

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
H.B. No. 5853



Introduced by Representative H. Harry L. Roque Jr.

AN ACT
CREATING OFFICE ERGONOMIC STANDARDS TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH
RISKS RELATED TO COMPUTER USE IN THE WORKPLACE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 provides that:

The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

There are several health problems associated with computer use. All of them are avoidable, through the use of ergonomic principles. Ergonomics is the science of fitting the job to the worker, rather than expecting workers to accommodate themselves to uncomfortable equipment, postures, and work organization.

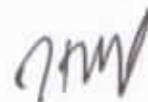
As with any task done repeatedly, working on a computer for long periods of time can cause inflammation of tendons, nerve sheaths and ligaments and damage to soft tissues.

Depending on an individual's sensitivity to the repeated movements of keyboarding, the cumulative effect can be disabling. Resulting conditions are called cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs). Different types of forearm and wrist CTDs from

computer use are carpal tunnel syndrome, tenosynovitis, epicondylitis, tendinitis, DeQuervain's disease and ganglionic cysts.

Neck and shoulder pain and stiffness can occur from improper placement of the computer monitor, mouse or document you are working from. If these items are not placed correctly, the muscles of the neck and shoulders are constantly working to keep the head and arms in an awkward position. Many people who use computers for prolonged periods of time complain of eyestrain, eye fatigue, eye irritation and blurred vision.

This bill seeks to inform employees about the ways to avoid health risks related to computer use and protect them from it.



H. HARRY L. ROQUE JR.

1. This bill was originally filed by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago in the Sixteenth Congress, Third Regular Session

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Office Computer
2 Ergonomics Act.”

3 SECTION 2. *Office ergonomic standards.* - The following standards shall be
4 required for employers who have employees who use computers in their workplace:

- 5 a. Chairs must be adjustable to allow the user to move the seat up and down
6 depending on the height of the user;
- 7 b. For employees who are required to copy or to type from another document,
8 a document holder must be provided;
- 9 c. Computer monitors must be positioned to lessen glare coming from external
10 sources;

- d. The rear of computer monitors should be at least three feet from another employee;
- e. Defective computer screens that flicker or wave must be repaired as soon as possible and the employee must not be forced to work with a defective computer monitor;
- f. Employees who regularly work in front of computer monitors must be allowed to rest their eyes on a regular basis; and
- g. Every company must hold an ergonomic standard seminar where a representative from the Department of Health shall talk about the details of this Act and give other means to lessen the health strain caused by computers in the workplace.

SECTION 3. *Duty of the Department of Labor and Employment.* - The Department of Labor and Employment is required to verify the compliance of employers with the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 4. *Penalties.* - The Department of Labor and Employment is empowered to establish and assess penalties or fines against any person for violations of this Act or regulations adopted under this Act. In no case shall the fine exceed One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000).

SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

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

5 SECTION 7. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
6 after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general
7 circulation.

Approved,