

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2410

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Introduced by

**HON. BERNARDO M. VERGARA**

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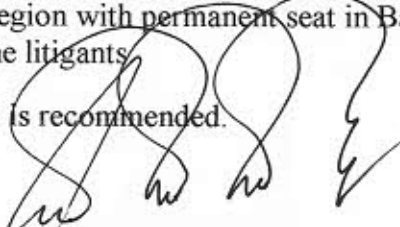
EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to amend Secs. 4 and 10 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, as amended by R.A. No. 8246 (December 30, 1996), by adding a division of the Court of Appeals for the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and the First Judicial Region, composed of three (3) Justices, with permanent station at Baguio City for cases coming from said territories.

As provided in R.A. No. 8438 (December 22, 1997) "An Act to Establish the Cordillera Autonomous Region", the area of CAR consists of the provinces of Benguet, Mountain Province, Ifugao, Abra, Kalinga, Apayao and the chartered City of Baguio, while under the Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980, as amended, the First Judicial Region consists of the Province of Abra, Province of Benguet and the City of Baguio, Province of Ilocos Norte and the City of Laoag, the Province of Ilocos Sur, Province of La Union, Mountain Province, Province of Pangasinan and the cities of Dagupan and San Carlos.

Under present rule, decisions and resolutions of the Regional Trial Courts in CAR and First Judicial Region are brought on appeal or special civil action to the Court of Appeals in Manila in the exercise of its original and appellate jurisdiction. This considerably adds to the ever-increasing overload of the Court of Appeals in Manila which, as a consequence, adversely affects the expeditious resolution of the appealed cases. Delay in the final resolution of cases has oftentimes spawned doubts in the litigants on the efficiency of the justice system. This is compounded by the inconvenient, inexpedient and expensive access to the court of Appeals in Manila to follow up their cases. In like manner, the protracted transmittal of court records to Manila multiplies the delay thereby causing anxiety on the litigants in the speedy disposition of justice. Thus, the creation of a division for the Cordillera Autonomous Region and the First Judicial Region with permanent seat in Baguio City will put an end to this mounting burden on the litigants.

Accordingly, the approval of this bill is recommended.



BERNARDO M. VERGARA

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AN ACT CREATING A DIVISION OF THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR CASES COMING FROM THE CORDILLERA AUTONOMOUS REGION AND THE FIRST JUDICIAL REGION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

*Section 1.* Sec. 4 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, as amended by RA No. 8246, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

**“Sec. 4. Exercise of Powers and Functions. – The Court of Appeals shall exercise its powers, functions and duties through twenty-four (24) divisions, each composed of three (3) members. The Court may sit en banc for the purpose of exercising administrative, ceremonial or other non-adjudicatory functions.”**

*Sec. 2* Sec. 10 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, as amended by RA No. 8246, is hereby amended to read as follows:

**“Sec. 10. Place of Holding Sessions. – The Court of Appeals shall have its permanent stations as follows: the first seventeen (17) divisions shall be stationed in the City of Manila for cases coming from the Second to the Fifth Judicial Regions;**

**The Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Divisions shall be in Cebu City for cases coming from the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Judicial Regions; the Twenty-first, Twenty-second and Twenty-third Divisions shall be in Cagayan de Oro for cases coming from the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Judicial Regions and Twenty Fourth Division for cases coming from CAR and First Judicial Region. Whenever demanded by public interest or whenever justified by an increase in case load, the Supreme Court, upon its own initiative or upon recommendation of the Presiding Justice of the Court of Appeals, may authorize any division of the Court to hold sessions periodically, or for such periods and at such places as the Supreme Court may determine, for the purpose of hearing and deciding cases. Trials or hearings in the Court of Appeals must be continuous and must be completed within three (3) months unless extended by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court."**

*Sec. 3.* The amount 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.

*Sec. 4.* Upon effectivity of this Act, all pending cases, except those which have been submitted for resolution, shall be referred to the proper division of the Court of Appeals.

*Sec. 5.* Separability Clause. – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

*Sec. 6.* Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, letters of instruction, executive orders, rules and regulations, or any part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

*Sec. 7.* Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.