

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9822



Introduced by Hon. Julianne L. Baronda

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Stenographers are considered as the workhorse of the Courts. Court proceedings are recorded meticulously by stenographers with passion for correctness so that the Judge, the Prosecutor and all the contending parties will have the transcripts of stenographic notes exactly as it transpired.

In a short span of time, the need for stenographers in the three branches of the government became a necessity. Both the Legislative and the Judiciary have employed quite a number of stenographers. Their job descriptions do not vary while the level of trust and confidence given to them are also at its peak. The qualification standard for the Regional Trial Court (RTC) stenographers and even those at the Senate and the House of Representatives are likewise the same.

The law requires accurate recordings of all official legal proceedings in the courtroom. Open legal proceedings are an important part of our system in order to ensure transparency. To this end, court stenographers transcribe “word-for-word” everything that happens inside the courtroom.

It is for this reason that court stenographers are an indispensable part of our justice system. Any court proceeding cannot proceed without a stenographer, which by the nature of their duties, are considered as jack of all trades. They sometimes act as a utility worker, a docket clerk, an interpreter or even assigned as officer-in-charge of a branch.

In the early 2000s there was an abrupt increase in the number of criminal cases due to violation of Batas Pambansa Blg. 22 and R.A. No. 9165. Estafa cases and large-scale illegal recruitment also started to clog the court dockets. To reciprocate the increase in the number of cases, trial courts increased the number of cases calendared for a day which resulted to additional transcripts to be accomplished by stenographers within twenty (20) days from the last hearing date, otherwise, they might be charged administratively. Most stenographers do office works even on weekends.

The sudden change and deluge of cases affect the health of stenographers. Nerve problems already arise from prolonged use of their hands and eyes to do work with constant sitting in front of typewriters and computers.

As of this writing, the data released by the Supreme Court provide that more than two thousand (2,000) court stenographers are needed to fill up vacant positions all over the country. On the average, only two (2) court stenographers are working for a Regional Trial Court branch which should be entitled to four (4) while only one (1) is working for a Metropolitan Trial Court (MeTC) which should be entitled to three (3).

Unfortunately, while many changes are on-going on the dynamics of work for court stenographers, they have to be contented on the salary accorded to them under the Salary Standardization Law.

Truth be told, stenographers are not just skilled workers, they also possess the highest degree of discipline in the performance of their work. Hence, this representation believes that it is high time to increase the salary grade of court stenographers in order to reward them for their hard work and even lessen their burden and stress due to the workload they are given every day.

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



Rep. Julianne “Jam” L. Baronda
District Representative

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HOUSE BILL NO. 9822

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**AN ACT INCREASING THE SALARY GRADE FOR COURT STENOGRAPHERS
OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC) FROM SALARY GRADE 12 TO
SALARY GRADE 18, METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT/MUNICIPAL
TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MeTC/MTCC) FROM SALARY GRADE 10 TO
SALARY GRADE 15, AND MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT/MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT
TRIAL COURT/SHARI'AH CIRCUIT COURT (MTC/MCTC/SCC) FROM SALARY
GRADE 8 to SALARY GRADE 12**

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

SECTION 1. – *Short Title.* - This act shall be known as the “*Court Stenographers Pay Hike Act of 2024.*”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the state to pay just and equitable compensation to all government personnel, including court stenographers, in accordance with the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, in order to compensate these workers for the sudden increase of work assignments and to motivate these qualified and competent civil servants to stay working for the government.

SECTION 3. *Increase in the Salary Grade Level.* – The salary grade of court stenographers assigned in the Regional Trial Court shall not be lower than Salary Grade 18, Metropolitan Trial Court/Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MeTC/MTCC) shall not be lower than Salary Grade 15, and the Municipal Trial Court/Municipal Circuit Trial Court/Shari’ah Circuit Court shall not be lower than Salary Grade 12, with equivalent monthly salaries as prescribed under Republic Act No. 11466, otherwise known as the “Salary Standardization Law of 2019”.

SECTION 4. *Coverage.* – This Act shall apply to all court stenographers occupying positions whether regular, contractual or casual, now existing or hereafter created.

SECTION 5. *Appropriations.* – The funding necessary for the immediate implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall, within sixty (60) days after the approval of this Act, prepare and issue the necessary guidelines to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, issuances, and rules and regulations or parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 7. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation and the Official Gazette.