



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 7745

Introduced by Representative Jose Enrique S. Garcia III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Infrastructures already existing in the country such as the interconnecting highways; railway in Luzon; seaports in Subic, Mariveles, Aurora, and Manila; and airports in Subic, Clark and Manila, when integrated and optimized effectively and efficiently with vast idle lands nearby, and utilized gainfully by the special economic zones shall accommodate the development of our national economy. The interconnecting infrastructures could serve as an economic engine of growth for Central Luzon to promote and encourage entrepreneurship and to create various jobs and business opportunities for the Filipino people.

Moreover, because of the global accessibility and direct access of these transportation hubs to domestic and foreign markets, economic activities must not be highly concentrated in Metro Manila. With the establishment of Regional Investment and Infrastructure Coordinating Hub of Central Luzon, Metro Manila will be decongested, as industries and populations will be dispersed to other locations in Central Luzon by granting incentives thereto, thereby helping solve Metro Manila's long standing traffic and congestion problem.

The development of special economic zones in the areas of Central Luzon through the Regional Investment and Infrastructure Coordinating Hub must, thus, be encouraged, as this will create business and job opportunities for the Filipino workers. This is in line with the government's policy to encourage, promote, induce, and accelerate a sound and balanced industrial, economic, and social development of the country.


REP. JOSE ENRIQUE S. GARCIA III
Second District, Bataan



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AN ACT
CREATING THE REGIONAL INVESTMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
COORDINATING HUB OF CENTRAL LUZON AND PROVIDING
FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Regional*
2 *Investment and Infrastructure Coordinating Hub of Central Luzon.*”

3 **SEC. 2. Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote
4 enabling policies and programs that encourage entrepreneurship and investments
5 in tourism, agriculture, and commercial enterprises that, in turn, will create jobs and
6 business opportunities, increase capital flow, release dormant capital, and create
7 inclusive wealth.

8 The State recognizes the indispensable role of the private sector and the
9 importance of establishing special economic or freeport zones in suitable and
10 strategic locations and further strengthening the Bases Conversion Development
11 Authority (BCDA), the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), the Clark
12 Development Corporation (CDC), the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport
13 Authority (APECO), the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan (AFAB), the
14 Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), and the Tourism Infrastructure and
15 Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) through measures that effectively attract foreign
16 and domestic investments.

Pursuant to this policy, infrastructure development and organization of the interconnecting highways, railways, seaports, and airports in Central Luzon must be maximized to encourage capital flow, effectively address bottlenecks and decongest Metro Manila, lay the foundation for long-term growth of Central Luzon, and increase the productivity of the people and their individual and family income, thereby improving the quality of life.

SEC. 3. Purposes. – This Act shall have the following purposes:

(a) To develop policies and programs that promote entrepreneurship and attract investments, thus creating more jobs and business opportunities for the people;

(b) To decongest Metro Manila by dispersing industries and population to Central Luzon;

(c) To improve the quality of life by developing sustainable communities where residents live near where they work and where institutions such as schools and universities, hospitals, utilities, among others, are within close proximity;

(d) To optimize the use of the interconnecting highways and railways in Central Luzon; seaports in Subic, Mariveles, Aurora, and Manila; and airports in Subic, Clark, and Manila to serve as an investment corridor for Central Luzon and eventually, the whole country;

(e) To act as a catalyst for unleashing dormant capital into productive investments in infrastructure and industries within Central Luzon;

(f) To establish a platform that will encourage the local government units (LGUs) to partner with existing special economic or freeport zones in Central Luzon, that shall encourage the private and public sectors to establish other special economic or freeport zones and provide incentives to attract and maximize investments in infrastructure, from local and foreign business investors, resulting in numerous economic livelihood and employment opportunities for the people;

(g) To strengthen the culture of cooperation and improve coordination among the national government, the LGUs, and the private sector;

(h) To encourage business investments that are focused, fast, friendly, flexible, and forward-looking, thus ensuring these to be self-sustaining, income-generating, and revenue-contributing entities, with the integration of the BCDA, SBMA, CDC, AFAB, APECO, PEZA, and TIEZA with the Regional Investment and Infrastructure Coordinating Hub of Central Luzon (RICH), adhering to the principle of global competitiveness;

(i) To encourage the creation of sustainable and industrial cities and communities that balance economic growth and expansion, having regard to

environmental protection and preservation, thereby balancing economic progress and future developments; and

(j) To cause the updating of comprehensive land use plans, in coordination with the LGUs within Central Luzon, incorporating the plans already created for the Subic-Clark-Tarlac area for a more cohesive and harmonious Central Luzon Master Development Plan.

SEC 4. Regional Investment and Infrastructure Coordinating Hub. – There is hereby created, under the supervision of the Office of the President of the Philippines, a Regional Investment and Infrastructure Coordinating Hub of Central Luzon, hereinafter referred to as “RICH”, which shall replace the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council (SCADC). The powers of the RICH, as mentioned in Section 5 of this Act, shall be vested and exercised by the Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board, which shall be composed of twelve (12) members, as follows:

- (i) The President of the BCDA;
- (ii) The Chairperson and Administrator of the SBMA;
- (iii) The President of the CDC;
- (iv) The President of the APECO;
- (v) The Chairperson and Administrator of the AFAB;
- (vi) The Chairperson of the Regional Development Council of Region III;
- (vii) The Director-General of the PEZA;
- (viii) The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer of the TIEZA;
- (ix) One (1) representative of all the special economic or freeport zones from each of the provinces of Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, and Tarlac; and
- (x) One (1) representative of the private sector, appointed by the President of the Philippines.

Except for the member representing the private sector, the members of the Governing Board shall serve in an *ex officio* capacity. The Chairperson of RICH shall be appointed by the President, chosen among the *ex officio* members.

A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum to conduct day-to-day business. A member of the Board may authorize a representative to attend and vote in the members' behalf: *Provided*, That the authorization shall be in writing, duly signed by the member, and filed before the scheduled meeting, and shall be valid and effective for a period not longer than one (1) year at any one time.

Regular meetings shall be conducted by the Board no less than once a month. Notice, in writing, must be given three (3) days before the scheduled meeting.

The members of the Board shall be entitled to receive commensurate and reasonable *per diems*, as may be determined by the Department of Budget and

1 Management (DBM): *Provided*, That the *per diems* collected per month shall not
2 exceed the equivalent of four (4) meetings, except in cases of extraordinary
3 circumstances.

4
5 **SEC. 5. Powers and Functions.** – The RICH, through its Board, shall be
6 vested with the following powers and functions:

7 (a) To develop and facilitate the construction of infrastructure projects
8 particularly those that enhance national competitiveness and create employment
9 and business opportunities;

10 (b) To develop feasibility studies supported by necessary technical,
11 engineering, and commercial viability assessment for regional infrastructure
12 projects;

13 (c) To promote the establishment of special economic or freeport zones, and
14 other development programs and projects in Central Luzon;

15 (d) To require the submission by the LGUs of their respective recent or
16 updated comprehensive land use plans, as well as the land use plans already
17 existing for the Subic-Clark-Tarlac area and in consultation with all stakeholders, to
18 evaluate, formulate, coordinate, and communicate a Comprehensive and Integrated
19 Plan for Central Luzon, in accordance with Section 8 of this Act;

20 (e) To administer all fiscal and non-fiscal incentives provided in this Act and,
21 including the Foreign Investments Law, the Omnibus Investments Code, the
22 Philippine Economic Zone Act of 1995, and the Bases Conversion and Development
23 Act of 1992;

24 (f) To formulate clear, consistent, and predictable regulations, for the grant of
25 registration agreements, permits, licenses, or clearances for infrastructure projects,
26 investments, business enterprises initiated through the RICH, in accordance with
27 this Act and subject to the compliance with the provisions of the Local Government
28 Code;

29 (g) To identify and include areas outside the jurisdiction of any special
30 economic or Freeport zone, and which cannot be placed within the ambit of the
31 jurisdiction of any special economic or freeport zone, as certified by the special
32 economic or freeport zone near the identified areas; to consolidate, merge,
33 purchase, develop, and create the same, with the consent of the affected LGUs, into
34 special economic or freeport zones, new industrial townships, commercial and retail
35 developments, agro-industrial zones, and the like;

36 (h) To construct, acquire, own, lease, operate and maintain, on its own or
37 through contract, franchise, license, permit, public-private partnership, build-

1 operate-transfer or joint venture, the required utilities and infrastructure facilities,
2 including additional roads, bridges, airports, seaports, railroads, subways, and to fix
3 just and reasonable rates, fares, charges and other prices therefor;

4 (i) To coordinate and assist existing special economic or freeport zones in
5 the implementation of cross border projects along and within the Central Luzon
6 economic corridor pursuant to the objectives of the RICH;

7 (j) To generate its own revenues from the license, application, filing, and
8 registration fees, administrative and regulatory fees, and invest its funds and other
9 assets, as it may deem proper;

10 (k) To raise and borrow the necessary funds from local and international
11 financial institutions and to issue bonds, promissory notes, and other securities,
12 subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Finance (DOF) and
13 the Monetary Board of the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* (BSP) and to secure the
14 same by guarantee, pledge, mortgage, deed of trust or assignment of properties;

15 (l) To enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every class, kind
16 and description which are necessary or incidental to the realization of this Act with
17 any person, firm or corporation, private or public, or with foreign government entities,
18 upon prior approval by the President of the Philippines;

19 (m) To formulate plans, programs and policies and provide assistance, and
20 coordinate with the concerned department or agency, if necessary, on any matter
21 of policy and ensure compliance therewith;

22 (n) To promote the RICH and the Central Luzon Investment Corridor to local
23 and international investors;

24 (o) To create a coordinating council per province to oversee the operations
25 of the businesses and investments established within their respective provinces and
26 such other functions, as may be delegated by a majority vote of the Board: *Provided,*
27 That, the Council shall submit a quarterly report, in writing, to the Board containing
28 the progress of the province and such other matters, as may be directed by the
29 Board: *Provided, further,* That the Council shall be composed of the Provincial
30 Governor and two (2) private sector members appointed and chosen by majority
31 vote of the members of the Board, from among five (5) individuals recommended by
32 the Provincial Governor, with the following minimum qualifications:

33 (i) A bona-fide resident of the concerned province; and

34 (ii) At least three (3) years of experience in management, planning and
35 finance;

36 (p) To establish subsidiaries and serve as holding company of such
37 subsidiaries, if necessary, and as approved by the Board;

- 1 (q) To exercise the right of eminent domain;
- 2 (r) To adopt, implement, and enforce ecological and environmental standards
3 and measures for environmental pollution control and management;
- 4 (s) To strengthen and coordinate all existing security and firefighting forces
5 already established within Central Luzon and in existing special economic or
6 freeport zones, and formulate and implement measures to ensure the safety and
7 preservation of peace and order within Central Luzon;
- 8 (t) To establish a "One-Stop Shop" in every province of Central Luzon to
9 promote focused, fast, friendly, flexible, and forward-looking registration and
10 operation of businesses and investments;
- 11 (u) To encourage and assist in the use of alternative dispute resolution
12 strategies such as mediation, conciliation, arbitration, or any combination thereof as
13 a means of achieving speedy and efficient means of resolving disputes in
14 accordance with Republic Act No. 9285, otherwise known as the "Alternative
15 Dispute Resolution Act of 2004";
- 16 (v) To coordinate and regulate utilities within the existing special economic or
17 freeport zones and those created under this Act; and
- 18 (w) To promulgate rules and regulations and perform such other powers and
19 functions as may be necessary, appropriate, or incidental to this Act.

20 **SEC. 6. Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer.** – A Chairperson and Chief
21 Executive Officer (CEO) shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines, who
22 shall be chosen from among a list of three (3) individuals, by a majority vote of the
23 Board: *Provided*, That the incumbent Executive Director of the SCADC shall hold
24 over until the Chairperson and CEO shall have been chosen and qualified: *Provided*,
25 *further*, That the recommended individuals chosen by the Board shall have at least
26 five (5) years of work experience in infrastructure development, finance,
27 administration, or management.

28 The Chairperson and CEO shall have the following powers and functions:

- 29 (a) To administer and manage the business affairs of the RICH;
- 30 (b) To lead in the development and improvement of the RICH and the Central
31 Luzon Investment Corridor Master Plan, as approved by the Board;
- 32 (c) To promote commercial, tourism, and agriculture enterprises within
33 Central Luzon including existing special economic or freeport zones, to encourage
34 more investments and production, for domestic and international markets;
- 35 (d) To ensure that regulations established by the RICH are enforced and
36 implemented;

1 (e) To coordinate primary dispute settlements and resolutions within the
2 special economic or freeport zones, including labor disputes, in order to address
3 local disputes and prevent strikes or lockouts;

4 (f) To encourage LGUs to provide incentives to private sectors and entities
5 who decide to relocate from Metro Manila to the special economic or freeport zones
6 under the RICH; and

7 (g) To exercise such other powers and perform such other functions as
8 delegated or assigned by a majority vote of the Board.

9 **SEC. 7. *Central Luzon Investment Corridor Master Plan.*** – Immediately within
10 one hundred eighty (180) days upon the effectivity of this Act, the Board shall
11 develop the Central Luzon Investment Corridor Master Plan (Master Plan) through
12 the active participation of all stakeholders in planning and implementing the creation
13 and continuous operation of an aggregation of special economic or freeport zones
14 within Central Luzon.

15 The Master Plan shall include the provision of low-cost housing facilities
16 within the special economic or freeport zones to provide comfortable and livable
17 homes that are easily accessible by non-motorized means of transportation.

18 The Master Plan shall be approved upon a majority vote of the Board, which
19 shall contain a long-term strategy and their commitment to implement the Master
20 Plan. The Master Plan shall not be subject to frequent policy changes unless for key
21 changes essential to further improve the productivity within the area.

22 **SEC. 8. *Responsibilities of the Local Government Units and Other***
23 ***Stakeholders.*** – The Master Plan shall be implemented by the RICH, through its
24 Board, and it shall be the overall coordinating body in the implementation of the
25 Master Plan, specifically for projects with cross border locations in established
26 special economic or freeport zones. The RICH shall coordinate and partner with
27 LGUs in formulating, implementing, and promoting the Master Plan. The LGUs shall
28 be responsible in coordinating with the Department of Environment and Natural
29 Resources (DENR) for providing the zoning and the comprehensive land use plan
30 for the region. The LGUs shall assist in the identification and conversion of lands in
31 Central Luzon and shall be encouraged to provide incentives to entities such as
32 local tax incentives and streamlining of business permits applications, processing
33 and approval.

34 The LGUs shall, in close coordination with the Department of Public Works
35 and Highways (DPWH) and other concerned departments, ensure that all highways,
36 railways, airports, and seaports are in good condition and properly maintained.

37 The LGUs, in coordination with registered entities, shall be encouraged to
38 construct low-cost housing, in partnership with the Pag-IBIG Fund, within Central
39 Luzon to provide housing facilities with access to power, clean water and sewerage

1 systems to workers and their families to provide them with a comfortable and livable
2 work-life balance, at the same time decongesting Metro Manila and improving the
3 traffic condition.

4 Private entities shall be responsible for providing investments and
5 infrastructure within Central Luzon which shall observe international best practices
6 in industrial operations while complying with existing laws, rules and regulations,
7 including those intended for environmental preservation, and protection to labor.
8 Private entities may propose their own plans as long as these are in accordance
9 with the Master Plan, as described in Section 7 of this Act. The entities shall
10 construct low-cost housing or condominium facilities with access to electric power,
11 clean water and sewerage systems for their workers and their families, in
12 partnership with the Pag-IBIG Fund, which shall extend housing loans to qualified
13 members availing of the housing facilities.

