

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
H. No. **4345**



Introduced by Representative H. Harry L. Roque Jr.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

Based on the Concluding Observations of the Committee Against Torture on the Philippines, the jails and detention facilities being run by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology do not meet minimum international standards and “may by themselves constitute ill-treatment or torture.” Mainly, this is due to severe overcrowding of detention facilities, leading to dilapidated cells, unsanitary conditions, inadequate amounts of food, insufficient lighting, poor ventilation, and others. Severe overcrowding has made it very difficult for administrators to prevent crime that occurs within these cells such as physical violence, sexual violence, drug trade, and others.

Consistent with the recent investigations conducted on various legislators purportedly involved in illegal drug trade within the New Bilibid Prison, this bill is the first of many steps that are necessary to rectify such problems. The investigations have revealed that, independent of who is involved in the drug trade, there is in fact a culture of impunity within these facilities. While stricter regulations may reduce these problems, the addition of new prison facilities throughout the country is also vital. The purpose of this bill is to regionalize prison facilities to ease in control and management.

The purpose of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
HARRY L. ROQUE JR.

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AN ACT DIRECTING THE BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS FOR THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL PENITENTIARIES, DEFINING ITS  
STANDARDS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

SECTION 1. Short title- This Act shall be hereby known as the “Regional Penitentiary Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of State Policy – It is the policy of the State not to employ any form of physical, psychological, or degrading punishment against any prisoner or detainee or use substandard or inadequate penal facilities under subhuman conditions. The State must therefore endeavor to improve the conditions of its prison facilities towards this end.

SECTION 3. Establishment of Regional Prisons –Regional prisons shall hereby be established and maintained by the Bureau of Corrections under the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice is hereby directed to determine the appropriate locations to construct three (3) new prison facilities, with one facility each in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

SECTION 4. Regional prison standards – The Bureau of Corrections, Department of Justice, and the Department of Public Works and Highways shall, in consultation with the Philippine National Police and the Supreme Court of the Philippines, shall work

together to design the prison to be consistent with the needs of existing prisoners, in line with national and international standards on just and humane treatment.

SECTION 4. *Budget allocation.* – The sum of One Hundred Billion Pesos (P100,000,000,000) shall be appropriated from the Philippine Treasury to be at the disposal of the Department of Public Works and Highways for the purposes of constructing the prison facilities in the preceding section.

SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,