

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5475**



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the World Health Organization, diseases were determined as major cause of morbidity. Few years ago, it has been reported that sixty percent (60%) of all deaths in the Philippines are due to chronic diseases.

However, studies show that the burden of diseases as major cause of death has diminished due to improved health technology and health care delivery systems. But then again, much still needs to be done to better reduce the occurrence of illnesses through the application of health measures which could prevent widespread diseases.¹ In this light, an effective and feasible intervention from the government that aims to address health problems in the country is auspiciously significant.

This bill proposes for the establishment of the National Registry of Diseases which will provide a compilation of information on the incidence of certain diseases. This compilation will serve as a basis for the direction of programs for disease prevention and control.

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


GARY C. ALEJANO

¹ Elio-Villa, Luningning. 2006. *Exploring Fresh Collaborative Initiatives for Combating Infectious Disease in the Philippines. Tropical Medicine and Health*. The Japanese Society of Tropical Medicine. Vol. 34, No.4. Data retrieved at http://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/tmh/34/4/153/_pdf on July 7, 2008

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL REGISTRY OF DISEASES AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

ARTICLE I

TITLE

1 **SECTION 1. Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*National Registry of Diseases*
2 *Act*”.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act, the following terms shall have the
5 following definitions:

- 6 a. “*Agent of the Registry*” means any public officer or employee of any statutory
7 body who is appointed by the Secretary under Section 3 to be an agent of the
8 Registry;
9 b. “*Anonymized*”, used to describe information pertaining to an individual, means
10 that the identity of that individual has been concealed or protected, whether by
11 presenting such information in a statistical form or otherwise, such that it cannot
12 be readily discovered or ascertained from that information;
13 c. “*Authorized Registry Officer*” means any Registry officer who is duly authorized
14 by the Registrar, in writing, to carry out any particular function or to exercise any
15 particular power under this Act;
16 d. “*Disclose*”, in relation to any information held by the Registry, includes to grant
17 to any person access to such information;
18 e. “*Disease*” means any physical or mental ailment, disorder, defect or morbid
19 condition (whether of sudden onset or gradual development), or the recurrence of
20 any such ailment, disorder, defect or morbid condition;
21 f. “*Healthcare Institution*” means —
22 i. any licensed private hospital, medical clinic, clinical laboratory or
23 healthcare establishment; or
24 ii. any facility, premises or conveyance which is declared to be a
25 healthcare institution for the purposes of this Act;

- 1 g. *"Individually-Identifiable"*, when used to describe information pertaining to an
2 individual, means that the identity of that individual can be readily discovered or
3 ascertained from that information;
- 4 h. *"Investigation Officer"* means any public officer who is appointed under Section
5 13 to be an investigation officer for the purposes of this Act;
- 6 i. *"Manager"*, in relation to a healthcare institution, means the person having the
7 management or control of the healthcare institution;
- 8 j. *"Medical Practitioner"* means a registered medical practitioner and who holds a
9 valid practicing certificate;
- 10 k. *"Register"* means a register kept and maintained by the Registrar under Section 5;
- 11 l. *"Registrar"* means the person appointed by the Secretary under Section 3 to be
12 the Registrar of the Registry and includes a Deputy Registrar and an Assistant
13 Registrar;
- 14 m. *"Registry"* means the National Registry of Diseases established under Section 4;
- 15 n. *"Registry officer"* means any person who is appointed by the Secretary under
16 Section 3 to be an officer of the Registry;
- 17 o. *"Regulations"* means regulations made under Section 19;
- 18 p. *"Reportable Disease"* means a report on the incidence of certain disease;
- 19 q. *"Requisite Consent"*, for the purposes of Section 11 or 12, means —
20 i. the consent, given in the prescribed form and manner, of the
21 person whose individually-identifiable information is to be disclosed under that
22 section; or
23 ii. where the person referred to in paragraph (i) is unable to give his
24 own consent because of his age, infirmity of mind or body or any other cause,
25 the consent, given in the prescribed form and manner, of such other person who
26 is authorized by the regulations to give such consent for and on his behalf.
- 27 r. *"Secretary"* means the Secretary of the Department of Health, for purposes of
28 Section 16, —
29 i. "body corporate" includes a limited liability partnership;
30 ii. "officer" —
31 (a) in relation to a body corporate, means any director, partner,
32 member of the committee of management, chief executive,
33 manager, secretary or other similar officer of the body corporate
34 and includes any person purporting to act in any such capacity;
35 or
36 (b) in relation to an unincorporated association (other than a
37 partnership), means the president, the secretary, or any member
38 of the committee of the unincorporated association, or any
39 person holding a position analogous to that of president,
40 secretary or member of a committee and includes any person
41 purporting to act in any such capacity.
42 iii. "partner" includes a person purporting to act as a partner.

