

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1658



---

Introduced by Representative Roman T. Romulo

---

**AN ACT**  
**PENALIZING ANY PERSON PROVIDING OR POSSESSING CONTRABAND AND THOSE WHO**  
**SHALL AID OR ABET THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SAME INSIDE ANY PRISON FACILITY**  
**ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFORE**  
**AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Despite existing regulations prohibiting the trade and possession of contrabands in our different correctional facilities, the menacing activity of contraband hoarding and the seeming ineptitude of prison authorities to put an end to this activity still plague our penal system.

The series of raids conducted by the Department of Justice together with the agents of the National Bureau of Investigation and the officers of the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor), the Philippine National Police, and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency proved that the New Bilibid Prison has become a hub of continuing criminality. In December 2014, authorities uncovered a cache of high-powered firearms and cash in the felons' quarters. Convicts, particularly high-profile drug dealers, also enjoy some amenities of private individuals like air-conditioned rooms with TV sets, Wi-Fi, refrigerators, Jacuzzis and sauna, hi-tech entertainment systems, concert equipment, aquariums, bar and kitchen and back-up power generators. They also sported pricey watches, and had wads of cash in their pockets, as if they were living in plush subdivisions and not in the national penitentiary.

Another publicized raid in November of 2015 revealed similar results wherein guns, bladed weapons, luxury items, and substantial amounts of money were found in the

possession of inmates. The most recent raid conducted by the authorities last May still proved that contrabands are still rampant inside our national penitentiary. The proliferation of these contraband items inside our prisons appear to have been unaffected by the so-called "Oplan Galugad" of the BuCor.

The supposed heavy constraints and policing, stringent inspection, and eminent police presence inside the national penitentiary proved not to deter the temerity and boldness of inmates in hoarding, using and generating lots of money in contrabands.

The seeming continued proliferation of contraband in prison is an appalling show of contempt for our justice system, whose main purpose is to reform and rehabilitate inmates for their eventual return to society. When a convicted criminal is still exposed to the very objects that had caused his incarceration, he resists reformation. Indeed, it would be difficult for an inmate to feel some remorse considering that he still has the comforts of home even when he is behind bars.

This proposal patterned after Title 18, Part I Chapter 87 of the U.S. Code Series of 1791, aims to put a stop to the shenanigans happening inside our prison facility by penalizing those who would provide, assist, aid or abet in the introduction of any prohibited object or contraband inside a prison facility, along with the inmate who makes, possesses or obtains or attempts to make or obtain the same inside the prison facility, and imposing a stiff penalty for its commission.

A stiff penalty is required in this circumstance in order to instill fear and be an effective deterrence to those contemplating of doing this crime in the future. More importantly, the said penalty applies as well to government officials or employees who cooperate or co-opt with the inmate or other private persons involved therein.

Not only will the government officials and employees suffer the same penalty, but they shall also suffer the additional punishment of perpetual absolute disqualification from holding a public office and forfeiture of all retirement benefits and all accrued leave credits. Thus, these people will have to rethink getting involved in the said crime or desist from doing it.

It is for this purpose that the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



**ROMAN T. ROMULO**  
Lone District, Pasig City

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS**  
*First Regular Session*

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1658**

---

**Introduced by Representative Roman T. Romulo**

---

**AN ACT**  
**PENALIZING ANY PERSON PROVIDING OR POSSESSING CONTRABAND AND THOSE WHO**  
**SHALL AID OR ABET THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SAME INSIDE ANY PRISON FACILITY**  
**ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFORE**  
**AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1       **SECTION 1. Title.** This Act shall be known as the *“Anti-Contraband in Prison Act of*  
2 *2022”*.

3  
4       **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** The maintenance of peace and order, the protection  
5 of life, liberty and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the  
6 enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy. To implement this policy, the State  
7 is mandated to enact laws aimed at achieving a just and orderly society governed by rules and  
8 regulations made applicable to all and not just to a chosen few. Recent inspections in our  
9 penal facilities including the New Bilibid Prisons show that some inmates incarcerated in our  
10 penal institutions continue to enjoy the luxuries they were accustomed to while they were  
11 outside the prison compound. To remedy this seeming inequity and to truly implement the  
12 thrust of one of the five pillars of our justice system, a mechanism for the effective  
13 implementation of the goal of the said pillars i.e., reformation, should be instituted. Towards  
14 this end, the State shall strictly monitor and regulate the ingress/egress of any person in any  
15 prison facility and provide the appropriate sanction to be imposed on any person found to be  
16 violating the rules set forth herein.

