

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **8323**



Introduced by the Honorable Precious Hipolito Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It was shocking to hear that in a country with more than a hundred million population, only two are forensic pathologists. This was bared following the controversial death of Christine Dacera, a flight attendant who celebrated the New Year with her friends. The unexpected turn of events that led to the unfortunate death of Dacera had exposed the apparent lack of technical know-how of the Philippines in forensics.

Forensic Science is the application of scientific principles and techniques to matters of criminal justice especially as relating to the collection, examination, and analysis of physical evidence.¹ Forensic pathology, on the other hand, is a field of forensic science which involves application of pathological methods in investigation of a crime and of sudden, suspicious or unexplained deaths.²

Certainly, the dearth of forensic science experts contributes to the turtle-paced criminal justice system in the Philippines. It is high time that we invest on facilities and human resources to elevate the state of forensic science in the country.

Thus, it is the intent of this bill to establish the Philippine Forensic Science Institute (PFSI) to improve the capabilities of our country when it comes to forensic science. PFSI is proposed to be an attached agency of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

The immediate passage of this bill is most earnestly sought.


PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO

¹ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Forensic Science", accessed 11 January 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/forensic%20science>

² Forensic Science Service UK, accessed 11 January 2021, <https://www.fss.org.uk/forensic-pathology.html>

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE FORENSIC SCIENCE INSTITUTE AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be referred to as the “Philippine Forensic Science Institute Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to give priority to research and development, science and technology education, training, and services. Thus, the State shall support appropriate and self-reliant forensic science capabilities and their application to the country’s criminal investigation and justice system.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the Philippine Forensic Science Institute (PFSI).* – To carry out the above policy, the Philippine Forensic Science Institute is hereby established which shall be an attached agency of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

SEC 4. *Objectives.* – PFSI shall have the following objectives:

- (a) To provide state-of-the-art forensic science facilities and technology in the country;
- (b) To conduct relevant studies for the improvement of forensic science capabilities in the country; and
- (c) To create a deeper pool of forensic science experts in the country through the conduct of state-funded trainings and instruction.

SEC 5. *Functions.* – PFSI shall have the following functions:

- (a) To offer competent, reliable and independent scientific and technical services for the detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes;
- (b) To provide assistance whenever technical advice on matters of forensic science is warranted;
- (c) To conduct relevant studies in all fields of forensic science;
- (d) To offer degree and non-degree programs to aspiring forensic science experts;
- (e) To continuously train existing forensic science practitioners; and
- (f) To institutionalize the use of contemporary methods in handling and examining various types of forensic evidence in order to enhance and improve the administration of justice.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOST shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC 7. *Appropriations.* The Secretary of DOST shall immediately include in the Department's programs the operationalization of the PFSI, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,