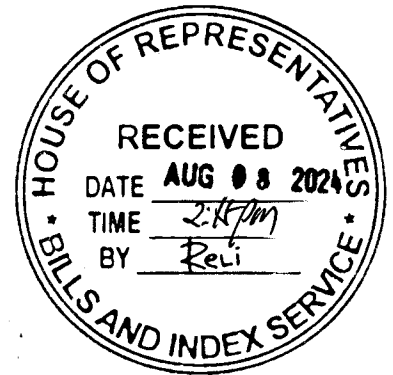


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10736



Introduced by: REPRESENTATIVE ARNULF BRYAN "ARNIE" B. FUENTEBELLA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State shall always ensure a quality, reliability, security and affordable supply of electric power in the country for the recovery, development and sustainability of the economy and ultimately for the protection of public interest.

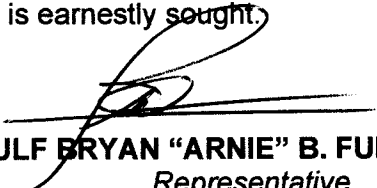
The Philippines' energy sector continues to be driven by its large population and rapidly growing economy. Primary energy supply comprises indigenous energy sources followed by net imported oil and coal. However, the self-sufficiency ratio remains at 50%, showing gaps in the country's ability to fulfill its energy needs despite the passage of the Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001.

It is then high time to revisit the EPIRA law to fill the gaps in the power energy requirements of the economy and of the consumers. The energy has become dynamic, with new players entering the market, providing us with more options; hence, the necessity of strengthening our regulatory functions. By granting them a modernized charter, we are empowering the ERC to foster healthy competition, to prevent monopolies, and encourage innovation.

The Filipino consumer deserves transparency, accountability, and fair treatment, which can only be done by giving the ERC a renewed charter to protect consumer rights, ensure reasonable rates, and swiftly address grievances.

The expansion and strengthening of the ERC is crucial in the performance of its regulatory functions, in coordination with the policy-making mandate of the Department of Energy (DOE), to cope with the rapid development and expansion of the energy sector vis-à-vis the abovementioned State Policy. As the stalwart guardian of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA), a commitment to the betterment of the ERC is a commitment to the future of energy.

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


ARNULF BRYAN "ARNIE" B. FUENTEBELLA
Representative
Fourth District, Camarines Sur

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 10736

Introduced by: REPRESENTATIVE ARNULF BRYAN "ARNIE" B. FUENTEBELLA

**AN ACT TO REFORM AND RESTRUCTURE
THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**

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

**CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Section 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the **"ERC Reform Act of 2024"**.

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - The State recognizes the significant role of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) in ensuring transparent and reasonable prices of electricity in a regime of free and fair competition and full public accountability to achieve greater operational and economic efficiency. Likewise, public interest demands the protection of consumers as they are affected by the rates and services of generation companies, electric utilities, and other electric power stakeholders. Towards this end, the State shall:

- a) Establish a strong, independent, transparent, and accountable regulatory body; and
- b) Institutionalize a system to ensure the efficient and effective performance of the functions and mandates of the regulatory body to enhance competitiveness in the electric power industry.

Sec. 3. *Scope.* - This Act shall enhance the existing powers, duties, functions, and governance mechanisms of the ERC to foster independence, transparency, and accountability.

Sec. 4. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the following words or terms shall have the following meaning, unless provided otherwise:

- a) "Commission" refers to the decision-making body of the ERC under Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, composed of one (1) Chairperson and four (4) Commissioners;

- b) "Consumer" refers to all captive and contestable customers who buy electricity either from a distribution utility, a retail electricity supplier, or a generation company;
- c) "Deliberation" refers to a communication between or among members of the Commission in a meeting: *Provided, That* a quorum exists;
- d) "Electric power industry participant" refers to any person or entity engaged in the generation, transmission, distribution, or supply of electricity;
- e) "Key ERC personnel" refers to employees who hold executive or managerial positions in the ERC;
- f) "Meeting" refers to a deliberation of the Commission with respect to any case, issue, or matter within its jurisdiction; and
- g) "Public hearing" refers to an official proceeding of a government agency during which the public is accorded the right to express its position on the subject matter at hand.

CHAPTER II

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION

Sec. 5. *The Commission.* - The Commission shall be composed of a Chairperson and four (4) members to be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Chairperson and the members of the Commission shall be natural-born citizens and residents of the Philippines, persons of good moral character, at least thirty-five (35) years of age, and of recognized competence in any of the following fields: energy, law, economics, finance, commerce, or engineering, with at least ten (10) year actual and distinguished experience in their respective fields of expertise: *Provided, That* out of the four (4) members of the Commission at least there shall be one (1) member of the Philippine Bar with at least ten (10) years experience in the active practice of law, and one (1) shall be a certified public accountant with at least ten (10) years experience in active practice, and one (1) licensed engineer with at least ten (10) years experience in active practice.

The Chairperson of the Commission shall act as the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission.

The Chairman shall hold office for seven (7) years without reappointment. Commissioners shall hold office for four (4) years and may be reappointed for only one term. Appointment to any vacancy shall be only for the unexpired term of the predecessor. In no case shall any Commissioner be appointed or designated in a temporary or acting capacity.

Members of the Commission shall enjoy security of tenure and shall not be suspended or removed from office except for just cause as specified by law.

Upon approval of this law, all positions in the ERC are deemed vacant, in preparation for the new organizational structure. The officers and employees of the ERC, in a hold-over capacity for a period of two (2) years, shall continue to perform their respective duties and responsibilities and receive the corresponding salaries and benefits, unless said official or employee is terminated, in accordance with applicable law.

The ERC shall submit to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) the proposed organizational restructuring provided herein within three (3) months from the effectivity of this Act.

The DBM shall approve the submitted proposed organizational restructuring within one (1) month from its receipt.

Every after five (5) years from the effectivity of this act, the ERC shall reassess its then organizational structure to determine if there is a need for further restructuring or reorganization, which may include additional services, divisions or personnel per division. The DBM shall approve any proposed organizational restructuring within one (1) month from its receipt thereof.

The Commission shall conduct an assessment of the fitness of the skills and capabilities of existing personnel on the basis of the results of such assessment, the Commission may implement such movement in personnel to establish the new organizational structure, in accordance with applicable laws, aligned with such personnel's capacity and performance; *Provided*, that the new position to which they were transferred to will be of the same rank and salary from its previous position without the necessity of reappointment. Affected employees may opt for voluntary separation from service within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act and shall be entitled to receive separation and early retirement benefits and other benefits under applicable laws and issuances within ninety (90) days from the date of effectivity of their separation.

Sec. 6. Requirements. - The members of the Commission shall, upon assumption of office:

- a) Publicly disclose any employment, consultancy, or any connection with, and any pecuniary interest in an electric power industry participant;
- b) Publicly disclose if his or her spouse, partner, and any relative by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth civil degree is employed or has a consultancy or any connection with, or has any pecuniary interest in an electric power industry participant;
- c) Divest through sale or legal disposition any and all interests in an electric power industry participant; and
- d) Terminate employment or consultancy with any electric power industry participant.

Sec. 7. Prohibited Acts. — The members of the Commission, within the duration of their term, are prohibited from:

- a) Taking up any employment or consultancy arrangement with any electric power industry participant;
- b) Holding any connection to and any pecuniary interest in an electric power industry participant;
- c) Holding any other office or employment; and
- d) Directly or indirectly practicing any profession, participating in any business, or be financially interested in any contract with, or any franchise, or special privileges granted by the government or any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality thereof, including government owned and controlled corporations or their subsidiaries.

After completion of term with the ERC, the Chairperson and members of the Commission shall be prohibited from accepting employment or appointment in any capacity with any regulated entity for a period of five (5) years following such completion. All members and employees of the commission shall be prohibited from appearing before the ERC for a period of three (3) years after said completion of term or termination of employment.

Any spouse, partner, and relative by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth civil degree of the members of the Commission are prohibited from:

- a) Taking up any employment or consultancy arrangement with an electric power industry participant during the incumbency of the member of the Commission to whom the spouse, partner, and relative concerned is related to;
- b) Holding any connection to and pecuniary interest in any electric power industry participant during the incumbency of the member of the Commission to whom the spouse, partner, and relative concerned is related to;
- c) Appearing as counsel or agent on any matter pending before the Commission or transacting business directly or indirectly therein during the incumbency of the member of the Commission to whom the spouse, partner, and relative concerned is related to, and within two (2) years from cessation of their service.

Sec. 8. *Duties and Responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer.* - The Chairperson of the Commission, acting as the Chief Executive Officer, shall have the following powers, functions and duties:

- a) To execute, administer and implement the policies and measures approved and adopted by the Commission;
- b) To directly administer and supervise the operations and day-to-day business activities of the Commission;
- c) To represent the Commission in all dealings with offices, agencies and instrumentalities of the government and with all persons and entities, public or private, domestic or foreign, unless otherwise directed by the Commission;
- d) To execute, on behalf of the Commission, all contracts, agreements and other instruments affecting the interests of the ERC duly approved by the Commission;
- e) To direct and supervise the preparation of the agenda for the meetings of the Commission;
- f) To preside at the meetings of the Commission; and
- g) To exercise such other powers, functions and duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Commission.

Sec. 9. *Duties and Responsibilities of the Members of the Commission.* - In addition to the functions enumerated in Republic Act. No. 9136, the members of the Commission shall:

- a) Regularly attend and actively participate in the meetings of the Commission where any case, issue, or matter within its jurisdiction is under consideration;
- b) Recommend to the Chairperson the inclusion in the agenda of any case, issue, or matter deemed appropriate in the performance of the Commission's functions;
- c) Be properly informed about and thoroughly analyze cases, issues, and matters pending before the Commission;
- d) Take part in continuous education and capacity building programs of the Commission to enhance technical competence;
- e) Abstain from acts which unduly influence, impede, or hamper the Executive Director or any ERC employee from effectively fulfilling his or her duties and responsibilities;
- f) Appoint the Executive Director of the ERC: *Provided*, That the requirements, qualifications, and duties and responsibilities stated in Sections 10 and 11 of this Act are complied with;
- g) Act on the selection and appointment of Key ERC Personnel: *Provided* That the selection process for Key ERC Personnel must be in accordance with ERC's Enhanced Merit Selection Plan and /or other plans related to personnel selection duly approved by the Commission;
- h) Review and act on the endorsement of the proposed ERC budget: *Provided*, That such endorsement must come from the Executive Director and must be substantiated with supporting documents;
- i) Initiate, *motu proprio* or upon formal complaint, investigations against the Executive Director and act upon these investigations: *Provided*, That such investigation is without prejudice to the filing of administrative or criminal cases against the Executive Director; and
- j) Perform in good faith and to the best of its ability the functions stated in Republic Act. No. 9136 and the duties and responsibilities specified in this Act.

CHAPTER III

ERC OPERATIONS

Sec. 10. *The Executive Director.* - The Commission, acting collectively, shall appoint an Executive Director who shall act as the Chief Executive Officer of ERC until resignation, retirement, or unless terminated earlier for cause. The Executive Director who shall be a CESO of the ERC, shall have relevant experience in any of the fields of law, economics, commerce, management, finance, or engineering for at least ten (10) years, and shall be subject to the same requirements and prohibitions as indicated in Sections 7 and 8 of this Act.

When an Executive Director who has rendered at least ten (10) years of service in such capacity retires, such Executive Director shall receive retirement benefits equivalent to the last salary plus representation and other allowances until the concerned Executive Director's death.

Sec. 11. *Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Director.* - The duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director shall include but shall not be limited to:

- a) Developing and proposing, for the Commission's approval, the operationalization of the strategies and policies agreed upon by the Commission;
- b) Effectively executing the approved operationalization of the strategies and policies agreed upon by the Commission;
- c) Leading the management of the daily operations of ERC in accordance with the plans and within the budget approved by the Commission;
- d) Assuming full responsibility for the overall supervision and control of all divisions, units, and services of the ERC;
- e) Assigning to each division, unit, and service of the ERC such duties that are considered necessary or expedient;
- f) Coordinating the workings of the divisions, units, and services of the ERC;
- g) Establishing a mechanism for capacity building for all employees of the ERC to continuously enhance technical competence: *Provided*, That such mechanism will be based on the principle of meritocracy;
- h) Ensuring compliance with the ERC's Enhanced Merit Selection Plan and other plans related to personnel selection duly approved by the Commission when it comes to the hiring and promotion of employees;
- i) Leading the management to ensure effective working relationships with the Commission by regularly communicating with the Chairperson to review key developments, issues, opportunities, and concerns;
- j) Ensuring that the management gives priority to providing documents and reports which contain relevant, accurate, timely, and clear information necessary for the Commission to fulfill its duties;
- k) Maintaining regular dialogue with the Commission while ensuring that the Commission, especially the Chairperson, is alerted to forthcoming complex, contentious, sensitive, or strategic issues facing the ERC;
- l) Advising the Commission on any matter referred to the Executive Director;
- m) Managing the affairs of the ERC in accordance with good corporate governance practices and procedures while promoting the highest standards of independence, transparency, integrity, and probity;
- n) Initiating investigations and recommending administrative sanctions against erring employees, without prejudice to the filing of any criminal action against the concerned employee;
- o) Regularly submitting to the Commission updates on the operations of ERC; and
- p) Performing such other duties as the Commission may assign.

All decisions of the Executive Director involving budgeting and disbursement of funds shall be subject to the approval of the Commission.

CHAPTER IV

FUNCTIONS OF THE ERC

Sec. 12. *Functions under Republic Act. No. 9136.* – The existing functions provided for in Section 43 of Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, are hereby retained, and additional functions thereto are provided in the preceding sections.

Sec. 13. *Amendment of the Philippine Grid Code and the Philippine Distribution Code.* – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate or amend, in coordination with the Department of Energy (DOE), and enforce, in accordance with law, the Philippine Grid Code and the Philippine Distribution Code which shall include, but not limited to the financial capability standards for the generating companies, the National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO), distribution utilities and suppliers: *Provided, further*, that such standards are set to ensure that the electric power industry participants meet the minimum financial standards to protect the public interest. determine, fix, and approve, after due notice and public hearings the universal charge, to be imposed on all electricity end-users pursuant to Section 34 of Republic Act. No. 9136.

Sec. 14. *Coordination with the Philippine Competition Commission.* – In line with the ERC's functions under Section 34 of Republic Act. No. 9136 to promote competition, encourage market development, ensure customer choice and penalize abuse of market power, the ERC shall coordinate with the Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) on the following:

- (a) Endorse for investigation to the PCC any acts of abuse of market power, cartelization, and anti-competitive or discriminatory behavior by any electric power industry participant. Should the PCC find that an electric power industry participant committed acts of abuse of market power, cartelization, and anti-competitive or discriminatory behavior, the ERC shall impose the fines and penalties provided for under this Act;
- (b) Inspect, on its own, through duly authorized representatives, or through the PCC, the premises, books of accounts and records of any person or entity at any time, in the exercise of its quasi-judicial power for purposes of determining the existence of any anticompetitive behavior and/or market power abuse and any violation of rules and regulations issued by the ERC; and
- (c) The PCC shall investigate any possible violation or non-compliance of this Section 45 of Republic Act. No. 9136. Based on the findings and recommendations of the PCC, the ERC shall determine whether such violation or non-compliance was committed and impose the corresponding fines and penalties.

For purposes of Section 45 of Republic Act. No. 9136 and this Act, control refers to the ability to substantially influence or direct the actions or decisions of an entity, whether by contract, agency or otherwise.

