

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO 7474

Introduced by Honorable Seth Frederick P. Jalosjos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks for the creation of three (3) new courts in the 1st District of Zamboanga del Norte to be stationed at Dapitan City, amending for the purpose Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, otherwise known as the "Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1981" and appropriating funds therefor.

At present, there are no Regional Trial Court (RTC) in the first district. The second district has six (6) RTCs---five (5) in Dipolog City and one (1) in Sindangan, while the third district has two (2) RTCs---one (1) in Siocon and one (1) in Liloy. Litigants from the first district are at a disadvantage as they have to travel far to seek justice. The distance impedes their easy access to the courts. To bring justice closer to the people, it is imperative to create new RTCs in the first district with its seat located in Dapitan City.

Based on the court data gathered by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) Zamboanga del Norte Chapter, the five (5) current branches of RTCs in Zamboanga del Norte have a combined caseload of 3,321 as of December 2016 or 664 per branch, a far cry from the manageable level of 300 cases per second-level court. The Office of the Court Administrator has recommended the creation of four (4) additional RTC branches to decongest the existing courts.

Currently, around one-third (1/3) of the pending cases originated from the first district, while the remaining two-thirds (2/3) are from the second district. The apportionment recommended by the IBP Zamboanga del Norte Chapter is three (3) branches of RTCs

in the first district to be located in Dapitan City, six (6) branches of RTCs in the second district in Dipolog City, and one (1) RTC in Sindangan.

Of the three (3) new branches of RTCs to be created in the first district, one has to be a Family Court, while the other two (2) will be courts of general jurisdiction.

In the light of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly recommended.


SETH FREDERICK P. JALOSJOS
Representative
First District of Zamboanga del Norte

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AN ACT

CREATING THREE (3) NEW COURTS, NAMELY: ONE (1) FAMILY COURT AND TWO (2) BRANCHES OF REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS, ALL IN THE 1ST DISTRICT OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980", AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SEC. 1. One (1) Family Court and two (2) branches of Regional Trial Courts, with seats at Dapitan City, are hereby created in the Ninth Judicial Region.

SEC. 2. The Supreme Court shall assign the branch number for the newly created branches.

SEC. 3. 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 amount necessary for the creation and the continuous funding therefore shall likewise be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 4. Section 14 (j) of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, otherwise known as "The Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980", as amended, as well as other provisions that may be inconsistent herewith, are hereby deemed repealed, modified and/or further amended.

SEC. 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,