43 **ARTICLE II**
44 **NATIONAL REGISTRY OF DISEASES**

1
2 **SEC. 3. *Appointment of Registrar.* –**

3 (1) The Secretary shall appoint a Registrar who shall be responsible for the
4 administration of the Registry.

5 (2) The Secretary may appoint —

6 (a) a Deputy Registrar;

7 (b) one or more Assistant Registrars; and

8 (c) such other Registry officers as he may consider necessary, to assist the
9 Registrar in the administration of the Registry.

10 (3) The Secretary may appoint any public officer or employee of any statutory body
11 to be an agent of the Registry to assist in the collection and collation of any information under
12 this Act, subject to such conditions and limitations as the Secretary may specify.

13 (4) The Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Assistant Registrars, Registry officers and
14 agents of the Registry shall be deemed to be public servants.
15

16 **SEC. 4. *National Registry of Diseases.* –** There shall be a National Registry of
17 Diseases, the functions of which are —

18 (a) to collect information on reportable diseases that have been diagnosed and treated
19 in the country;

20 (b) to establish, keep and maintain for each reportable disease a register containing
21 individually-identifiable information obtained under this Act;

22 (c) to compile and publish statistics on the epidemiology, management and outcomes
23 of reportable diseases;

24 (d) to provide information for the purpose of supporting —

25 (i) health services that are being provided by healthcare institutions to the
26 patients thereof who are suffering from any reportable disease; and

27 (ii) national public health policies, initiatives, programs and related studies
28 concerning any reportable disease; and

29 (e) generally to do all such acts, matters and things as are necessary to be carried out
30 under this Act.
31

32 **SEC. 5. *Registers.* –**

33 (1) The Registrar shall keep and maintain for each reportable disease a register
34 containing individually-identifiable information of each person who is diagnosed with and
35 treated for that disease in the country.

36 (2) The registers kept and maintained under subsection (1) shall not be open for
37 inspection by the public.
38

39 **ARTICLE III**
40 **NOTIFICATION OF REPORTABLE DISEASES**
41

42 **SEC. 6. *Duty to Notify Registrar of Reportable Diseases.* –**

43 (1) Where a person is diagnosed with or undergoes treatment for a reportable disease
44 at a healthcare institution, the manager of the healthcare institution shall, in such form and
45 within such time as may be prescribed, notify the Registrar of that fact.

46 (2) Any manager of a healthcare institution who —

47 (a) without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with the requirements of
48 subsection (1); or

(b) in compliance or purported compliance with subsection (1), furnishes as true information which he knows or has reason to believe to be false, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Eighty Thousand Pesos (P 80,000.00).

(3) A certificate under the hand of the Registrar stating that a notification required under subsection (1) has not been furnished or is incorrect shall be *prima facie* evidence of the facts stated in the certificate.

SEC. 7. Collection of Information. —

(1) Upon a notification being made to the Registrar under Section 6, the Registrar or an authorized Registry officer may require the manager of the healthcare institution who made the notification to provide such additional information as may be prescribed concerning the person to whom the notification relates.

