

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

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 140

Introduced by: **REPRESENTATIVE SALVIO B. FORTUNO**

AN ACT
EMPOWERING THE PUNONG BARANGAY TO ADMINISTER OATH OF
OFFICE TO ANY GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
SECTION 420 OF REPUBLIC ACT No. 7160 AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991

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

SECTION 1. Section 420 of Republic Act No. 7160 as amended, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SECTION 420. Power to Administer Oaths. – THE PUNONG BARANGAY IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER THE PRESCRIBED OATH OF OFFICE BEFORE PERFORMING OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, TO ANY GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.

The punong barangay, as chairman of the lupong tagapamayapa, and the members of the pangkat are ALSO hereby authorized to administer oaths in connection with any matter relating to all proceedings in the implementation of the katarungang pambarangay.”

SEC. 2. All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, rules and regulations, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 3. This Act shall effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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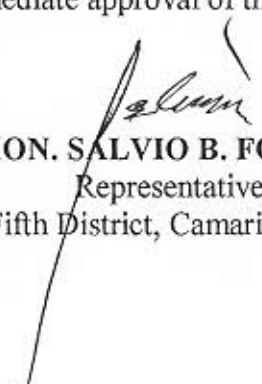
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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The euphoria generated by the earlier pronouncement of then President-apparent Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III to take his oath before a punong barangay in his hometown in Tarlac has brought to the fore the issue as to whether or not the punong barangay can administer oath to the highest official of the land. The great enthusiasm felt by punong barangays at that time had practically been doused with cold water when several legal luminaries expressed their legal views that the punong barangay has no power to administer oath except *"in connection with any matter relating to all proceedings in the implementation of the katarungang pambarangay"*.

This bill therefore seeks to empower the punong barangay to administer the prescribed oath of office before any government official, including the President of the Philippines, perform their respective functions and responsibilities. The paramount objective of this piece of legislation is to give the incoming President wider latitude or great opportunity to choose from who among the public officials, will administer oath to His Excellency. While this measure will break the long standing tradition where the President takes his oath before the Chief Justice, it will also give due recognition to the untiring support extended by the punong barangays to the President. The oath-taking ceremony will give the highest official of the land the opportunity to reach out to the highest official of the lowest political unit, just like the seraph in heaven meeting the lowest reptiles of the dust.

The foregoing reasons warrant the immediate approval of this bill.


HON. SALVIO B. FORTUNO
Representative
Fifth District, Camarines Sur