

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5909



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH STO. NIÑO B. BERNOS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

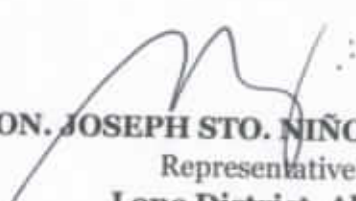
Under Section 16 of Article III of the 1987 Philippine Constitution it is provided that: "All persons shall have the right to a speedy disposition of their cases before all judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative bodies." However, due to perennial clogging of the court dockets in the country, this constitutional right has become illusory to many Filipinos.

As of June 1, 2017, the Judicial and Bar Council listed three (3) branches of Regional Trial Courts (RTC) in the Province of Abra. As the highest trial courts in the country, the RTC branches in Abra are important in resolving legal conflicts within its jurisdiction, but the growing population of the Province results to the political, social and economic interactions among its inhabitants, leading to a sharp rise in the number of court litigations and disputes. In the past three (3) years, these branches have seen a sharp increase in the cases handled by the Branches in the Province of Abra, due to land-related disputes and to the anti-illegal drug campaign of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's administration. In addition, owing to the geographic features of the Province, people have to travel long distances to reach courthouses in the provincial capital town of Bangued. Hence, establishing an additional branch will

give our constituents a nearer option for their legal needs, lessening the workload on the already existing branches and facilitating swift resolution of cases.

The lack of available court salas creates a serious backlog of cases contributing immensely to the delay in the administration of justice. Furthermore, the Province of Abra has produced a number of professionals in the legal services sector, who could benefit from the opportunities arising from the establishment of another RTC Branch. They will be able to hone their skills and be in the service of their fellow Abreños in need of immediate legal services and speedy resolution of their cases. Hence, this bill seeks to create one (1) additional branch of the Regional Trial Court in the Province of Abra, to be located in the Municipality of La Paz, where it will be able to cater to municipalities in the western areas of the Province of Abra.

In view of the foregoing and in the interest of expeditious, fair and impartial delivery of justice, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. JOSEPH STO. NIÑO B. BERNOS
Representative
Lone District, Abra

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INTRODUCED BY **REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH STO. NIÑO B. BERNOS**

AN ACT

**CREATING ONE (1) ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
IN THE PROVINCE OF ABRA TO BE STATIONED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
LA PAZ, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14.
PARAGRAPH (A) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
"THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980", AS AMENDED, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE.**

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

SECTION 1. An Additional Regional Trial Court branch to be stationed in the Municipality of Bangued, Province of Abra is hereby created in the First Judicial Region.

The Supreme Court shall assign the branch number of the newly created Regional Trial Court branch in the First Judicial Region.

Sec. 2. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Justice, shall immediately include in the Court's program the implementation of this Act. The funding therefore shall likewise be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The funds necessary for the operation of the Courts herein created shall be appropriated and released only upon the actual organization of the Courts and the appointment of its personnel.

Sec. 3. Section 14 (a) of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, otherwise known as "The Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980", as amended, and all other laws, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

Sec. 4. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.