

**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila**

Thirteenth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2087



Introduced by Honorable Catalino V. Figueroa

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The incidence of heinous crimes in Metro Manila and in the entire country has remained unabated despite all-out government efforts to minimize, if not totally eradicate them. Murders, kidnappings and rape continue to hug the daily headlines as if to underscore public apathy and the helplessness of the military and police authorities. Kidnappers and hold uppers ply their bloody trades with impunity, secure in their belief that the long arm of the law will never reach them.

Part of the blame could be laid at our present judicial system. The saying "Justice delayed is justice denied" is especially true in the Philippines where prosecution of criminal cases could drag on for years before they maybe terminated. By that time, the state and the offended party may have already lost interest in the case and in most instances, the criminal goes scot-free.

A plausible reason for the delay is the clogged dockets where judges are up to their necks in the resolution of cases filed before their salas. Another is the difficulty under our procedural laws which permit the accused particularly the moneyed and influential, to employ every trick in the rule books to delay the decision of their cases.

The creation of circuit criminal courts in every judicial district of the Regional Trial Courts in the country is designed to unclog court dockets thereby allowing judges to resolve cases filed before them with fairness and dispatch.

In view thereof, the approval of this bill is earnestly recommended.


CATALINO V. FIGUEROA

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**AN ACT
CREATING CIRCUIT CRIMINAL COURTS TO TRY AND DECIDE CASES OF
HEINOUS CRIMES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. In each of the judicial district of the Regional Trial Courts presently constituted, there is hereby created a Circuit Criminal Court which shall have concurrent jurisdiction with the Regional Trial Court to try and decide heinous crimes cases.

SEC. 2. The Judges Circuit Criminal Courts shall be appointed by the President and shall have the same qualifications, rank, compensation and privileges, and shall be subject to the same restrictions or disabilities, as the judges of the Regional Trial Court. They shall hold office during good behavior and may be suspended or removed only in the manner and upon the same grounds as the judges of the Regional trial Courts.

SEC. 3. The provisions of all laws and the Rules of Court relative to the judges of the Regional Trial Courts, and the trial, disposition and appeal of criminal cases therein shall be applicable to the circuit judge and the cases cognizable by them insofar as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 4. The Circuit Criminal Court may hold sessions any where within their respective district: Provided, however, that cases shall be heard within the

province where the crime subject of the offense was committed: And, provided, further, that when the interest of justice so demands, with prior approval of the Supreme Court, cases may be heard in a neighboring province within the district. The provincial government concerned shall provide the Circuit Criminal Courts with adequate office space.

SEC. 5. The Supreme Court shall designate from among the personnel of the Regional Trial Courts of the province where any of the circuit criminal courts is holding session, who will act as personnel of the latter court and, as such, shall be subject to the order of the circuit judge: Provided, however, that nothing in this section shall preclude the Supreme Court from appointing such permanent personnel of each circuit court as maybe necessary.

SEC. 6. Criminal cases cognizable by the Circuit Criminal Courts herein created which are pending in and may have been partly tried by, the Regional Trial Courts as of the date of the approval of this Act, shall continue to be tried and decided by the latter. As far as practicable, the trial cases in the Circuit Criminal Courts, once commenced shall be rendered within the same period required for judges of the Regional Trial Courts to subject their decision on similar cases.

SEC. 7. For administrative purposes, the Circuit Criminal Courts shall be under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

SEC. 8. The amount necessary to carry out the provision of the Act shall be charged to the appropriations of the Department of Justice, thereafter, such sums as are necessary for its continued implementation shall be include in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,