14 In the province of Bataan, the responsibilities of the LGUs mandated in the
15 preceding paragraphs shall be carried out and implemented through the Metro
16 Bataan Development Authority (MBDA) created under *Sangguniang Panlalawigan*
17 Ordinance No. 9 dated November 29, 2013, to optimize cooperation and ensure a
18 seamless integration and complementary execution of development initiatives both
19 in the province and in Central Luzon. The MBDA shall likewise continue coordinating
20 and implementing province-wide programs and services and exercise all other
21 powers and functions granted by Ordinance No. 9.

22 **SEC. 9. Registration and Availment of Incentives.** – Upon the effectivity of
23 this Act, any person, firm, association, partnership, corporation, or any other form of
24 business organization, regardless of nationality, control, or ownership of the working
25 capital thereof, who wishes to be a registered entity under the RICH may apply for
26 registration, in accordance with the Constitution, existing laws on tax incentives, and
27 such other rules and regulations.

28 All activities and investments under the Investment Priorities Plan (IPP) and
29 registered through the RICH, whether located inside or outside special economic or
30 freeport zones, including tourism-related activities, may only be granted incentives
31 under this Act.

32 **SEC. 10. Tax Incentives.** – The RICH may administer tax incentives in
33 accordance with Executive Order No 226, or the Omnibus Investments Code,
34 Republic Act No. 7916, as amended, and other existing laws on tax incentives.

35 **SEC. 11. Existing Registered Enterprises.** – Enterprises registered with the
36 PEZA, TIEZA, CDC, SBMA, APECO, and AFAB under existing laws, rules and
37 regulations shall continue to be entitled to the incentives under similar terms and
38 conditions provided therein. The registered enterprise may also register with the
39 RICH and shall be qualified to avail of the incentives provided herein, in accordance

1 with existing laws, rules and regulations and other rules and regulations as may be
2 determined by the RICH.

3 The provision of any law to the contrary notwithstanding, the CDC, SBMA,
4 APECO, and AFAB shall continue to exercise the power to grant and administer the
5 tax incentives provided for in their respective charters.

6 **SEC. 12. *Revocation of Registration Agreement.*** – The Board may
7 automatically revoke the Registration Agreement of any entity who violates any of
8 the RICH rules and regulations, including submitting false or fraudulent documents,
9 declaring any false material information in connection with its application, or any
10 other act as may be determined by the Board, and upon substantial proof. For
11 purposes of this Act, “Registration Agreement” shall refer to the final agreement
12 executed by the RICH and the registered entity setting forth the terms and conditions
13 for the latter’s operation of business or economic activity.

14 **SEC. 13. *One-Stop Shop.*** – Upon the effectivity of this Act and the joint
15 promulgation of a memorandum of agreement between the RICH and other
16 investment promotion agencies in Central Luzon, a “One-Stop Shop” shall be
17 established for enterprises who wish to be registered and are registered with PEZA,
18 TIEZA, CDC, SBMA, APECO, AFAB, and RICH. The One-Stop Shop shall facilitate
19 the registration, operation and maintenance of enterprises in Central Luzon. The
20 RICH, PEZA, TIEZA, CDC, SBMA, APECO, AFAB and other appropriate
21 government agencies which are involved in registering, licensing, or issuing
22 Registration Agreements and other permits to investors shall coordinate and, if
23 necessary, assign a representative in every One-Stop Shop to attend to investors’
24 requirements and applications. The One-Stop Shop, in coordination with the
25 agencies, shall maintain an online database for all transactions, and shall act upon
26 all applications within three (3) business days upon completion and submission of
27 requirements.

28 For this purpose, a “One-Stop Shop” refers to a center established, in
29 accordance with this Act, where a single common site or location is designated for
30 all concerned agencies in the registration, licensure and issuance of permits to
31 enterprises who wish to register and operate within Central Luzon: *Provided*, That
32 each province shall establish its own One-Stop Shop to facilitate the ease of doing
33 business in the region.

