

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 385

Introduced by **CHRISTOPHER S. CO** and **RODEL M. BATOCABE**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The passage of this bill seeks to convert the existing Presidential Security Group (PSG) into a highly professionalized civilian security organization to be named the Government Protection and Security Service (GPSS). It aims to insulate the organization from partisan politics while maximizing its efficiency and effectiveness.

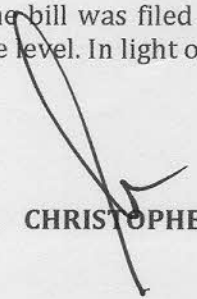
This is in pursuant to the 1987 Constitution which mandates that the armed forces shall be insulated from partisan politics. It prohibits members of the military from engagement, directly or indirectly, in any partisan political activity, except to vote.

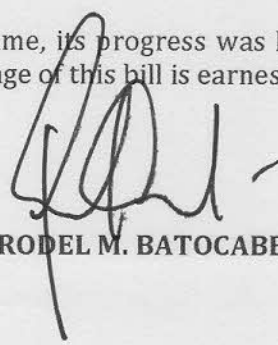
Currently, the PSG is an Army unit of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) with headquarters in the Malacañang Palace. Police personnel and operators from the PNP Special Weapons and Tactics and Special Action Force are also assigned therein.

PSG posts are perceived to be the most sought-after assignment as they are closest to the seat of power – the presidency. Military and police officers and personnel are designated to the PSG which serves as a spring board for their professional careers. It is also alleged that military or police personnel assigned to the PSG are politicized as they are promised high-ranking positions in the AFP or PNP and stay beholden to officials they have served. To date, there had been at least three (3) PSG Commanders who had become AFP Chief-of-Staff who were perceived, rightly or wrongly, to have been appointed because of their closeness to the President.

This perception should be eradicated as it demoralizes the members of the armed forces and weakens the public's confidence in its military. The creation of an institutionalized civilian agency, independent from the AFP or PNP, ensures that the protective role of the agency, that is, ensuring the safety of national leaders, their families, the Malacañang Palace, and foreign visitors, shall be upheld and given utmost priority.

The bill was filed in the 15th Congress but for lack of time, its progress was halted at the committee level. In light of all these circumstances, the swift passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


CHRISTOPHER S. CO


RODEL M. BATOCABE

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 385

Introduced by **CHRISTOPHER S. CO** and **RODEL M. BATOCABE**

An Act Creating and Institutionalizing a Government Protection and Security Service (GPSS)

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

SECTION 1. Title. This Act shall be known as the "Government Protection and Security Service Act",

SECTION 2. The Government Protection and Security Service. The Government Protection and Security Service (hereinafter "GPSS") is hereby created under the direction and control of the Office of the President.

SECTION 3. Functions. The GPSS shall perform the following functions:

(A) It shall be the lead agency in the provision of security for the following:

- 1) the President, Vice President, Senate President, Speaker of the House, Chief Justice of the Philippines;
- 2) the First Family; and
- 3) the Malacañang Palace and other buildings under the Office of the President.

(B) It shall be the primary coordinating agency in the provision of security for the following:

- 1) visiting foreign heads of states or governments;
- 2) distinguished visitors and diplomatic delegates of foreign states of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO) to the Philippines; and
- 3) other individuals or events as officially designated by the Office of the President.

(C) The GPSS shall coordinate with all law enforcement agencies and lead the investigation of crimes related to the security of the individuals and events enumerated above;

(D) The GPSS may also provide support to different government agencies and provide assistance to the AFP and PNP in its undertakings as ordered by the President;

SECTION 4. Transfer of Powers and Functions. For this purpose, the Presidential Security Group (PSG) is hereby abolished. The powers and functions of the PSG not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby transferred to the GPSS. The foregoing transfer of powers and functions shall

include all applicable funds and appropriations, records, equipment, property and personnel as may be necessary.

The AFP and PNP shall maintain close coordination with the GPSS on all matters relating to the security of the President.

Section 5. Organization. The GPSS shall be headed by a Director with the rank of Undersecretary. The Director shall be responsible for the general administration and management of the GPSS.

The Director shall be assisted by Deputy Directors with the rank of Assistance Secretary for divisions which include but shall not be limited to:

- (A) Personnel and Fiscal Division;
- (B) Intelligence Division;
- (C) Information and Communications Technology Division;
- (D) Operations Division;
- (E) Special Tactics and Training Division; and

SECTION 6. Staffing.

- (A) The Director shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. All other personnel from Deputy Director and below shall hold plantilla positions subject to civil service rules and regulations.
- (B) In addition to the law enforcement positions, the GPSS shall rely on the capabilities and expertise of civilian personnel from diverse professional backgrounds.
- (C) If upon the effectivity of this Act, the GPSS has not been composed and the new staffing pattern and positions have not been approved or filled up, the current PSG and its personnel shall continue to hold office. PSG personnel shall continue with the performance of their task as detail service with the GPSS, subject to screening, until such time that the organizational structure of the GPSS is fully operational.
- (D) Personnel who are affected shall have the option of either being integrated into the GPSS or remain with the AFP or PNP and shall, thereafter, be immediately reassigned to other units therein by the head of such agencies. The personnel absorbed and on detail service shall be given until one (1) year to finally decide to join the GPSS. Nothing in this Act shall mean a diminution of the powers of the AFP or PNP.
- (E) Such personnel who are transferred, absorbed and integrated in the GPSS shall be extended appointments to positions similar or higher in rank, salary, and other emoluments and privileges granted to their respective positions in their original mother agencies.
- (F) Members of the GPSS shall enjoy security of tenure and shall not be suspended or removed from office except for just cause as specified by law.

Section 7. Training and Enhancement of Technical Competence. - The personnel or staff composing the GPSS shall undergo an intense selection process. The GPSS shall establish rigorous training programs for its staff for the purpose of enhancing the tactical, operational, strategic, and technical competence of the GPSS which should enable it to adequately perform its duties and functions.

Section 8. Implementation. The GPSS, shall promulgate and issue the necessary Implementing Rules and Regulations for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 9. Funding. – Funds for the operation of the GPSS shall initially be sourced from the current PSG and thereafter be included in the appropriation for the Office of the President.

SECTION 10. Repeal. – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.