In determining the control of an entity, the Commission may consider the following: control is presumed to exist when the parent owns directly or indirectly, through subsidiaries, more than one half (1/2) of the voting power of an entity, unless in exceptional circumstances, it can clearly

be demonstrated that such ownership does not constitute control. Control also exists even when an entity owns one half (1/2) or less of the voting power of another entity when: (a) there is power over more than one half (1/2) of the voting rights by virtue of an agreement with investors; (b) there is power to direct or govern the financial and operating policies of the entity under a statute or agreement; (c) there is power to appoint or remove the majority of the members of the board of directors or equivalent governing body; (d) there is power to cast the majority votes at meetings of the board of directors or equivalent governing body; (e) there exists ownership over or the right to use all or a significant part of the assets of the entity; or (f) there exist rights or contracts which confer decisive influence on the decisions of the entity.

CHAPTER V

BUDGET OF THE ERC

Sec. 15. *Budget of the ERC.* - The ERC shall enjoy limited fiscal autonomy, subject to regular audits by the Commission on Audit. For this purpose, the ERC shall be allowed to retain fifty percentum (50%) of its collections from fees to use for its budgetary requirements, including training and capital outlays. The annual budget certified by the ERC, through its Chairperson, as necessary to defray its expenses shall be provided for in the regular or special appropriations and shall be released automatically and regularly.

CHAPTER VI

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS FOR ERC PERSONNEL

Sec. 16. *Enhancement of Technical Competence.* - The ERC shall establish rigorous training programs for its staff for the purpose of enhancing the technical competence of the ERC in the following areas: evaluation of technical performance and monitor compliance with service and performance standards, performance-based rate-setting reform, environmental standards and such other areas as will enable the ERC to adequately perform its duties and functions. For this purpose, at least eight percent (8%) of the annual budget of the ERC shall be allocated for the funding of training programs.

Sec. 17. *Early Retirement Program.* - The ERC shall establish an Early Retirement Program for qualified ERC personnel who have reached the age of fifty-six (56) years old with at least fifteen (15) years of creditable government service as of the date of application. Qualified personnel shall be given the option to avail themselves of any of the following, whichever is beneficial to them:

(a) Retirement gratuity provided under Republic Act No. 1616 (An Act Further Amending Section Twelve Of Commonwealth Act Numbered One Hundred Eighty-Six, As Amended, By Prescribing Two Other Modes Of Retirement And For Other Purposes), as amended, payable by the last employer of the affected personnel, plus the refund of retirement premiums payable by the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), without the incentive herein provided.

(b) Retirement benefit under Republic Act No. 660 (An Act To Amend Commonwealth Act Numbered One Hundred And Eighty-Six, Entitled "An Act To Create And Establish A Government Service Insurance System, To Provide For Its Administration, And To Appropriate The Necessary

Funds Therefor," And To Provide Retirement Insurance And For Other Purposes) or applicable retirement, separation or unemployment benefit provided under Republic Act No. 8291 (An Act Amending Presidential Decree No. 1146, As Amended, Expanding And Increasing The Coverage And Benefits Of The Government Service Insurance System, Instituting Reforms Therein And For Other Purposes) if qualified, plus the following applicable incentives:

(b.1.) 1/2 month of the present basic salary for every year of government service and a fraction thereof, for those who have rendered twenty (20) years of service and below;

(b.2.) 3/4 month of the present basic salary for every year of government service and a fraction thereof, computed starting from the 1st year, for those who have rendered twenty-one (21) to less than thirty-one (31) years of service; and

(b.3.) 1 month of the present basic salary for every year of government service and a fraction thereof, computed starting from the 1st year, for those who have rendered thirty-one (31) years of service and above.

In addition, the affected personnel shall be entitled to the refund of Pag-IBIG contributions, and the commutation of unused vacation and sick leave credits.

CHAPTER VII

CONSUMER REPRESENTATION

Sec. 18. *Promotion of Consumer Interests.* - The ERC shall handle consumer complaints and ensure the adequate promotion of consumer interests. In cases involving the fixing rates and tariffs of transmission, and distribution retail wheeling charges and tariffs of franchise electric utilities and all electric power rates, a vote of three (3) members shall be required.

The ERC shall establish procedures for determining legitimate representation of consumer organizations and the conduct of forum, where consumers can express their concerns on policies and regulations outside the formal rule-making processes.