(2) For the purpose of subsection (1), the Registrar or authorized Registry officer may require the manager of the healthcare institution —

(a) to furnish the prescribed additional information to any Registry officer or agent of the Registry; or

(b) to produce to the Registrar or any Registry officer or agent of the Registry for inspection any medical record, book or document which contains or may contain the prescribed additional information.

(3) Any manager of a healthcare institution who —

(a) without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with the requirement of the Registrar or an authorized Registry officer under this section; or

(b) in compliance or purported compliance with this section, furnishes as true information which he knows or has reason to believe to be false, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Eighty Thousand Pesos (P80,000.00).

(4) A certificate under the hand of the Registrar stating that the additional information required under subsection (1) has not been furnished or is incorrect shall be *prima facie* evidence of the facts stated in the certificate.

ARTICLE IV CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE

SEC. 8. Confidentiality. —

(1) Except in the case of a prosecution for an offence under this Act, the Registrar, a Registry officer, an agent of the Registry or any other person who acts under the direction of the Secretary or Registrar for any purpose related to the Registry shall not be compellable in any proceedings to give evidence in respect of, or to produce any document containing any individually-identifiable information which has been obtained under this Act.

(2) Except as otherwise provided by this Act, the Registrar, a Registry officer, an agent of the Registry or any other person who acts under the direction of the Secretary or Registrar for any purpose related to the Registry shall not disclose the contents of any register or any individually-identifiable information which may have come to his knowledge in the course of performing any duty or function under this Act or carrying out any act in relation to the Registry.

(3) Any person who fails to comply with subsection (2) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (P400,000.00) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve (12) months or to both.

1
2 **SEC. 9. Disclosure and Publication of Anonymized Information. —**

3 (1) The Registrar —

4 (a) may, on a request by any person and —

5 (i) upon payment by such person of the prescribed fee; and

6 (ii) subject to such conditions as the Registrar may impose; and

7 (b) shall, on a request by the Secretary, disclose or publish any information held by the
8 Registry in an anonymized form.

9 (2) Any person who fails to comply with any condition imposed under subsection (1) shall be
10 guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Two Hundred
11 Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six (6) months or
12 to both.

13
14 **SEC. 10. National Public Health Programs. —**

15 (1) The Registrar may, with the approval of the Secretary, disclose individually-
16 identifiable information held by the Registry to any public officer or any other person for the
17 purpose of conducting national public health programs concerning any reportable disease.

18 (2) In determining whether to approve such disclosure under subsection (1), the
19 Secretary shall, subject to subsection (3), have regard to —

20 (a) the aims and objectives of the national public health program, including any
21 public health benefits to the country;

22 (b) the identity of the public officers or persons involved in the program to
23 whom the individually-identifiable information held by the Registry will be
24 disclosed;

25 (c) the use to which the individually-identifiable information will or may be put;
26 and

27 (d) the measures that will be put in place under the national public health
28 program to protect the individually-identifiable information from unauthorized
29 disclosure.

30 (3) The Secretary shall not approve any disclosure under subsection (1) unless he is
31 satisfied that the national public health program cannot be carried out with anonymized
32 information.

33 (4) The Secretary may, when granting approval under subsection (1), impose such
34 conditions as he considers necessary with respect to —

35 (a) the identities of the public officers or persons, or class of public officers or
36 persons who are authorized to receive or handle the individually-identifiable
37 information;

38 (b) the use to which the individually-identifiable information is to or may be
39 put; and

40 (c) the measures that must be put in place under the national public health
41 program to protect the individually-identifiable information from unauthorized
42 disclosure.

43 (5) The Secretary may, at any time, vary or revoke any of the existing conditions
44 imposed under subsection (4) or impose new conditions.

45 (6) The Secretary may, at any time, revoke the approval given under subsection (1).

46 (7) Any person who fails to comply with any condition imposed under subsection (4)
47 or any new condition imposed under subsection (5) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be
48 liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (P400,000.00) or
49 to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve (12) months or to both.

