

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **1455**

Introduced by Honorable MARIA ISABELLE G. CLIMACO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill proposes the creation of four (4) additional branches of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) and four (4) additional branches of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MTCC) in the City of Zamboanga.

Presently, and based on B.P. Blg. 129 (The Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980), Zamboanga City has only six (6) RTC branches and four (4) MTCC branches [Sec. 14 (j), Sec. 29]. In 1991, when R.A. 7154 was approved, increasing the number of Regional Trial Courts in the 9th Judicial Region, which includes the City of Zamboanga del Sur and none to Zamboanga City.

Zamboanga City is a highly urbanized city and is the center of education, commerce, industry, transportation, and communication in Western Mindanao (Region IX), the headquarters of the Western Mindanao Command located in the city and some important national government regional offices operate therefrom. It has two legislative districts resulting from the enactment of R.A. 9269, approved on March 19, 2004. There are 98 barangays constituting the city which has a land area of 148,338.49 hectares, and a population of 774,407 as of August 1, 2007, according to the National Statistics Office. Thirty years ago (30) years ago, in 1980, when B.P. Blg. 129 was approved, Zamboanga City had a population of 343,722, or less than half of the 2007 population. The number of the people in the city continues to rise, with the NSO reporting an average annual growth rate of 2.18% (Western Mindanao).

With the increase of population through the years, the number of cases continues to grow and now clog the dockets of the six (6) RTC and four (4) MTCC branches. Since 1983 up to August 2004, a total of 20,968 have been filed with the Regional Trial Court in Zamboanga City, 12,683 of which being criminal nature. Presently, there is a total of 3,843 cases pending with the RTC or at an average of 640 cases per court which is far from the ideal number of cases which is 200 or less. For the same 21-year period, a total of 12,586 criminal cases have been filed with the Municipal Trial Court in Cities. As of December 31, 2009, the total pending of the four (4) MTCC is 6,249 or at an average of 1,692 cases per court. The existing 6 RTC branches and 4 MTCC branches are clearly inadequate to handle the total case load. Hence, there is a need to allocate additional court branches in Zamboanga City, as herein proposed.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this Bill is earnestly requested.


MARIA ISABELLE G. CLIMACO
1st District, Zamboanga City

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AN ACT
AMENDING SECTIONS 14 (J) AND 29 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980.

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

SECTION 1. Section 14, Paragraph (J) of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, otherwise known as the Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“(J)” Thirty – **FOUR** Regional Trial Judges shall be commissioned for the Ninth Judicial Region. There shall be:”

“Two branches for the Province of Basilan, with seats at Isabela;

“Three branches with seats thereat for the Province of Sulu, with seats at Jolo, Parang, and Siasi;

“Two branches with seats thereat for the Province of Tawi – Tawi, with seats at Bongao and Sapa – Sapa;

“Eight branches with seats thereat for the Province of Zamboanga del Norte and the Cities of Dipolog and Dapitan, with seats at Dipolog City, Sindangan, Siocon, and Liloy; and

“[Fifteen] **NINETEEN** branches with seats thereat for the Province of Zamboanga del Sur, and the Cities of Pagadian and Zamboanga, with **TEN** (10) seats at Zamboanga City, **AND THE REMAINING SEATS AT** Pagadian City, Molave, San Miguel, Ipil, and Aurora.

SECTION 2. Section 29 of the same law is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“Section 29. Municipal Trial Courts in Cities. – In every city which does not form part of a metropolitan area, there shall be a Municipal Trial Court with one branch, except as hereunder provided:

Two branches for Laoag City;
Four branches for Baguio City;
Three branches for Dagupan City;
Five branches for Olongapo City;
Three branches for Cabanatuan City;
Two branches for San Jose City;
Three branches for Angeles City;
Two branches for Cavite City;

Two branches for Batangas City;
Two branches for Lucena City;
Three branches for Naga City;
Two branches for Iriga City;
Three branches for Legaspi City;
Two branches for Roxas City;
Four branches for Iloilo City;
Seven branches for Bacolod City;
Two branches for Dumaguete City;
Two branches for Tacloban City;
Eight branches for Cebu City;
Three branches for Mandaue City;
Two branches for Tagbilaran City;
Two branches for Surigao City;
Two branches for Butuan City;
Five branches for Cagayan de Oro City;
Seven branches for Davao City;
Three branches for General Santos City;
Two branches for Oroquieta City;
Three branches for Ozamis City;
Two branches for Dipolog City;
[Four] **EIGHT** branches for Zamboanga City;
Two branches for Pagadian City; and
Two branches for Iligan City."

SECTION 3. The four additional branches of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities for Zamboanga City shall be numbered consecutively as branches V, VI, VII, and VIII.

SECTION 4. The amount needed to carry out the provisions of this Act is hereby authorized to be appropriated in the Government Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved.