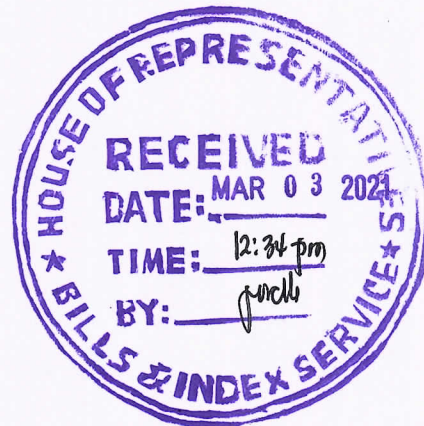




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Eighteenth Congress

Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 8875

Introduced by

HON. DATU ROONIE Q. SINSUAT, SR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 5, Article VI of the 1987 Constitution, in part, provides that :

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'(3) Each legislative district shall comprise, as far as practicable, contiguous, compact, and adjacent territory. *Each city with a population of at least two hundred fifty thousand, or each province, shall have at least one representative.*'

Cotabato City regards itself as 'the heart of Central Mindanao'. It was formerly a part and the regional center of Region XII, but due to the ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law in 2018, it is now part of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Being an independent component city, it is not, administratively, subject to regulation from the Provincial Government of Maguindanao where it is geographically located.

Cotabato City remains the commercial hub of central Mindanao. The strategic location of the city provides it with a natural role as a business and commercial center for surrounding areas. Because of this, it has become the fastest growing regional urban center in this part of Mindanao and one of the

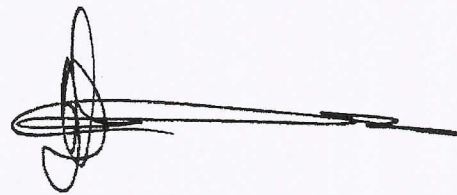
fastest growing cities in the Philippines. According to the 2015 census, it has a population of 299,438, making it the most populated city under the independent component city status.

Notwithstanding these characteristics, Cotabato City does not have its own representative in Congress and remains included in the First Legislative District of the Province of Maguindanao along with the municipalities of Barira, Buldon, Datu Blah Sinsuat, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Kabuntalan, Matanog, Northern Kabuntalan, Parang, Sultan Kudarat, Sultan Mastura and Upi.

This bill seeks to separate Cotabato City from the First Legislative District of the Province of Maguindanao to constitute the Lone Legislative District of Cotabato City. The establishment of Cotabato City as a lone congressional district will provide its constituents the opportunity to avail of resources from the government for their own, in turn bring forth greater impetus for economic growth. More importantly, the proposed measure is in accord with the afore-quoted constitutional mandate.

This bill was originally filed by Representative Bai Sandra Sema in the 15th, 16th and 17th Congresses, but due to lack of material time, the measure was never passed into law. It is the hope of Cotabateños that the time has arrived for the realization of a long-awaited aspiration.

For the foregoing reasons, the immediate consideration and passage of this bill is earnestly urged.

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a stylized, circular flourish on the left and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

HON. DATU ROONIE Q. SINSUAT, SR
1ST DISTRICT, MAGUINDANAO



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House of Representatives
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HON. DATU ROONIE Q. SINSUAT, SR.

AN ACT
SEPARATING COTABATO CITY FROM THE FIRST LEGISLATIVE
DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF MAGUINDANAO TO CONSTITUTE
THE LONE DISTRICT OF COTABATO CITY

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

SECTION 1. Lone Legislative District – Cotabato City is hereby separated from the First Legislative District of the Province of Maguindanao to constitute the Lone Legislative District of Cotabato City.

SECTION 2. Incumbent Representative – The incumbent Representative of the First Legislative District of the Province of Maguindanao shall continue to represent the City of Cotabato until the new Representative of the Lone District of Cotabato City shall have been duly elected and qualified in the succeeding congressional elections from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 3. *Rules and Regulations* - The Commission on Elections shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations within thirty (30) days after the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 4. *Repealing Clause* - All laws, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved.