

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session
HOUSE BILL NO. **5928**



Introduced by Representative EDGAR R. ERICE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

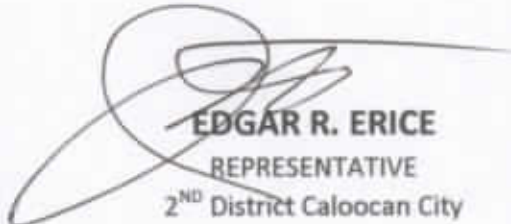
Article 2 Section 27 of the 1987 Constitution: The State Shall Promote honesty and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption. "Specifically, the graft courts of the Sandiganbayan"

Article 3 Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution: All persons shall have the right to a speedy disposition of their cases before all judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative bodies.

As evidenced by the study sponsored by the Supreme Court and the World Bank entitled "Philippines: Formulation of case Decongestion and Delay Reduction Strategy Project – Phase 1" pre-RA 10660, on average, each justice had a workload of 441 cases. Since Sandiganbayan justices worked in only Five (5) divisions, each division effectively handled more than 1,000 cases per year.

While the addition of an additional TWO (2) divisions by virtue of RA 10660 is well intentioned, it only marginally reduces the number each justice must work on from 441 to 315 yearly. This bill hopes to further reduce the workload of each justice from 315 yearly to an average of 221 yearly by increasing the number of justices from 21 to 30 and adding THREE (3) more Divisions, complementing the existing Seven (7) Divisions thereof

In an effort to further reduce the workload of Sandiganbayan justice to provide a speedy disposition of cases, as well as prevent late disposition due to prescription and inordinate delays, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


EDGAR R. ERICE
REPRESENTATIVE
2ND District Caloocan City

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AN ACT FURTHER INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SANDIGANBAYAN ASSOCIATE JUSTICES AND DIVISIONS, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1606, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7975 AND REPUBLIC ACT 8294, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10660.

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

Section 1. Section 1, first paragraph, of Presidential Decree no. 1606 is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"Section 1. Sandiganbayan; Composition; Qualifications; Tenure; Removal and Composition - A special court, of the same level as the Court of appeals and possessing all the inherent powers of a court of justice, to be known as the Sandiganbayan is hereby created composed of a presiding justice and ~~fourteen~~ **TWENTY-NINE (29)** associate justices who shall be appointed by the President."

Section 2. The first paragraph of Section 3 of the same decree is hereby further amended to read as follows: "

"Section 3. Divisions of the Court; Quorum- The Sandiganbayan shall sit in **TEN (10)** divisions of three justices each. The **TEN (10)** divisions may sit at the same time. The first **FIVE (5)** divisions Shall be stationed in the Metro Manila area, **THREE (3)** divisions shall be stationed in one or more cities in the Visayas for cases coming from the Visayas region, and another **TWO (2)** divisions shall be stationed in one or more cities in Mindanao for cases coming from the Mindanao region. "

Section 3. Funding and Appropriations. - The amount necessary to carry out the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Sandiganbayan. Thereafter, such sums as may be needed for its full implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 4. Separability Clause. If for any reason any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, such parts or portions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 5. Repealing Clause. All acts, decrees, general orders and circulars, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 6. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general Circulation.

Approved,