

**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City**

**FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session**

House Bill No. 4342

**Introduced by Representatives
DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO and GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO**

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE FAMILIES COMMISSION, PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

One of the primary strengths of the commission system is the involvement of citizens in making decisions and evaluating the results for their own communities. Local ownership of process often brings more efficient service and greater leverage of resources. Residents of each community are involved in developing plans, selecting programs and initiatives to implement said plans, and evaluating the results of that work.

Accordingly, the creation of a Families Commission aims to provide for a progressive public and private leadership that shall work collaboratively to support and strengthen communities to improve the lives of Filipino families. Moreover, to actively speak out for Filipino families, the Commissioners and staff visit communities throughout the country to hear about their issues and promote the Commission's work. The Commission shall be committed to locally-driven, results-oriented change through:

- a) Informed and effective public policy;
- b) Passionate voice and strong advocacy on behalf of families;
- c) Engagement of diverse communities to plan and develop shared action on children's issues and;
- d) Wise investment of resources with a preventative focus on healthy families.

Thus, the Families Commission Act, once enacted, shall undertake research, provide policy advice, consult the public and provide information to families and those who work with them. These activities aim to improve services, policies and support for all Filipino families. The Commission shall be responsible for nationwide planning, standards setting and policy development, and provide communities with research-based best practices on which to base local programs for families.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Camarines Sur



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Second District, Pampanga

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Families Commission Act of 2011”.

SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* – In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) ‘Board’ refers to the persons who are Commissioners and, in relation to the transaction of business at a meeting, who numbers not less than the required quorum acting together as a board;
- (2) ‘Commission’ refers to the Families Commission established by this Act;
- (3) ‘Member’ refers to a member of the Commission.

SECTION 3. *Commission Established.* – This section establishes the Families Commission.

SECTION 4. *Commission’s Main Function.* -

(1) The Commission's main function is to act as an advocate for the interests of families generally.

(2) That function does not include acting as an advocate for the interests of a particular family or particular families in connection with a particular case or issue brought before any court, tribunal or body.

(3) In performing that function, the Commission shall identify and consider to factors that shall maintain or enhance either or both of the following:

(a) families' resilience;

(b) families' strengths.

SECTION 5. *Commission's Additional Functions.* – In order to perform its main function stated in section 4, the Commission shall have the following additional functions:

(1) Encourage and facilitate informed debate, by any of the following persons, on matters relating to the interests of families:

(a) representatives of government, academe, and community sectors; and

(b) members of the public.

(2) Increase public awareness and promote better understanding of matters relating to the interests of families, such as but not limited to the following:

(a) the importance of stable family relationships (including those between parties to a marriage or a de facto relationship);

(b) the importance of the parenting role; and

(c) the rights and responsibilities of parents.

(3) Encourage and facilitate the development and provision, by departments of the Government, of policies designed to promote or serve the interests of families.

(4) Stimulate and promote research into any matter relating to the interests of families, such as –

(a) Collecting and disseminating information or research about families;

(b) Advising on areas where further research or information about families should be undertaken or collected; and

(c) Entering into contracts or arrangements for research or information about families to be undertaken or collected:

(5) Consult with, or refer a matter to, any one (1) or more other agencies, if the Commission considers it necessary or desirable to do so for the proper performance of any or all of its other functions

(6) Carry out any functions that are incidental and related to the performance of its main function stated in Section 4 or to the performance of any of its additional functions stated in this Section.

SECTION 6. *Diversity of Filipino families.* -

(1) In the exercise and performance of its powers and functions, the Commission shall consider the kinds, structures, and diversity of families.

(2) In this section, family includes a group of people related by marriage, blood, or adoption, an extended family, 2 or more persons living together as a family, or other culturally recognized family group.

(3) However, persons are not members of a family for the purposes of this section solely because they have as their common objective or one (1) of their common objectives the achievement of some profit, result or any other outcome of a community, domestic, professional, recreational, social, vocational, or otherwise unlawful nature.

SECTION 7. *Needs, values, and beliefs of particular groups.* - In the exercise and performance of its powers and functions, the Commission shall have regard to the needs, values, and beliefs—

(1) of the Filipino people; and

(2) of ethnic and cultural groups in the Philippines.

SECTION 8. *Mechanisms for Obtaining Views of Specified Groups.* -

(1) In the exercise and performance of its powers and functions, the Commission shall maintain mechanisms, such as but not limited to appointing advisory committees or forming consultation forums, to ensure that there are at all times readily accessible to it the views—

- (a) of the Filipino people;
- (b) of ethnic and cultural groups in the Philippines; and
- (c) of groups that represent families, or one (1) or more kinds of family members, and of groups that have a particular interest in families or in any one (1) or more matters related to the Commission's functions.

(2) Examples of groups referred to in subsection (1)(c) of this Section are groups that represent the interests of any of the following:

- (a) spouses and de facto partners;
- (b) parents, fathers, and mothers;
- (c) children under the age of 18 years;
- (d) grandparents and the elderly;
- (e) caregivers;
- (f) men and women;
- (g) providers of social services;
- (h) the academe and researchers interested in matters relating to families;
- (i) employers and workers.

SECTION 9. *Capacity and Powers.* -

(1) Except as provided in this Act or any other Act or rule of law, the Commission shall exercise all the powers, rights and privileges authorized by law, whether expressed or implied, and those incident to its existence.

(2) The Commission shall exercise said powers only for the purpose of performing its functions.

SECTION 10. *Membership of Commission.* -

(1) The Commission shall consist of at least three (3) but not more than seven (7) Commissioners.

(2) A Chief Commissioner shall be appointed, and a Deputy Chief Commissioner may be appointed.

SECTION 11. *Board's Role.* –

(1) The board is the Commission's governing body, and all powers, rights and privileges conferred upon the Commission shall be exercised by it.

(2) All decisions relating to the operation of the Commission must be made by or under the authority of the board in accordance with this Act.

(3) All Commissioners shall be members of the Board and shall be headed by the Chief Commissioner prescribed in Section 10 of this Act.

SECTION 12. *Ability to Delegate.* – The Board may delegate any of the powers or functions of the Commission or of the Board, either generally or specifically, to any of the following persons by resolution and written notice to the person or persons of:

(1) any of its members;

(2) a committee appointed by resolution of the board that includes at least one (1) member of the Board; and

(3) any employee or employees of the Commission;

SECTION 13. *Board may Appoint Committees.* –

(1) The Board may, by resolution, appoint one (1) or more committees to—

(a) inquire into, and report to the board on, any matters within the scope of the Commission's or the board's powers or functions that are referred to the committee by the board; and

(b) exercise or perform any of the Commission's or the board's powers or functions that are delegated to the committee.

(2) In all cases, the committee is subject to the control of the board and may, at any time, be discharged, altered, or reconstituted by the board.

SECTION 14. *Membership of committee.* – A committee must consist of at least one (1) member and may include any other persons that the board thinks fit.

SECTION 15. *Funding.* – The sum necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be appropriated in the general annual appropriations.

SECTION 16. *Repealing Clause.* – Any laws, decrees, ordinances or rules and regulations which are inconsistent with or contrary to the provision of this Act is hereby amended or repealed.

SECTION 17. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,