

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

Fifteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4032

Introduced by the Honorable Janette L. Garin, M. D.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Philippine schools, in order to produce globally competitive medical technologists, sought the adjustment and amendment of their respective curriculum in order to bridge the gap between their standard and the current trend in the medical world. This high and global standard of schools of medical technology should be empowered by an enabling law which would sustain the competitiveness and excellence of both new medical technology graduates and full-pledged medical technologists in the country.

Republic Act 5527, known as The Medical Technology Act, was enacted in 1969. The majority of the sections in the law has become obsolete in the span of forty-one years and no longer applies to present conditions as it was originally created to regulate the practice of laboratory professionals in the clinical laboratory settings. Today, medical technology has evolved into many areas such as research, teaching and special fields. RA 5527, therefore, is in need of revision in order to properly address the demands of the Medical Technology profession.

The instant bill seeks, among others, to give a qualified medical technologist an opportunity to head the Board of Medical Technology, the creation of the Technical Panel in Medical Technology Education under the Commission on Higher Education and update the law by introducing provisions for Continuing Medical Technology Education and Certification of Phlebotomists, as well as pertinent provisions to address present-day requirements to ensure the global competitiveness of Medical Technologists. Through this bill, medical technologists can attain their full potential and maximize their role in the medical field in particular, and in the Philippine society in general, to the benefit of the Filipino people.

Hence, the passage of this bill is timely and appropriate.


JANETTE LORETO-GARIN, M.D.

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FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
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**AN ACT REGULATING AND MODERNIZING THE
PRACTICE OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY (MEDICAL
LABORATORY SCIENCE) IN THE PHILIPPINES,
REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE RA 5527, RA 6132, PD
498 AND PD 1534, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

ARTICLE I
TITLE

Section 1. ***Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Medical
Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) Law of 2011.”

ARTICLE II
DECLARATION OF POLICY

Section 2. ***Declaration of Policy*** - The State recognizes the importance of the
Medical Technology profession in nation building and development through the
portals of healthcare, education and research. Hence, it shall develop and nurture
competent, virtuous, productive and well-rounded medical technologists whose
standard of practice and service shall be world-class.

The State shall further promote, regulate and protect the professional practice of
Medical Technology in the Philippines and shall ensure its continued growth and
development and maintenance of high international standards of practice.

ARTICLE III
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Section 3. ***Definition of Terms.*** – As used in this Act, the following terms shall
mean:

- (a) Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science). – refers to the
healthcare profession that performs laboratory investigations on the
human body or on specimens taken from the human body the results of

which provide information that physicians and other professionals need regarding healthcare; research; forensics and, in general, other applicable areas. Medical Technology may also be applied in the investigations of other species of the animal kingdom for veterinary, agricultural, industrial or other similar purposes.

(b) Medical Technologist. – refers to a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) /Bachelor of Science in Public Health who is duly registered with the Professional Regulation Commission and qualified to practice Medical Technology. A person shall be deemed to be in the practice of Medical Technology within the meaning of this Act, who shall for a fee, salary or other compensation or reward paid or given directly or indirectly through another, renders any of the following professional services:

1. Examination of tissues, secretions and excretions of the human body and body fluids by various electronic, chemical, microscopic, microbiologic, hematologic, serologic, immunologic, nuclear, molecular, cytogenetic and other laboratory procedures and techniques either manual or automated;
2. Blood banking procedures and techniques and other blood transfusion services;
3. Parasitologic, Bacteriologic, Mycologic, Virologic and other microbiologic techniques;
4. Histopathologic and Cytotechnologic techniques
5. Drug testing in accredited clinical laboratories;
6. Research involving human beings and other species of the animal kingdom requiring the use of and/or application of Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) knowledge and procedures;
7. Preparations and standardization of reagents, standards, stains and others, provided such reagents, standards, stains and others are exclusively for the use of their laboratory;
8. Clinical laboratory quality control.
9. Phlebotomy, collection, processing and preservation of specimens
10. Consultancy in test upgrading, method selection, laboratory equipment planning and troubleshooting where application of the knowledge of medical technology is required;
11. Teaching of professional subjects in Medical Technology.
12. Introduction, demonstration, evaluation and improvement of clinical laboratory procedures and techniques.
13. Similar activities to the foregoing where the training, skill and experience of a Medical Technologist are needed as may be determined under rules and regulations to be promulgated by the Professional Regulation Commission.

