

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 628



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This measure is a refiled bill originally introduced in the 15th Congress by the late Representative Pedro P. Romualdo, and subsequently reintroduced in the 16th and 17th Congresses by former Representative Xavier Jesus D. Romualdo.

The Explanatory Note of House Bill No. 3515 from the 17th Congress, authored by former Representative Xavier Jesus D. Romualdo, is hereby adopted as part of this measure, which remains relevant in the ongoing campaign against illegal gambling. It states:

"Illegal gambling is a universally recognized social ill that is known to result in the squandering of income and the disintegration of families, lead to the commission of crimes, and is a source of corruption. Hence, the State condemns and criminalizes illegal gambling activities. However, despite the campaign against illegal gambling, it continues to subsist and remain prevalent in the country.

The suppression of illegal gambling will require a comprehensive approach from and the joint efforts of both the government and the public. In the meantime, Congress should adopt more stringent measures against illegal gambling as part of its contribution to the campaign against the same. This proposed measure is a step in that direction as it seeks to increase the penalties against those who engage in illegal gambling activities. The imposition of heavier penalties will show the seriousness with which Congress views the problem of illegal gambling and is in fulfillment of Congress's responsibility of ensuring that laws of the land are able to meet and respond to the challenges of the present times."

Despite existing prohibitions under Presidential Decree No. 1602, illegal gambling continues to thrive in many parts of the country. The persistence of this illicit activity undermines social order, exploits economic vulnerabilities, and erodes public trust in law enforcement and governance. Existing penalties have proven insufficient to deter offenders, particularly with the emergence of more sophisticated forms of gambling linked to organized crime, corruption, digital platforms, and, more recently, activities associated with Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs).

It is therefore imperative for Congress to revisit and strengthen the provisions of Presidential Decree No. 1602. This bill seeks to impose stiffer penalties and modernize our legal response to illegal gambling in order to protect vulnerable sectors of society, uphold the rule of law, and safeguard the Filipino family from the social consequences of this destructive vice.

The immediate enactment and favorable passage of this measure are respectfully recommended.



JURDIN JESUS M. ROMUALDO

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AN ACT
AMENDING SECTION 1 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1602, PRESCRIBING
STIFFER PENALTIES ON ILLEGAL GAMBLING

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

SECTION 1. Section 1 of Presidential Decree No. 1602 is hereby amended, as follows:

Section. 1 Penalties. The following penalties are hereby imposed:

The penalty of prision correccional in its [medium] MAXIMUM period [or] AND a fine ranging from FIFTY THOUSAND [P50,000.00] TO ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND (P100,000.00) PESOS, and in cases of recidivism, the penalty of prision mayor in its (medium) MAXIMUM period [or] AND a fine ranging from [five thousand to ten thousand] ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND (P100,000.00) TO ONE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND (P150,000.00) PESOS shall be imposed upon.

(1) XXX

(2) Any person who shall knowingly permit any form of gambling referred to in the preceding sub-paragraph to be carried on in an inhabited or uninhabited place or in any building, vessel or other means of transportation owned or controlled by him. If the place where gambling is carried on has a reputation of a gambling place or that prohibited gambling is frequently carried on therein, or the place is or government building or barangay hall, the malefactor shall be punished by [prision correccional] PRISION MAYOR in it [maximum] MINIMUM period and the fine of [six

1 thousand] ONE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P150,000.00).

2
3 (b) The penalty of [prision correccional in its maximum] PRISION MAYOR IN ITS
4 MEDIUM period [or] AND a fine of [six thousand] TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS
5 (P200,000.00) shall be imposed upon the maintainer or conductor of the above gambling schemes.

6
7 (c) The penalty of prision mayor in its [medium] MAXIMUM period with [temporary]
8 PERPETUAL absolute disqualification [or] AND a fined of [six thousand] TWO HUNDRED FIFTY
9 THOUSAND PESOS (P250,000.00) shall be imposed if the maintainer, conductor or banker of said
10 gambling schemes is a government official, or where such government official is a player, promoter,
11 referee, umpire, judge or coach in case of game-fixing, point- shaving and machination.

12
13 (d) The penalty of prision correccional in its (medium) MAXIMUM period [or] AND a fine
14 ranging from [four hundred to two thousand] TWENTY THOUSAND PESOS (P20,000.00) TO FIFTY
15 THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00) shall be imposed upon any person who shall, knowingly and
16 without lawful purpose in any hour or any day, possess any lottery list, paper pertaining to or in any
17 manner used in the games of jueteng, jai alai or horse racing, bookings, and similar games of
18 lotteries and numbers which have taken place or about to take place.

19
20 (e) The penalty of [temporary] PERMANENT absolute disqualification shall be imposed
21 upon any barangay official who with knowledge of existence of a gambling house or place in his
22 jurisdiction fails to abate the same or take action in connection herewith.

23
24 (f) The penalty of prision [correccional] MAYOR in its [maximum] MINIMUM period
25 [or] AND a fine ranging from [five hundred pesos to thousand pesos] TWENTY THOUSAND
26 PESOS (P20,000.00) TO FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00) shall be imposed upon any
27 security, security guard, watchman, private or house detective of hotels, villages, buildings,
28 enclosures, and the like which have the reputation of a gambling place or where gambling activities are
29 being held.

30
31 SEC. 2. All laws, decrees, executive orders and issuances, rules and regulations, and other
32 issuances, or parts thereof, that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
33 modified accordingly.

34
35 SEC. 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or
36 a newspaper of general circulation.

37
38 Approved,