1
2 **SEC. 11. Medical Treatment.**— The Registrar may, if he thinks fit, disclose to a medical
3 practitioner any individually-identifiable information of a medical nature held by the Registry
4 concerning a person suffering from a reportable disease if the Registrar is satisfied that —

- 5 (a) the medical practitioner is responsible for the treatment and care of that person;
6 (b) the disclosure is necessary for the proper treatment of that person; and
7 (c) the requisite consent has been given for such disclosure.
8

9 **SEC. 12. Disclosure of Individually-Identifiable Information for Public Health**
10 **Research.** —

11 (1) A person, referred to in this section as the researcher, who requires any
12 individually-identifiable information held by the Registry for the purpose of carrying out any
13 medical, epidemiological or other form of public health research concerning any reportable
14 disease may apply to the Registrar in the prescribed form for the disclosure of such information.

15 (2) The Registrar may, subject to such conditions as he thinks fit to impose and upon
16 the payment by the researcher of such fees as may be prescribed, disclose to the researcher
17 such individually-identifiable information if the Registrar is satisfied that —

- 18 (a) the research cannot be carried out with anonymized information;
19 (b) the requisite consent has been given for such individually-identifiable
20 information to be disclosed to the researcher for the purpose of the research;
21 (c) the research may —

22 (i) improve the quality of health services provided for patients suffering
23 from any reportable disease in the country; or

24 (ii) support any national public health policy, initiative or program
25 concerning any reportable disease; and

26 (d) the researcher and the research comply with such conditions as may have
27 been prescribed.

28 (3) A researcher to whom the individually-identifiable information of any person has
29 been disclosed under subsection (2) shall not —

30 (a) use such individually-identifiable information for any purpose other than the
31 purpose approved by the Registrar; or

32 (b) disclose the name or any other individually-identifiable information of that
33 person unless the requisite consent has been given for the disclosure.

34 (4) A researcher to whom the individually-identifiable information of any person has
35 been disclosed under subsection (2) shall not disclose —

36 (a) the name or any other information leading to the identification of the
37 healthcare institution in which that person has been diagnosed with, or has been or is
38 being examined or treated for, a reportable disease unless the manager of that healthcare
39 institution has given his consent for the disclosure in the prescribed form and manner;
40 or

41 (b) the name or any other information leading to the identification of the person
42 who provided the individually-identifiable information to the Registrar under this Act,
43 unless that person has given his consent for the disclosure in the prescribed form and
44 manner.

45 (5) Before making any decision on an application under subsection (2), the Registrar
46 may refer the application to a national research advisory committee comprising not less than 3
47 and not more than five (5) members appointed by the Secretary and, in making his decision,
48 the Registrar shall have regard to any report made to him by the national research advisory
49 committee.

1 (6) Where a researcher to whom any individually-identifiable information of any
2 person has been disclosed under subsection (2) contravenes subsection (3) or (4) or any
3 condition imposed under subsection (2), he shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on
4 conviction to a fine not exceeding Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (P400,000.00) or to
5 imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve (12) months or to both.

6 7 **ARTICLE V** 8 **ENFORCEMENT POWERS**

9 10 **SEC. 13. *Appointment of Investigation Officers.* —**

11 (1) The Secretary may, in writing, appoint any public officer to be an investigation
12 officer for the purpose of conducting an investigation into any offence under this Act.

13 (2) Every investigation officer, when exercising any of his powers under this Act,
14 shall, if not in uniform, declare his office and shall, on demand, produce to any person affected
15 by the exercise of that power such identification card as the Secretary may direct to be carried
16 by the investigation officer when exercising such power.

