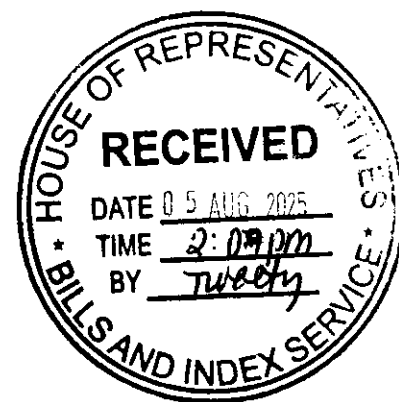


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3094



Introduced by: Hon. Keith Micah "Atty. Mike" D.L. Tan

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE KATARUNGANG PAMBARANGAY

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Katarungang Pambarangay was conceptualized to promote the speedy administration of justice at the barangay level, provide an initial venue for dispute settlement, and to achieve peaceful and friendly settlements. It recognizes the Filipino tradition of resolving conflicts through amicable settlement that saves the time and resources of all the parties concerned, and at the same time relieves the trial courts of cases among neighbors that can be settled through mediation at the barangay level.

Katarungang Pambarangay was governed by Presidential Decree No. 1508 which was signed on June 11, 1978 and took effect on December 20, 1978. It covers cases punishable by imprisonment not exceeding thirty (30) days or a fine not exceeding Two Hundred Pesos (P200.00).

PD 1508 was repealed by Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, which embodies the same principles and essence of PD 1508 in Sections 399-422, Chapter VII, Title I, Book III, and Section 515, Title I, Book IV.

The cases covered by the Katarungang Pambarangay was, however, expanded by increasing the authority of the lupon to settle criminal offenses punishable by imprisonment of not exceeding one (1) year or a fine not exceeding Five thousand pesos (P5,000).

Related to this, the Supreme Court issued Circular No. 14-93 on July 15, 1993 to provide the "Guidelines on the Katarungang Pambarangay Conciliation Procedure to Prevent Circumvention of the Revised Katarungang Pambarangay Law."

The Katarungang Pambarangay has been instrumental in the promotion of peace, order and development in our communities but it needs to be revisited to improve the administration of justice at the barangay level, to professionalize justice administration at the barangay level, and to provide greater fiscal and other incentives to attain a high level of competency, integrity, independence, probity, and honesty.

In 2024, it was reported that the government has realized an estimated savings of P4.3-billion in court litigation costs through the excellent performance of the

Lupong Tagapamayapas under barangay justice system or Katarungang Pambarangay¹.

Hence, in view of its vital contribution in the promotion of peace, order and development in our communities and the need to further strengthen the provision of access to justice at the barangay level, this bill seeks to establish the Katarungang Pambarangay Training Program along with the provision of continuing education and provision of incentives and benefits for the members of the lupong tagapamayapa.

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



Keith Micah "Atty. Mike" D.L. Tan
4th District, Quezon

¹ <https://dilg.gov.ph/news/Remulla-lauds-Lupons-for-P43B-savings-in-litigation-cost-77-resolution-rate/NC-2024-1138>

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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 "Pinalakas na Sistema ng Katarungang Pambarangay Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to ensure that justice, in its most tangible and immediate sense, is made easily accessible to all its citizens. In line with the foregoing, the State recognizes the need to strengthen the government services aimed at providing access to justice at the barangay level, which is most immediately accessible to Filipino citizens.

SEC. 3. *Katarungang Pambarangay Training Program.* - There is hereby established a Katarungang Pambarangay Training Program pursuant to the mandate of providing support for the effective administration of justice and enforcement of human rights and resolving and/or mediating conflict at the barangay level.

It shall be formulated and administered by the Department of Justice (DOJ), in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other relevant agencies.

The Program shall consist of not less than one hundred (100) hours of training on the Revised Katarungang Pambarangay Law and its pertinent rules and guidelines as well as alternative dispute resolution. It shall also cover lectures on applicable substantive and procedural laws on common legal disputes including relevant topics on human relations, psychology, sociology and other related matters.

