



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

Fifteenth Congress  
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5546



**Introduced by Honorable Ranulfo P. "Dodong" Canonigo**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

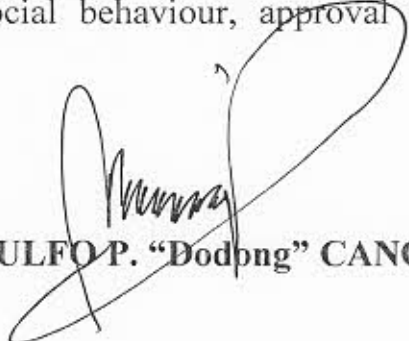
This bill seeks establish three additional penal institutions in the Philippines, one for Luzon, one for Visayas and one for Mindanao.

It is a sad fact that most inmates in the country's national penitentiary, the New Bilibid Prison (NBP), who are from far-flung areas of the country cannot be visited by their relatives and friends due to distance and financial constraints. While it is true that a visit from relatives or friends is a big factor that can greatly enhance the rehabilitation of a prisoner, records and experience abound showing countless broken homes and marriages caused by the lack of visitation and communication between an inmate and his family. It is also common occurrence, no matter how deplorable and hapless, that dead inmates who are unclaimed by their families are simply buried in the vicinity of the NBP compound.

Another big problem in the NBP is congestion. In June 2011, during committee hearings on the bills concerning the modernization of the Bureau of Corrections and at the height of the furor over the sleep-over privilege of convicted former Batangas governor Jose Antonio Leviste, the sorry state of the country's national penitentiary was brought to fore. Several information were exposed — that the population growth rate for inmates nationwide stood at 5%. As of June 2011, the number of inmates jumped from 13,000 to about 36,000 for the last 20 years. Moreover, both medium security and maximum security camps of the NBP had exceeded its occupancy rate by more than 200%. The number of employees did not change — it was 2,362 twenty years ago and 2,362 today — which leaves a disparate 1:81 ratio of custodians to inmates.

While the primal part of the prisoner's punishment is the deprivation of liberty, the present state of NBP is in sub-human condition, and, rather than being reformatory, it has become more punitive, thereby running counter to the provisions of the United Nations' agreements like Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, that our country is a signatory.

To effectively pursue the government's responsibilities to provide humane treatment of prisoners, supply the inmates' basic needs and implement a variety of responsive rehabilitation programs designed to wean them from the pattern of their criminal or anti-social behaviour, approval of this bill is earnestly recommended.



**RANULFO P. "Dodong" CANONIGO**



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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING THREE ADDITIONAL PENAL INSTITUTIONS IN**  
**LUZON, VISAYAS AND MINDANAO, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS**  
**THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. Three additional penal institutions are hereby established in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

SEC. 2. Each of the penal institutions shall be provided with a building for prisoners, equipment, tools, implements, devices and apparatus, and manned by expert personnel necessary for it to carry out the programs and functions similar to the national penitentiary.

SEC. 3. Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of Justice shall issue rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged to the appropriations of the Department of Justice under the

current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 5. All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,