The ERC shall also exert efforts to inform consumers of pending proceedings where their participation is important.

Sec. 19. *Public Offering Requirement.* - The ERC shall perform such other regulatory functions as are appropriate in order to ensure the successful restructuring and modernization of the electric power industry, such as, but not limited to, the rules and guidelines under which generation companies, distribution utilities which are not publicly listed shall offer and sell to the public a portion not less than fifteen percent (15%) of their common shares of stocks: *Provided, however,* that generation companies, distribution utilities or their respective holding companies that are already listed in the Philippine Stock Exchange are deemed in compliance. For existing companies, such public offering shall be implemented not later than five (5) years from the effectivity of this act. New companies shall implement their respective public offerings not later than five (5) years from the issuance of their certificate of compliance.

Sec. 20. *Jurisdiction.* - The ERC shall have the original and exclusive jurisdiction over all cases contesting rates, fees, fines and penalties imposed by the ERC in the exercise of the functions under Section 34 of Republic Act. No. 9136, as well as in the function of the abovementioned powers, functions and responsibilities, and over all cases involving disputes between and among participants or players in the energy sector.

All notices of hearings to be conducted by the ERC for the purpose of fixing rates or fees shall be published twice for two successive weeks in two (2) newspapers of nationwide circulation in at least one (1) newspaper of general circulation, and/or post electronically.

CHAPTER VIII

FINES AND PENALTIES

Sec. 21. *Fines and Penalties.* - The following fines and penalties shall be imposed by the ERC for any violation of or non-compliance with Republic Act. No. 9136, its IRR, or this Act:

- (a) By any juridical entities engaged in the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity, the fine shall range from a minimum of Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P500,000.00) to a maximum of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00).

The Commission may order the regulated entities to apply penalties imposed for violation of Republic Act. No. 9136, its IRR, or this Act as a reduction of its rates to benefit its end-users.

- (b) By any person, a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) but not more than Fifty Million Pesos (P50,000,000.00), or by imprisonment of not lower than six (6) years and one (1) day and not higher than twelve (12) years, or both, at the discretion of the court.

When the entities involved are juridical persons, the penalty of imprisonment shall be imposed on its officers, directors, or employees holding managerial positions, who are knowingly and willfully responsible for such violation.

Civil and criminal actions and proceedings instituted on behalf of the government under the authority of this Act or other laws enforced by the ERC shall be brought in the name of the Government of the Philippines and shall be prosecuted and handled by the ERC with the assistance of the Department of Justice (DOJ): *Provided*, that the determination of the existence of probable cause and the subsequent filing of any criminal or civil case with the proper court against violators of this act shall exclusively belong to the DOJ: *Provided, however*, that no civil or criminal action for the recovery of duties or the enforcement of any fine, penalty or forfeiture under this act shall be filed in court without the approval of the Commission.

The fines and penalties may be adjusted to its present value every five (5) years using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as published by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

CHAPTER IX

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 22. *Transitory Provision.* - The current Chairperson and members of the Commission shall continue to serve in such capacity until the completion of their term.

The qualifications, requirements, and prohibitions stated in this Act shall apply to new Chairperson and members of the Commission.

The current Executive Director shall assume the duties and responsibilities laid out in Section 13 of this Act upon the effectivity of this Act: *Provided*, That upon such assumption, the current Executive Director shall immediately comply with the requirements and prohibitions stated in this Act: *Provided further*, That the current Executive Director shall serve as such until his or her resignation, retirement or termination for cause.

Sec. 23. *Oversight Committee.* - Upon the effectivity of this Act, the Joint Congressional Energy Commission established under Republic Act No. 9136 and renamed under Republic Act No. 11285, otherwise known as the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act, shall exercise oversight powers over the implementation of this Act.

Sec. 24. *Separability Clause.* - If for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and in effect.

Sec. 25. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 26. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The DOE and ERC shall, in consultation with relevant government agencies and all stakeholders, promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR) of the Act within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.

Sec. 27. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation

Approved