SEC. 4. *Continuing Katarungang Pambarangay Education.* - The DOJ, in coordination with the DILG and other relevant agencies, shall formulate and administer a continuing education program for the lupong tagapamayapa consisting of sixteen (16) hours of training that aims to deepen their mediation skills.

SEC. 5. *Katarungang Pambarangay Advisory Center.* - There is hereby created in each barangay a Katarungang Pambarangay Advisory Center which is composed of the members of the lupong tagapamayapa.

The Katarungang Pambarangay Advisory Center shall serve as an information

and referral center that may be approached by barangay residents for preliminary inquiries regarding possible initiation of or defense against existing legal action.

SEC. 6. *Functions of the Katarungang Pambarangay Advisory Center.* - The Katarungang Pambarangay Advisory Center shall:

(a) Entertain queries from barangay residents regarding basic legal procedures;

(b) Provide hand-outs, pamphlets, and other pertinent educational materials that are useful in addressing the legal concerns of the barangay residents;

(c) Advise barangay residents regarding the importance or necessity of undergoing conciliation; and

(d) Serve as a Help Desk by referring inquiring barangay residents to proper legal offices such as the City Prosecutor's Office, Public Attorney's Office (PAO), the local chapter of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), or the National Labor Relation Commission's (NLRC) Single Entry Assistance Desk (SEAD), depending on the assessed legal need of such resident.

SEC. 7. *Lupong Tagapamayapa Incentives and Benefits.* - In recognition of their services, members of the lupong tagapamayapa who adequately demonstrate the ability to judiciously and expeditiously resolve cases referred to them shall be entitled to the following incentives, subject to the DILG's existing system of granting economic or other incentives:

(a) Hazard Allowance. - Lupon members in rural and urban areas, exposed to situations, conditions, or factors in the work environment or place where foreseeable but unavoidable danger or risks exist which adversely endanger his or her health or life and/or increase the risk of producing adverse effect on his or her person in the exercise of his or her duties, to be validated by the proper authorities, shall be entitled to hazard allowance in an amount to be determined by the barangay, in consultation with the local peace and order council of the local government unit concerned.

(b) Training, Education and Career Enrichment Programs. - The DILG, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education and other concerned government agencies and non-government organizations shall provide opportunities for the following:

(1) educational programs which shall recognize years of service at the lupon as credits to higher education in institutions with stepladder curricula that will entitle lupon members to upgrade their skills and knowledge for community work or to pursue further training;

(2) continuing education, study and exposure tours, training, grants, field immersion, scholarships, and similar activities; and

(3) scholarship benefits in the form of tuition fees in state colleges, to be granted to one child of every lupon member who will not be able to take advantage of the above programs.

(c) Free Legal Services - Legal representation and consultation services for lupon members shall be immediately provided by the Public Attorney's Office or the Provincial Legal Office or the City/Municipal Legal Office, as the case may be, in cases of coercion, interference, and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against lupon members arising out of or in connection with the performance of their duties as such.

(d) Indemnification of Lupon Members. - The DOJ shall establish an equitable indemnification package for the lupon members, which may be in the form of free legal assistance, liability insurance, and other forms of protection and indemnification for all cost and expenses reasonably incurred by such persons in connection with any civil or criminal actions, suit or proceeding to which they may be, or have been made, a party by reason of the performance of their functions or duties, unless they are finally adjudged in such action or proceeding to be liable for gross negligence or misconduct or grave abuse of discretion.

In the event of settlement or compromise, indemnification shall be confined only on matters covered by the settlement, provided that the DOJ Secretary has determined that the concerned lupon member did not commit gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of his or her functions and duties.

SEC. 8. *Administration; Rules and Regulations.* - The DOJ, in consultation with the DILG and concerned agencies, shall ensure the efficient and effective implementation and administration of the provisions of this Act.

The DOJ, in coordination with the DILG and concerned agencies, shall prepare and issue the implementing rules and regulations within one ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations.* - Such amount as may be necessary for the effective implementation of this law shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision or part not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,