(c) Medical Laboratory Technician. – A person certified and registered with the Board as qualified to assist a Medical Technologist in the practice of Medical Technology as defined in Republic Act 5527. Upon the effectivity of this law, the Board shall discontinue registration for this category.

Previously registered Medical Laboratory Technicians under Republic Act 5527 (The Philippine Medical Technology Act of 1969) shall maintain their status as registered Medical Laboratory Technician. A registered Medical Technologist occupying a position of Medical Laboratory Technician shall be rendered an appropriate position and be reclassified as Medical Technologist.

(d) Phlebotomist:

1. A registered Medical Technologist automatically qualifies as Phlebotomist.
2. A graduate of Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) and has passed an examination for Phlebotomy given by the Board of Medical Technology of the Professional Regulation Commission.

A phlebotomist is qualified to perform blood specimen collection and follow proper procedures of identification, preservation and transport of specimens.

(e) "Accredited Medical Technology Training Laboratory". - refers to a clinical laboratory duly licensed by the Department of Health and accredited as a training laboratory by the Commission on Higher Education upon recommendation by the Technical Panel in Medical Technology Education or its equivalent.

(f) "Recognized School of Medical Technology". - refers to any school, college or university which offers a program in Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) approved by the Commission on Higher Education upon recommendation of the Technical Panel in Medical Technology Education or its equivalent.

(g) "Board". - refers to the Board of Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) of the Professional Regulation Commission.

(h) Technical Panel in Medical Technology Education - refers to the Technical Panel in Medical Technology Education reconstituted and/or organized under the Office of Programs and Standards, Commission on Higher Education.

(i) Continuing Medical Technology Education (CMTE) - refers to the enhancement of knowledge, professional competence and ethical values in the practice of medical technology through mandatory formal classes or training programs administered for Medical Technologists.

(j) Code of Professional Ethics - refers to a set of standards relating to the conduct, integrity and moral duties of the medical technologists as prescribed and promulgated by the duly accredited national organization of medical technologists with the approval of the Board.

ARTICLE IV ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

Section 4. **Composition of the Board of Medical Technology.** -There is hereby created a Medical Technology Board under the Professional Regulation Commission, which shall hereinafter be referred to as the Board composed of a Chairman and two (2) members who are all registered Medical Technologists and who shall be appointed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines upon recommendation of the Professional Regulation Commission. The Chairman and members of the Board shall hold office for three (3) years from appointment and shall continue to hold such office until their successors shall have been appointed and duly qualified: *Provided*, That the incumbent members will continue to serve until the expiration of their terms.

In case of death, disability, or removal of member of the Board, his successor shall serve only the balance of his term.

Section 5. ***Qualification of Chairman and Members of the Board.*** – No person shall be appointed as Chairman or Member of the Medical Technology Board unless he/she is a Filipino citizen of good moral character and a duly registered Medical Technologist of the Philippines with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science).

Furthermore, they shall be members of good standing in their accredited national professional organization but must neither be an officer or director of such organization at the time of their appointment.

The Chairman must have a Masters Degree and with at least 15 years experience as Medical Technologist which shall include at least 10 years of clinical laboratory practice and who must be actively practicing the profession not later than five years prior to his/her appointment.

A Member must have at least 10 years experience as Medical Technologist which shall include at least five years of clinical laboratory practice, and must be practicing the profession not later than five years prior to his/her appointment.

