

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Seventeenth Congress
Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **8589**



Introduced by Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy

AN ACT REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10912 ALSO KNOWN AS “CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2016” AND OTHER RELATED ISSUANCES, GUIDELINES, AND MEMORANDUMS

Explanatory Note

Continuing Professional Development or CPD refers to the inculcation of advanced knowledge, skills and ethical values in a post-licensure specialization or in an inter or multidisciplinary field of study, for assimilation into professional practice, self-directed research and/or lifelong learning. This was established in 2016 through Republic Act No. 10912 in order to develop the work and knowledge of our Filipino professionals. Continuing Professional Development is inevitably an important practice to improve outcomes, skills, and knowledge of professionals. This process is relevant in the advancement of an individual's profession as it develops the standards and updates the competencies needed in their field of work.

However, in 2017, more than fifty thousand professionals signed a petition to review the implementation of R.A. 10912 as the mandatory requirement caused unnecessary distress for professionals to comply with the obligations under the law. Programs, seminars, and talks are reported to be exceptionally expensive. Such programs range from two thousand pesos (PhP 2,000) to roughly twenty thousand pesos (PhP 20,000) or more depending on the duration of the seminar, the nature of the topic, and mainly is dependent on the private CPD providers.

Several articles have already reported actual accounts of different professionals and their experience of costly and inefficient CPD seminars. According to various reports, a particular incident happened in a seminar for civil engineers, where it was alleged that the engineers paid three thousand pesos (PhP 3,500) for the seminar yet there were so many participants who attended that the venue lacked chairs for all the participants. This ended with the participants, engineers and professionals all, having to sit on the floor. To add more insult to injury, no meals were provided for the duration of the seminar. With regards to the substance of the seminar, it was alleged that the topics tackled by the seminar were either not related to their profession or are topics which are so basic, containing information the participants already knew.

Other accounts of Filipino professionals in provinces emphasized that they have to shell out extra money for airfare, lodging, and transportation just to attend CPD seminars outside their region but are only offered few CPD units. This raises a serious problem regarding these accredited CPD providers if they are really able to provide significant learning or if it is only becoming a money-making scheme that abuses our professionals' pockets and opportunities.

It has been apparent that Filipino professionals are troubled with spending more and going beyond their budget. These seminars serve as a burden for Filipino professionals and instead hinder their productivity, especially for those with low wages and those who cannot practice their professions due to financial needs. Professionals lack financial support and would need assistance in fulfilling the units prescribed by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC). It is also important to note that different private CPD providers have not been effectively monitored in terms of price and quality of offered programs. Other than expenses, CPD also brings a burden to time. According to a report by Rappler, nurses have also shared their plight with CPD. Due to long work shifts, nurses cannot afford to attend CPD seminars not only because of financial constraints but also due to the length and duration of the seminars available.

In the same report, most nurses are already required by their employing hospitals to attend trainings and seminars for at least forty-eight (48) hours a year if they want to keep their contracts. Particularly, the National Kidney and Transplant Institute provides training sessions for free, but these sessions are not accredited by the Professional Regulation Commission. These are all legitimate concerns by Filipino professionals as some trainings made and given to professionals are put to waste. It is ironic that costly and irrelevant seminars are accredited by the PRC but free seminars and trainings by institutions for the development of their workers are often disregarded and not considered as "professional development."

Overall, it seemed that the pursuit of professional development became self-defeating and has created an apparent inequality across professionals. Although there is no doubt that the goal of our CPD program would greatly improve skills of professionals, its current implementation only serves to be a need for quantity rather than quality.

According to the online petition by professionals "the CPD Law only made the process very costly, more bureaucratic and unnecessary regulative." There are different mandated CPD units depending on the profession and divergent processes of accreditation of units. Even the accreditation of Master's and Doctorate degrees must be filed not later than five years from the completion of said degrees. This undermines and poses a question if degrees completed before the ratification of RA 10912 will still be considered as CPD units. Thus, the PRC has not been clear as to how CPD is interpreted and implemented. It is problematic that the PRC seemed to be inconsistent in its implementation despite its various guidelines and lacked the necessary oversight in monitoring professional development.

RA 10912 mandated Continuing Professional Programs for Filipino professionals. However, the program albeit with good intentions, serve only as added unnecessary and abusive burdens to our professionals in acquiring and renewing their licenses. It poses a problem with regard time, access to seminars, financial capacity, and quality of learning of the Filipino professionals. It also disregards the problem of unemployment and the absence of standardization of processes and practices involved in CPD. It has even turns a blind eye to the numerous reports of abuses and overpricing of several accredited CPD providers. Real professional development was not reached and was watered down due to costs and inefficient service delivery. Ultimately, the Professional Regulation Commission pursued minimal changes to improve the implementation of the law. It did not remedy the problem of access, affordability and quality of the programs.

It is the duty of the state to improve the quality of work of its citizens. However, this must be done in accordance to their needs. Although continuing professional development is necessary, taking due consideration of the capacities and capabilities of the Filipino professionals are equally important. RA 10912 failed to acknowledge these aspects and must be discontinued as it was proven to be more of an inconvenience than an advancement. The state must look into better measures in the pursuit of professional development and at the same time give credence to the woes of our Filipino professionals.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.



BERNADETTE HERRERA-DY

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Section 1. *Repeal of the Law.* Republic Act No. 10912, An Act Mandating and Strengthening the Continuing Professional Development Program for All Regulated Professions, Creating the Continuing Professional Development Council, And Appropriating Funds Therefor, And for Other Related Purposes also known as “Continuing Professional Development Act Of 2016” is hereby repealed. This includes the memorandums and issuances by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and the Professional Regulation Boards (PRB) for each profession.

Section 2. *Establishment of a Multi-stakeholder Review Committee.* The Committee shall be established to review the problems faced in the implementation of RA 10912, to gather good practices of professional organizations, and to recommend next steps in promoting continuous development of Filipino professionals by producing a detailed report of findings that reflect the needs of each sector. Adopting a multi-sectoral approach, the Committee shall be composed of representatives from the different sectors, the Professional Regulation Commission, the Professional Regulation Boards, Accredited Integrated Professional Organization or the Accredited Professional Organization (AIPO/APO) in a given profession, the academe, private CPD providers, private firms and corporations, hospitals, and civil society professionals from each field other than the direct representative of the AIPO/APO of each profession.

Section 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Professional Regulation Commission, in consultation with appropriate government agencies and other stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act.

Section 4. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Section 5. *Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette and at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,