17 18 **SEC. 14. *Powers of Entry, Inspection, Search, and Seizure.* —**

19 (1) An investigation officer shall, for the purposes of investigating any offence under
20 this Act, have power to do any or all of the following:

21 (a) to enter, inspect and search, without warrant at any reasonable time, any
22 place which he has reason to believe contains evidence relating to or connected
23 with an offence under this Act;

24 (b) for the purposes of paragraph (a) —

25 (i) to inspect and make copies of and take extracts from, or require the
26 occupier or any person having the management or control of any place
27 mentioned in that paragraph to provide copies of or extracts from, any
28 book, document, record or electronic material;

29 (ii) to inspect and make copies of and take extracts from, or require the
30 occupier or any person having the management or control of any place
31 mentioned in that paragraph to provide copies of or extracts from, any
32 medical record of any person who has been or who is being treated or
33 examined at that place, notwithstanding that the prior consent of such
34 person has not been obtained;

35 (iii) to seize and remove from any place mentioned in that paragraph any
36 book, record, document, material, article or thing which the
37 investigation officer reasonably believes to be the subject-matter of, or
38 to be connected with the commission of, an offence under this Act; and

39 (iv) to make such examination or inquiry as may be necessary to
40 ascertain whether the provisions of this Act have been complied with;

41
42 (c) to require any person, by way of an order in writing, to produce any book,
43 document, record, electronic material, article or thing that the investigation officer
44 considers is necessary or desirable for the purposes of an investigation under this Act.

45 (2) The occupier or any person having the management and control of, or who is found
46 in, any place mentioned in subsection (1) (a) shall render all necessary assistance and co-
47 operation to the investigation officer as are necessary for an entry, inspection, examination,
48 inquiry or otherwise for the exercise of his powers under this Act in relation to that place.

49 (3) Any person who —

- (a) obstructs, hinders or impedes an investigation officer in the exercise of his power under this section; or
- (b) fails to comply with any order or requirement of an investigation officer under this section or to produce any book, document, record, electronic material, article or thing which he is required by or under this Act to produce to an investigation officer, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six (6) months or to both.

SEC. 15. Powers to Examine and Secure Attendance. —

(1) An investigation officer may —

- (a) examine orally any person supposed to be acquainted with the facts and circumstances of any offence or matter under this Act, and to reduce to writing any statement made by the person so examined; and
- (b) require by order in writing the attendance before himself of any person, being within the limits of the country, who, from information given or otherwise, appears to be acquainted with the facts and circumstances of any offence or matter under this Act and that person shall attend as so required.

(2) The person referred to in subsection (1) (a) shall be bound to state truly the facts and circumstances with which he is acquainted concerning any offence or matter under this Act, except only that he may decline to make, with regard to any fact or circumstance, a statement which would have a tendency to expose him to a criminal charge, penalty or forfeiture.

(3) A statement made under this section by any person shall be read over to him and shall, after correction, if necessary, be signed by him.

(4) If any person fails to attend as required by an order under subsection (1) (b), the investigation officer may report such failure to a Magistrate who may thereupon issue a warrant to secure the attendance of that person as required by the order.

**ARTICLE VI
MISCELLANEOUS**

SEC. 16. Offences by Bodies Corporate. —

(1) Where an offence under this Act committed by a body corporate is proved —

- (a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer; or
- (b) to be attributable to any neglect on his part, the officer as well as the body corporate shall be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

(2) Where the affairs of a body corporate are managed by its members, subsection (1) shall apply in relation to the acts and defaults of a member in connection with his functions of management as if he were a director of the body corporate.

(3) Where an offence under this Act committed by a partnership is proved —

- (a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of a partner; or
- (b) to be attributable to any neglect on his part, the partner as well as the partnership shall be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

(4) Where an offence under this Act committed by an unincorporated association other than a partnership is proved —

- 1 (a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer of the
2 unincorporated association or a member of its governing body; or
3 (b) to be attributable to any neglect on the part of such officer or member, the
4 officer or member as well as the unincorporated association shall be guilty of
5 the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished
6 accordingly.

7
8 **SEC. 17. *Protection from Liability.* —**

9 (1) No action, suit or other legal proceedings shall lie against the government or
10 personally against the Secretary, the Registrar, a Registry officer, an agent of the Registry, an
11 investigation officer or any other person for anything which is done or omitted to be done in
12 good faith in the course of or in connection with —

- 13 (a) the exercise or purported exercise of any power under this Act;
14 (b) the performance or purported performance of any function or the discharge
15 or purported discharge of any duty under this Act; or
16 (c) the compliance or purported compliance with this Act.