The Chairperson and Members shall not be, in any way, professionally connected with the faculty of any Medical Technology school or review center for at least two years prior to appointment and shall have no pecuniary interest, directly or indirectly in such institution at the time of his appointment;

Section 6. ***Compensation of Members of the Board of Medical Technology.*** – Each member of the Board shall receive compensation in such sum as the PRC may determine, comparable with the compensation per person examined or granted certificate with any of PRC's professional boards.

Section 7. ***Functions and Duties of the Board.*** –

- (a) Administer the provisions of this Act;
- (b) Determine and prepare the questions for the licensure examination for Medical Technologists
- (c) Regulate the practice of the profession in accordance with professional regulatory law
- (d) Administer oaths in connection with the administration of this Act;
- (e) Issue, suspend or revoke certificates of registration of medical laboratory technician;
- (f) Look into conditions affecting the practice of medical technology in the Philippines and, whenever necessary, adopt such measures as may deemed proper for the maintenance of good ethics and standards in the practice of medical technology;
- (g) Investigate such violations of this Act or of the rules and regulations issued there under as may come to the knowledge of the Board and, for this purpose issue *subpoena* and *subpoena duces tecum* with charges presented to the Board; and
- (h) Draft such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provision of this Act:
- (i) Prescribe the qualification and training of medical technologists as to special fields of the profession and supervise their specialty examination conducted by the professional organization of medical technologists accredited by the Professional Regulation Commission;

- (j) Formulate and recommend approval of refresher course for applicants who shall have failed the Board Examination for the third time.
- (k) Determine and prepare the questions for certification examination for Phlebotomists
- (l) Such other functions as may be prescribed by the Professional Regulation Commission following existing laws governing the Commission.

Section 8. ***Removal of the Board Members.*** – Any member of the Board may be removed by the President of the Philippines for neglect of duty, incompetence, malpractice or unprofessional, unethical, immoral or dishonorable conduct after having been given opportunity to defend himself in a proper administrative investigation: *Provided*, That during the process of investigation, the President shall have the power to suspend such member under investigation and appoint a temporary member in his place.

ARTICLE V EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION

Section 9. ***Licensure Examination*** – Except as otherwise specifically allowed under the provision of this Act, all applicants for registration as medical technologists shall be required to undergo a written examination which shall be given by the Board semi-annually during the months of March and September in the greater Manila area and other places as the Board may designate. Examination for Phlebotomy Certification shall be given annually in September by the Board of Medical Technology.

Section 10. ***Qualifications for Admission to the Licensure Examination*** – Every applicant for examination under this Act, shall, prior to the date thereof, furnish the Board satisfactory proof that he or she:

- (a) Is in good health and is of good moral character;
- (b) Has completed a course of at least four (4) years leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology (Medical Science Technology) / Bachelor of Science in Public Health conferred by a recognized school, college or university; *Provided* that graduates of Bachelor of Science in Public Health have complied with the standards as stipulated in the Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Medical Technology Education.
- (b) Has paid the required examination fees as may be determined by PRC;
- (c) Has complied with other requirements that the Board or the PRC may prescribe.

Section 11. ***Scope of Examination.*** – The examination questions shall cover the following subjects with their respective relative weights:

Clinical Chemistry.....	20%
Microbiology & Parasitology.....	20%
Hematology.....	20%
Blood Banking, Immunohematology, Immunology & Serology.....	20%
Clinical Microscopy (Urinalysis & other body fluid).....	10%
Histopathologic and Cytologic Techniques, Laboratory Management, Medical Technology Law, Related	

Laws and their implementing Rules, and the Code of Ethics.....	10%
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The Board shall prepare the schedule of subjects for examination and submit the same to the Commissioner of the Professional Regulation Commission for publication. The Board shall compute the general average of each examinee according to the above-mentioned relative weights of each subject. Provided, however, That the Board may change, add to and remove from the list of subjects or weights above as progress in the science of Medical Technology may require, subject to the prior approval of the Professional Regulation Commission.

Section 12. **Report of Rating** – The Board shall, after the date of completion of the examination, report the result thereof for the approval of the Commissioner of the Professional Regulation Commission within the time limit and guidelines set by the Professional Regulation Commission.

