to ensure that leadership in the Commission is not monopolized or dominated by one particular political group. No Commissioner shall serve as Chairman for two (2) consecutive terms.

In no case shall the Commissioners appoint representatives to act on their behalf.

**Sec. 5. Powers and Functions.** To accomplish its mandate, the Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) To formulate, implement and monitor a comprehensive peace and reconciliation agenda on selected political groups;

(b) To formulate, implement and monitor a more effective plan and mechanism to recover ill-gotten wealth of certain individuals;

(c) To identify persons and organizations involved in political conflicts and provide measures to settle such disputes;

(d) To implement a mechanism for redress of victims of such conflicts and to determine who should be entitled to a political amnesty;

(e) Provide advice and assistance to the President in the formulation, coordination, implementation and monitoring of policies, plans, programs and projects on identified political groups;

(f) Act as the primary government agency through which political groups can seek government assistance and redress; serve as the medium through which such assistance may be extended to affected victims of political conflicts;

(g) Promulgate such rules and regulations and exercise such powers and functions as maybe necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives outlined in this Act; and

(h) Perform such other functions as may be necessary for its effective operations and continued enhancement as a government entity.

**Sec. 6. Periodic Performance Evaluation.** The Chairman is hereby required to formulate and enforce a system of measuring and evaluating periodically and objectively the performance of the Commission and submit the same annually to the President.

**Sec. 7. Separability Clause.** If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other section or provisions hereof, which are not affected thereby shall continue in full force and effect.

**Sec. 8. Repealing Clause.** All acts, decrees, orders, executive orders, instructions, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**Sec. 9. Effectivity Clause.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation. The publication shall not be later than seven (7) days after approval hereof.

*Approved,*