17 (2) A person who makes a notification to the Registrar under Section 6 or who
18 otherwise makes available to the Registrar, a Registry officer, an agent of the Registry or an
19 investigation officer any document or other information for the purpose of complying with the
20 requirements of this Act, shall not, by virtue of doing so —

- 21 (a) be liable to any suit or other legal proceedings for breach of confidence; or
22 (b) be held in any proceedings before any court or tribunal or in any other
23 respect to have breached any code of professional etiquette or ethics, or to have
24 departed from any accepted form of professional conduct.

25 (3) Where pursuant to this Act the Registrar discloses to any person any information
26 that is held by the Registry, neither the Registrar nor any Registry officer involved in the
27 disclosure of such information shall be liable for any loss or damage suffered by that person or
28 by any other person by reason of any error or omission of whatever nature appearing in the
29 information disclosed or however caused if the error or omission was made in good faith and
30 in the ordinary course of the discharge of the duties of the Registrar or Registry officer.

31
32 **SEC. 18. *Obstructing Registrar and Registry Officer in Execution of Duty.* —** Any
33 person who obstructs, hinders or impedes the Registrar, a Registry officer or an agent of the
34 Registry in the performance or execution of his duty or anything which he is authorized,
35 empowered or required to do under this Act shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on
36 conviction to a fine not exceeding Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00) or to
37 imprisonment for a term not exceeding six (6) months or to both.

38 **SEC. 19. *Regulations.* —**

39 (1) The Department may make regulations for carrying out the purposes and
40 provisions of this Act.

41 (2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), the Department may make
42 regulations with respect to any or all of the following matters:

- 43 (a) the circumstances under which, and the manner in which, individually-
44 identifiable information held by the Registry may be anonymized for the
45 purposes of disclosure and publication under Section 9;
46 (b) the circumstances under and the manner in which persons whose
47 individually-identifiable information is held by the Registry or the next-of kin

of such persons may be contacted for the purposes of any national public health program referred to in Section 10;

(c) the circumstances under and the manner in which individually-identifiable information held by the Registry may be disclosed for the purposes of any medical, epidemiological or other form of public health research referred to in Section 12;

(d) the circumstances under and the manner in which a person may obtain certified extracts of individually-identifiable information relating to himself;

(e) the forms to be used for the purposes of this Act;

(f) the fees and charges payable under or for the purposes of this Act;

(g) any other matter as may be necessary or expedient to be prescribed for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

(3) In making any regulations any contravention of or failure to comply with any regulation shall be an offence punishable with a fine not exceeding Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (P400,000.00) or with imprisonment for a term not exceeding six (6) months or with both.

SEC. 20. *Saving Provision for Personal Information Previously Collected.* —

(1) As from the date on which any disease becomes a reportable disease for the purposes of this Act —

(a) any personal information that had already been collected by a specified entity before that date pertaining to a person who had been diagnosed with or who had undergone treatment for that disease for the purposes of a national disease registry shall be deemed to be personal information that has been collected under and for the purposes of this Act in relation to that reportable disease; and

(b) any person who had made a notification of any such personal information to the specified entity before that date shall be entitled to the same protection from liability under Section 17 (2) as if he had made the notification under Section 6 on or after that date.

SEC. 21. *Funding Provision.* — The Secretary of the Department shall immediately hereinafter include in the Department's programs the prompt implementation of this Act, funding of which shall be provided for in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 22. *Enforcement.* — It shall be the duty of all duly constituted law enforcement agencies and officers of national, provincial, city, or municipal governments to uphold and enforce the provisions of this Act and to investigate and prosecute or cause the investigation and prosecution of any person violating the same.

SEC. 23. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the Department shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 24. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act shall at any time be found to be unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 25. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, rules or regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1
2 **SEC. 26. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
3 following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general
4 circulation.

Approved,