Section 13. **Ratings in the Examination.** – In order to pass the examination, a candidate must obtain a general average of at least seventy-five percent in the written test, with no rating below fifty percent in any of the major subjects: No further examination will be given an applicant who has not qualified after three examinations, unless and until he shall have completed a refresher course in accordance with rules approved by the Board

Section 14. **Oath Taking.** – All successful examinees shall be required to take a professional oath before the Board or before any person authorized to administer oaths prior to entering upon the practice of medical technology in the Philippines.

Section 15. **Issuance of Certificate of Registration.**- Every applicant who has satisfactorily passed the required examination for medical technologist shall be issued a certificate of registration as such *Provided*, That no such certificate shall be issued to any successful applicant who has not attained the age of twenty-one (21) years. All certificates shall be signed by the Chairman and members of the Board and by the Commissioner of the Professional Regulation Commission. The duly registered medical technologist shall be required to display his certificate of registration **and PRC identification card** in the place where he works

Section 16. Fees to be paid for by each applicant for issuances of new certificates of registration, replacement of lost, destroyed or mutilated certificates shall be in accordance with the fees established by the PRC. This shall likewise apply to PRC identification cards of registered medical technologists.

Section 17. **Refusal to Issue Certificate** – The Board shall refuse to issue a certificate of registration to any person convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of any criminal offense involving moral turpitude, or any person guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct, or of unsound mind, or incurable communicable disease, and in such case shall give to the applicant a written statement setting forth the reason for its action, which statement shall be incorporated in the record of the Board.

Section 18. **Administrative Investigation** – Revocation or Suspension of Certificates – Administrative investigations shall be conducted by at least two members of the Board with one legal officer sitting during the investigation. The existing rules of evidence shall be observed during all administrative proceedings, the respondent shall be entitled to be represented by counsel or be heard in person, to have a speedy and public hearing, to confront and cross-examine witnesses against him or her, and to all other rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

The Board may, after giving proper notice and hearing to the party concerned reprimand an erring medical technologist or revoke or suspend his certificate of registration for the causes mentioned in the next proceeding section or for causes enumerated in section thirty one_(31) of this Act, or for unprofessional conduct, malpractice, incompetency, or serious ignorance or gross negligence in the practice of medical technology.

No penalty of revocation shall be imposed unless there is unanimous vote of all the three members of the Board. The Board may, by majority vote, impose the penalty of reprimand or suspension, the latter however not to exceed two years.

When the penalty of suspension or revocation is imposed by the Board the medical technologist shall be required to surrender his certificate of registration within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final, under the pain of perpetual disqualification from the practice of medical technology in the Philippines for inexcusable failure to do so. The suspension shall run from the date of such surrender.

Section 19. ***Appeal*** – The revocation or suspension of a certificate made by the Board may be appealed exclusively to the Professional Regulation Commission whose decision shall become final unless elevated to the Court of Appeals in accordance with the Rules of Court.

Section 20. ***Reinstatement, Reissue or Replacement of Certificate*** – The Board may, upon application and for reason deemed proper and sufficient, reissue any revoked registration certificate. The suspension of a certificate of registration shall be automatically lifted upon the expiration of the period of suspension and said certificate shall be re-issued to the medical technologist concerned upon request without prejudice to further actions by the Board for violation of the provision of this Act or conditions imposed by the Board upon the medical technologist during the period of suspension.

Section 21. ***Roster of Medical Technologist*** – A roster of Medical Technologist shall be prepared annually by the Secretary of the Board. This roster shall contain the name, address and citizenship of each registered Medical Technologist, date of registration or issuance certificate, and other data pertinent data. The roster shall be open to public inspection, and copies thereof shall be placed on file in the Professional Regulation Commission, and furnished to other offices, private or governmental and to the public upon request.

