

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **3069**



Introduced by: Congressman **BIENVENIDO M. ABANTE, JR.**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A BARANGAY HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION CENTER IN
EVERY BARANGAY IN THE COUNTRY

EXPLANATORY NOTE

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7, KJV).

It is submitted that there is no other right more precious than the human right to life, as God Himself formed man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Human rights are defined as the supreme inherent and inalienable rights to life, dignity, and self-development. It is concerned with issues in areas of civil, political rights, economic, social, and cultural rights founded on internationally accepted human rights obligations to which the Philippine Government is a state party. It is even enshrined in our highest law of the land, the 1987 Constitution, that the State shall value the dignity of every person and guarantee full respect for human rights.¹ Thus, the state has an obligation to protect and preserve human rights for the sake of the present and for the generations yet unborn.

In pursuance of this constitutional mandate, the local government units at the level of provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays are mandated to create, among others, the Human Rights Committee as one of the standing committees of their respective Sanggunian.² The Committee is mandated to develop local policies and legislation that will address issues on human rights, the rule of law, and access to justice. Being the smallest local government unit, the barangay is in fact the government's front-line force in the local community's defense and safeguarding of human rights. Having Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC) across the country will give ordinary people the ability to take the initiative in advancing and defending human rights.

¹ Art. II, Sec. 1 1987 Philippine Constitution.

² Sec. 50, Local Government Code.

In doing so, it guarantees the inclusion of human rights, the rule of law, and access to justice in local legislative and executive acts, as well as raising public awareness of human rights. Moreover, BHRAC will guide in understanding and using these supreme inherent and inalienable rights when needed, especially for those who are at the grassroots level.

For the foregoing reasons, the passage of the instant bill is earnestly sought.



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

SECTION 1. Title. This Act shall be known as the **“Barangay Human Rights Action Center” (BHRAC) Act of 2025.**

SEC. 2. Role and Creation of the Barangay Human Rights Action Center. There shall be established a Barangay Human Rights Action Center in every barangay in the country, amending for this purpose Book III on the Local Government Units of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code, by adding thereto another chapter to be known as:

“Chapter XI - The Barangay Human Rights Action Center”

The Center serves as the Human Rights Desk in the barangay to bring the services and programs of the Commission on Human Rights within the reach of the people, especially in the far-flung areas, and as a forum wherein the collective views on the human rights of the people may be expressed, crystallized, and considered. The Center shall be manned by the Barangay Human Rights Action Officer (BHRAO).

SEC. 3. Manner of Creation. The BHRAO shall be established by a resolution approved by the Sangguniang Barangay, and the BHRAO shall be chosen or appointed by the Barangay Assembly called for the purpose by the Punong Barangay by a majority of those present. The voting shall be supervised by the City/Municipal Local Government Operations Officer and as a representative of the Regional Office and/or sub-office of the Commission on Human Rights, where the barangay is located. The position of the BHRAO is non-political and independent, and no elective or appointive, or employee of the Government can be chosen as BHRAO.

SEC. 4. *Qualifications of the Barangay Human Rights Action Center.* A person shall be appointed Barangay Human Rights Action Officer if he is:

- a) At least 21 years of age;
- b) A high school graduate;
- c) Once elected, s/he must not engage in partisan political activities;
- c) Of proven integrity, and
- d) Committed to the cause of Human Rights

SEC. 5. *Tenure and removal from Office of the BHRAO.* The BHRAO duly chosen by the Barangay Assembly shall serve for a term of five (5) years without re-appointment unless sooner removed by the Barangay Assembly for causes provided by the preceding section, or by reason of death or resignation.

SEC. 6. *Removal from Office.* The following are the grounds for removal of a BHRAO from office:

- a) Violation of human rights;
- b) Loss of Confidence, and
- c) Non-performance of functions.

SEC. 7. *Supervision.* The Commission on Human Rights shall immediately, after the approval of this Act, prepare and provide the Barangay with the implementing rules, guidelines, and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act. In coordination with the Barangay, the Commission on Human Rights shall supervise the operation and activities of the BHRAO.

SEC. 8. *Technical Assistance.* The Commission on Human Rights, jointly with the National Youth Commission, shall provide technical assistance in the training of the BHRAOs and, whenever possible, provide the barangay with training, seminars, and pertinent materials.

SEC. 9. *Legal Assistance.* The Commission on Human Rights shall render legal advice on matters involving questions of law and help them to keep abreast with recent jurisprudence, both on substantive and procedural matters, to the BHRAOs in the exercise of their functions as the voice of the voiceless and advocate of human rights at the barangay level.

SEC. 10. *Appropriation.* This Act shall be initially implemented within the framework of the funds of the Barangay. As far as practicable, the funds required therefore shall be drawn from available funds of the city, municipal, or provincial governments, and from the appropriation of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) for training and program planning. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the budget of the Commission on Human Rights in the annual General Appropriation Act.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances, or parts thereof, contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby modified, amended, or repealed accordingly.

SEC. 13. Effectivity. This Act shall be effective after fifteen (15) days from publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,