34 **SEC. 14. *Eminent Domain.*** – The areas comprising the special economic or
35 freeport zones may be expanded or reduced when necessary, in accordance with
36 law. For this purpose, the RICH shall have the power to acquire, either by purchase,
37 negotiation or condemnation proceedings, any private land within or adjacent to the
38 Zones for:

39 (a) Consolidation of lands for zone development purposes and
40 infrastructure projects;

(b) Acquisition of right of way to the zones; and

(c) Protection of watershed areas and natural assets valuable to the prosperity of the zones.

SEC. 15. *Land Reclassification and Conversion.* – The Board may initiate the reclassification and conversion of agricultural lands for residential, commercial, industrial, and other nonagricultural purposes, in accordance with the comprehensive land use plans of the concerned LGUs and the Master Plan approved by the RICH, and subject to the provisions of laws and regulations on reclassification and conversion of agricultural lands. *Provided,* That the reclassification and conversion shall be initiated only based on a firm commitment to devote and utilize the land for the purpose immediately upon approval of the reclassification and conversion.

SEC. 16. *Presidential Land Grant.* – The provisions of any existing law to the contrary notwithstanding, the President of the Philippines may, upon the recommendation of the DENR Secretary, grant to the RICH by donation, sale, lease or otherwise, portions of land of the public domain as may be necessary for utilization or expansion of special economic or freeport zones in Central Luzon to increase the efficiency of its performance and achieve its purpose as an engine of growth for Central Luzon and the Philippines.

SEC. 17. *Coordination.* – The BCDA, SBMA, CDC, APECO, AFAB, PEZA, TIEZA, and the Board of Investments (BOI), as well as special economic or freeport zones which may thereafter be established in Central Luzon, shall be in close coordination with RICH, for purposes of domestic and foreign promotion, policy direction, and ease of doing business.

SEC. 18. *Utilities and Other Services.* – The RICH may undertake and regulate the operation and maintenance of utilities, such as electric power supply and such other services within Central Luzon and fix just and reasonable fees, rates, and charges and other forms of pricing in connection thereof, in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations, and without prejudice to any condition contained in a utility's Congressional franchise.

SEC. 19. *Capitalization.* – The RICH shall have an authorized capital stock of Two billion pesos (P2,000,000,000.00), divided into twenty thousand (20,000) no-par shares fully subscribed and paid for by the national government with: (a) assets which the President of the Philippines may transfer to the RICH as part of the equity contribution of the government; and (b) cash contribution by the government in such amount to be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 20. *Personnel.* – The Board shall provide for an organizational chart of officers and employees, as may be deemed necessary, in coordination with the

1 Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and fix a compensation plan consisting of
2 the salaries and benefits thereof: *Provided*, That the compensation plan shall be
3 comparable with the prevailing compensation plans in CDC, SBMA, APECO, AFAB,
4 TIEZA, and PEZA: *Provided, further*, That the compensation plan shall be subject
5 to review by the Board in no more than once every two (2) years.

6 **SEC. 21. *Legal Counsel.*** – Without prejudice to the hiring of an outside
7 counsel, the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC) shall be the *ex*
8 *officio* legal counsel of the RICH. In the event that highly specialized legal services
9 cannot be provided for by the OGCC as may be required, the services of an outside
10 counsel, whose compensation shall be approved by the Board, may be engaged
11 and no further consent or approval of the OGCC shall be required.

12 **SEC. 22. *Injunctions or Restraining Orders.*** – The implementation of the
13 provisions of this Act is of national interest. Thus, no project bidding and undertaking
14 in the implementation of the provisions of this Act shall be restrained or enjoined by
15 an injunction or restraining order except by the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

16 **SEC. 23. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Upon consultation with the
17 stakeholders, the RICH, through its Board and the DPWH, DBM, DTI, National
18 Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), DOF, Bureau of Internal Revenue
19 (BIR), Bureau of Customs (BoC), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and
20 Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), shall promulgate the
21 implementing rules and regulations of this Act within one hundred twenty (120) days
22 after its effectivity.

23 **SEC. 24. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
24 regulations or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of
25 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

26 **SEC. 25. *Separability Clause.*** – If any portion or provision of this Act is
27 declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected
28 thereby shall remain in force and effect.

29 **SEC. 26. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
30 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.