17  
18       **SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.** As used in this section:

1 (1) "Person" shall refer to natural persons and shall include private individuals as well  
2 as government/public official or employee in cahoots with the prisoner;

3  
4 (2) "Prison" means a correctional detention or penal facility or any prison, institution,  
5 or facility under the control and supervision of the Department of Justice (DOJ) in  
6 which persons are held in custody for violation of law or commission of a felony;

7  
8 (3) "Firearms" "Ammunition" and "Explosive or Incendiary Device" shall have the same  
9 meaning, as that provided for in accordance with *Republic Act 10591*, otherwise  
10 known as the "*Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulations Act*" and  
11 *Section 3 of Presidential Decree 1866 as amended by Republic Acts 8294 and 9516*;

12  
13 (4) "Dangerous Drugs" shall have the same meaning as that provided for in *Republic*  
14 *Act 9165*, otherwise known as the "*Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002*"  
15 and all other illegal substances prohibited therein including but not limited to  
16 Ecstasy, Methamphetamine Hydrochloride or Shabu and other drugs producing  
17 similar effects;

18  
19 (5) "Prohibited Object or Contraband" means –

- 20  
21 (A) a firearm, incendiary device or dangerous drugs as defined herein;  
22 (B) ammunition, weapon or an object that is designed or intended to be used as  
23 a weapon or to facilitate the detained persons escape from prison;  
24 (C) any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage;  
25 (D) any money whether Philippine or Foreign denominated currency;  
26 (E) a cell phone, laptop computer, accessories thereof, or any device used for  
27 purposes of communicating with the outside world for commercial purposes  
28 including signal jammers to prevent the authorities from determining their  
29 use of the aforementioned devices;  
30 (F) luxury items such as but not limited to electronic devices, jewelry or any other  
31 objects of such nature that should otherwise not be found inside the penal  
32 institution, and  
33 (G) any other object that threatens the order, discipline, or security of a prison,  
34 or the life health, or safety of an individual detained therein.

35  
36 **SECTION 4. Registration Requirement.** All persons desiring to visit his/her relative  
37 detained in any prison facility shall, before or during the actual visit, prepare and accomplish  
38 before any prison official in charge of manning the entrance of the said facility a registration  
39 form which shall contain the following information:  
40

(a) Full name and complete address of the visitor who shall be accompanied by any of the following documents, to wit:

1. A Valid Identification Card with photograph;
2. A Valid Passport;
3. Driver's License;
4. Social Security System Identification Card;
5. Company Identification Card;
6. Government Service Insurance System identification card;
7. Voter's Identification Card;
8. Senior's Citizen Card;
9. School Identification Card; or
10. National Identification Card

(b) His/her relationship to the person to be visited;

(c) The things or objects he/she is bringing to the person to be visited; and

(d) Unless related to the detained person or the latter's counsel of record, the purpose of said visit.

**SECTION 5. *Prohibited Acts.*** Any person who commits any of the following prohibited acts shall be punished in accordance with the preceding section –

(A) In violation of any law or any rules and regulations issued in relation thereto or any rules and regulations implemented by prison authorities of the penal facility, provides to an inmate of a prison any prohibited objects or contraband, or attempts to do so; or

(B) Assists, aids or abets in the procurement by an inmate of the prohibited objects or contraband defined herein; or

(C) Being an inmate of a prison makes, possesses or obtains, or attempts to make or obtain a prohibited object or contraband.

**SECTION 6. *Penal Provisions.*** (a) *For Failure to comply with the Registration Requirement:* Any person who shall commit a violation of Sec. 4 hereof shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment ranging from one (1) day to five (5) days or a fine of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000);

(b) *For violation of Sec 5 (A).* The penalty of imprisonment ranging from Twenty Years and One Day (20 years, 1 day) to Forty Years (40 years) and a fine of Ten Million Pesos

(P10,000,000.00) if the prohibited object or contraband involved is covered by Section 3 (5)(a)(b).

If the prohibited object or contraband involved is other than the abovementioned, the penalty shall be six years and one day (6 years, 1 day) to twelve years (12 years) and a fine of one million pesos (P1,000,000.00). These penalties shall be served consecutively after the service of sentence imposed by the court on the possession of the prohibited object or contraband.

(c) *For violation of Sec 5 B).* The penalty of imprisonment ranging from Twelve Years and One Day (12 years, 1 day) to Twenty Years (20 years) and a fine of Five Million Pesos (P5,000,000.00) if the prohibited object or contraband is covered by Sec 3(5)(a)(b). Otherwise, the penalty shall be six years and one day (6 years, 1 day) to twelve years (12 years) and a fine of one million pesos (P1,000,000.00).

(d) *For violation of Sec 5 (C).* The penalty of imprisonment ranging from Twenty Years and One Day (20 years, 1 day) to Forty Years (40 years) and a fine of Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00) if the prohibited object or contraband is covered by Sec 3(5)(a)(b). Otherwise, the penalty shall be six years and one day (6 years, 1 day) to twelve years (12 years) and a fine of one million pesos (P1,000,000.00) The said penalty shall be in addition to the original penalty to which the inmate was sentenced to serve.

If the offender is a public official or employee, he shall, in addition to the penalties herein provided, suffer the additional penalty of absolute perpetual disqualification from holding public office and the forfeiture of all his retirement benefits and accrued leave credits.

**SECTION 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the DOJ in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement its provisions.

**SECTION 8. Separability Clause.** If, for any reason, any provision or section of this Act shall be held to be unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions or sections hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

**SECTION 9. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation,

*Adopted,*