ARTICLE VI MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Section 22. ***Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) Education.*** – The Medical Technology (Medical Laboratory Science) course shall be at least four years, as stipulated in CHED's Policies, Standards and Guidelines, composed of general education, core and professional courses, including a satisfactory internship in accredited training laboratories, and shall include the following professional subjects:

- Hematology
- Clinical Chemistry
- Microbiology
- Parasitology
- Blood Banking/Immunohematology
- Serology/Immunology
- Clinical Microscopy
- Histopathology & Cytology

Laboratory Management
Medical Technology Laws & Ethics

The TPMTE is hereby authorized, upon approval of CHED to change, remove from or add to the subjects listed.

In case of death, disability, or removal of member of the Board, his successor shall serve only the balance of his term.

Section 23. *Creation and Composition of Technical Panel in Medical Technology Education (TPMTE)* – There is hereby established a Technical Panel in Medical Technology Education under the Commission on Higher Education – Office of Programs and Standards (CHED-OPS). The TPMTE shall be composed of the President of the Philippine Association of Schools of Medical Technology and Hygiene (PASMETH), who shall be the Chairman, and the President of the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists, Inc. (PAMET) and a representative from the Board of Medical Technology/ Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). The other two members shall be one more representative each from PAMET and PASMETH, as recommended by their respective organization. The TPMTE shall be supported by a secretariat and staff.

Section 24. *Functions of TPMTE.* – The TPMTE shall assist CHED in setting Policies, Standards and Guidelines for the Medical Technology Program. It may also assist in its implementation, including monitoring and evaluation.

The functions of the TPMTE shall include:

- (a) To recommend the minimum required curriculum for the course of medical technology.
- (b) To determine and prescribe the number of students to be allowed to take up the medical technology course in each school, taking into account the student-instructor ratio and the availability of facilities for instruction.
- (c) To approve medical technology schools meeting the requirements and recommend closure of those found to be substandard.
- (d) To require all Medical Technology schools to submit an annual report, including the total number of students and instructors, a list of facilities available for instruction, a list of their recent graduates and new administrations, on or before the month of June.
- (e) To inspect, when necessary, the different Medical Technology schools in the country in order to determine whether a high standard of education is maintained in said instructions.
- (f) To promulgate, prescribe and enforce necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of the foregoing functions.

Section 25. *Accreditation of Schools of Medical Technology and of Training Laboratories.* – The Commission on Higher Education through TPMTE shall approve schools of Medical Technology and accredit laboratories for training of students in accordance with the provision of this Act, as amended. The laboratories shall show satisfactory evidence that they possess qualified personnel and are properly equipped to carry out laboratory procedures commonly required in the following fields: Clinical Chemistry, Microbiology, Serology, Parasitology, Hematology, Blood Banking, Clinical Microscopy, Histopathologic Techniques, and that the scope of activities of said laboratories offer sufficient training in said laboratory procedures.

ARTICLE VII
HEALTH HUMAN RESOURCES PRODUCTION, UTILIZATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

Section 26. ***Studies for Medical Technology Manpower Needs, Production, Utilization and Development.*** - The Board, in coordination with the accredited professional organization and appropriate government and private agencies shall initiate, undertake and conduct studies on health human resources production, utilization and development.

Section 27. ***Accredited Professional Organization*** - All registered medical technologists whose names appear in the roster of PRC professionals shall have their automatic membership in a one and only registered and accredited national organization of registered and licensed Medical Technologists, upon the recognition and accreditation by the Board, subject to the approval by the Commission. The members in the said accredited national organization shall receive benefits and privileges appurtenant thereto upon payment of required fees and dues. Membership in the organization shall not be a bar to membership in any other association of allied health professionals.

Section 28. ***Continuing Medical Technology Education (CMTE)*** – There shall be a program of continuing Medical Technology Education (CMTE) conducted by the accredited professional organization and other CMTE providers to enhance and maintain the proficiency of its members on current medical technology procedures and techniques.

All Registered Medical Technologists shall abide by the requirements, rules and regulations on CMTE to be promulgated by the Board, subject to the approval of the Commission, in coordination with the accredited professional organization. For this purpose, a CMTE Council is hereby created to implement the CMTE Program.

Section 29. ***Medical Technology Training and Education Program.*** Upon the effectivity of this Act, the Board in coordination with the accredited Professional Organization shall develop training and education programs in order to upgrade the level of skill and competence of Medical Technologists. Ten percent (10%) of its members shall be trained annually which shall be chargeable to the income of PCSO and PAGCOR and shall be released to the APO subject to accounting and auditing procedures.

Section 30. ***Salary.*** In order to enhance the general welfare, commitment to service and professionalism of Medical Technologists, the minimum base pay of registered Medical Technologists should not be lower than equivalent to salary grade 15 under Republic Act No. 6758, "Compensation and Classification Act of 1989".

ARTICLE VIII PENAL PROVISIONS

Section 31. ***Foreign Reciprocity*** – No foreigner shall be admitted to examination, or be given a certificate of registration or be entitled to any of the rights and privileges under this Act, unless the country or state of which he is a subject or a citizen permits Filipino Medical Technologist to practice within its territorial limits on the same basis as the subjects or citizens of said country or state.

Section 32. ***Inhibition Against the Practice of Medical Technology.*** – No person shall practice or offer to practice medical technology as defined in this Act without having previously obtained a valid certificate of registration from the Board provided that registration shall not be required of the following:

- (a) Duly registered physicians.
- (b) Medical technologist from other countries called in for consultation or as visiting or exchange professors to colleges or universities: *Provided*, That they are only practicing the said function.
- (c) Medical technologist in the service of the United States Armed forces stationed in the Philippines rendering services as such for members of the said forces only.

Section 33. ***Penal Provisions*** – Without prejudice to the provision of the Medical Act of 1959 as amended relating to illegal practice of medicine, the following shall be punished by a fine of not less than two thousand pesos nor more than five thousand pesos, or imprisonment for not less than six months nor more than two years, or both, in the discretion of the court:

Any person who shall practice Medical Technology in the Philippines without being registered or exempted from registration in accordance with the provision of this Act; Any Medical Technologist who shall knowingly make a fraudulent laboratory report; Any person presenting or attempting to use as his own, the certificate of registration of another;

Any person who shall give any false or fraudulent evidence of any kind to the Board or any member thereof in obtaining a certificate of registration as Medical Technologist;

Any person who shall impersonate any registrant of like or the same name;

Any person who shall attempt to use a revoked or suspended certificate of registration;

Any person who shall in connection with his name or otherwise, assume, use or advertise any title or description tending to convey the impression that he is a Medical Technologist without holding a valid certificate of registration;

Any person or corporate body who shall allow anyone in his employ a non-registered medical technologist/medical laboratory technician to engage in the practice of medical technology or recommend for appointment anyone to the position of medical technologist/medical laboratory technician knowing that he is not registered as such;

Any person or corporate body who shall violate the duly issued rules and regulations issued pursuant to this law Professional Regulation Commission.

ARTICLE IX FINAL PROVISIONS

Section 34. ***Enforcement of this Act.*** – It shall be the primary duty of the Commission and the Board to effectively implement this Act. Any duly law enforcement agencies and officers of national, provincial, city or municipal governments shall, upon the call or request of the Commission or the Board, render assistance in enforcing the provisions of this Act and to prosecute any persons violating the same.

Section 35. ***Appropriations.*** – The Chairperson of the Professional Regulation Commission shall immediately include in its program and issue such rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 36. ***Rules and Regulations.*** Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Board and the Commission, in coordination with the accredited

professional organization, the Department of Health, the Department of Budget and Management and other concerned agencies, shall formulate such rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act. The implementing rules and regulations shall be published in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Section 37. *Separability Clause* – If any provision of this or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance is declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or of the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected by such declaration.

Section 38 *Repealing Clause* – Republic Act 5227, RA 6132, PD 498 and 1534 are hereby expressly repealed and all acts, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provision of this Act are hereby repealed:

Section 39. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,