



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3829



Introduced by Representative Maria Angela S. Garcia

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1 The Province of Bataan is rapidly emerging as a major economic hub, driven by
2 large-scale infrastructure projects, the expansion of economic zones, and increased
3 migration. The construction of the Bataan-Cavite Interlink Bridge (BCIB) will drastically
4 change the province's landscape and will position Bataan as the next major gateway.
5 As a result, Bataan will see a surge in transient populations, workers, businesses, and
6 logistics operations which will increase the incidence of legal disputes, criminal cases,
7 and commercial litigations. The influx of transients and economic activity will lead to
8 new challenges in law enforcement and judicial proceedings and will require an urgent
9 expansion of judicial capacity within Bataan to maintain law and order efficiently.

10
11 The expansion of the Freeport Area of Bataan (FAB) and ecozones may also
12 contribute to increased commercial disputes and regulatory matters in Bataan. If the
13 Bills establishing the Metro Bataan Development Authority (MBDA) and the Special
14 Economic Development Zone Act (SPEDEZA) are signed into law, they will further
15 streamline governance and enforcement mechanisms, resulting to stricter
16 implementation of laws and regulations. With enhanced enforcement, there will likely
17 be an increase in legal cases related to civil, environment, business compliance, and
18 corporate disputes. Without additional courts, these cases will pile up and will result to
19 judicial backlogs and delay in the delivery of justice for both individuals and entities
20 alike.

21
22 Population growth, fueled by migration and employment opportunities are
23 therefore both an opportunity and a challenging factor. As Bataan transitions into a
24 major metropolitan area, the demand for judicial services should significantly increase
25 in proportion to its expanding population.

26
27 The Courts in Bataan are divided into three (3) territorial jurisdiction. The first
28 territorial jurisdiction covers the municipalities of Dinalupihan and Hermosa. The second
29 territorial jurisdiction covers Balanga City and the municipalities of Orani, Abucay,
30 Samal, Orion, Morong and Bagac. The third covers the municipalities of Mariveles and
31 Limay.

1 These three territorial jurisdiction should have at least the same number of courts in
2 order to balance their services and so that there is no overwhelming that will ensue.

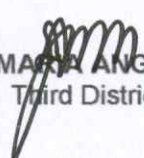
3
4 For instance, out of the three territorial jurisdictions, the first territorial jurisdiction
5 is the only one that has no Family Court, the other two having one each. The first
6 territorial jurisdiction, with a combined population of 195,652 currently has two (2)
7 regular Regional Trial Courts (RTCs) branches, forcing them to hear and try family-
8 related cases that should ideally be handled by a separately designated Family Court.
9 In the last ten years, 1,082 (22.6%) out of the 4,784 cases currently filed in this
10 jurisdiction involved family-related matters.

11
12 Meanwhile, the second territorial jurisdiction has a combined population of
13 325,397, the highest among the three territorial jurisdictions. It has five (5) RTC
14 branches and one (1) Family Court. In the last 10 years, there have been 12,617 cases
15 filed in these courts. The third territorial jurisdiction has 228,151 residents and is being
16 served by just three (3) RTC branches and one (1) Family Court. In the last 10 years,
17 6,838 cases have been filed in these courts.

18
19 Presently, there is one (1) Municipal Circuit Trial Court (MTCC) in the first
20 territorial jurisdiction, five (5) Municipal Trial Courts in the second territorial jurisdiction
21 and two (2) Municipal Trial Courts (MTCs) in the third territorial jurisdiction.

22
23 With increased mobility as will be expected from the construction of the BCIB,
24 among other factors, comes the inevitable rise in traffic violations, smuggling, human
25 trafficking, drug-related offenses, and other transient-related crimes. The Bataan courts
26 must be prepared to handle these cases efficiently to maintain public order and security.
27 Without additional judicial resources, dockets will become clogged and will delay the
28 administration of justice and undermine confidence in the legal system. We must be
29 prepared this early. We must strengthen today, or risk being shackled by tomorrow's
30 regrets.

31
32 This Bill therefore seeks to address the foregoing judicial challenges by creating
33 four (4) additional RTC branches, which includes a Family Court, as well as creating
34 one (1) additional Municipal Trial Court (MTC) in Hermosa, one (1) additional Municipal
35 Trial Court (MTC) in Mariveles and one (1) additional Municipal Trial Court in Cities
36 (MTCC) in Balanga City. These new courts will not only alleviate the current backlog
37 but also ensure that Bataan's judicial system remains efficiently responsive to its fast-
38 growing economy and population. The immediate passage of this measure is strongly
39 recommended to safeguard judicial efficiency and support Bataan's transformation into
40 a major economic and transit hub which will be vital to our country's economic progress,
41 more so now that the province of Bataan and its component city and municipalities shall
42 comprise the Metro Bataan Development Authority (MBDA), should the Bill therefor be
43 approved by the President, and that the construction of the BCIB Project could start
44 soon this year.


REP. MARIA ANGELA S. GARCIA
Third District, Bataan



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AN ACT

CREATING FOUR (4) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC), INCLUDING A FAMILY COURT, TWO (2) BRANCHES OF MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC), AND ONE (1) BRANCH OF MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MTCC) IN THE THIRD JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE PROVINCE OF BATAAN, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 14, 29 AND 30 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980," AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. There shall be created four (4) additional branches of the Regional Trial Court (RTC), one of which is a Family Court, two (2) branches of Municipal Trial Court (MTC) and one (1) branch of Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MTCC) in the Province of Bataan, stationed as follows:

- 1) One (1) Regional Trial Court (RTC) branch in the Municipality of Dinalupihan
- 2) One (1) Regional Trial Court (RTC) branch in the City of Balanga
- 3) One (1) Regional Trial Court (RTC) branch in the Municipality of Mariveles
- 4) One (1) Regional Trial Court branch (Family Court) in the Municipality of Dinalupihan
- 5) One (1) Municipal Trial Court (MTC) branch in the Municipality of Hermosa
- 6) One (1) Municipal Trial Court (MTC) branch in the Municipality of Mariveles
- 7) One (1) Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MTCC) branch in the City of Balanga

The Supreme Court shall assign the respective branch number for the newly-created branches of the Regional Trial Court.

SECTION 2. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Justice, shall take the necessary steps to immediately operationalize the newly-created RTC, MTCC and MTC branches, including the appointment of the judges, clerks of court, and other personnel to be assigned therein.

1 **SECTION 3.** The funds necessary for the implementation of this Act, including salaries
2 and court operations under maintenance and other operating expense (MOOE), and
3 provisions for Halls of Justice or courtrooms to accommodate seven (7) judges and
4 respective court staff, shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA)
5 and released upon the organization of such courts and appointment of personnel.

6 **SECTION 4.** Sections 14, 29, and 30 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, as amended by RA
7 7691 and RA 11576, are hereby further amended to reflect the additional RTC, MTCC
8 and MTC branches created under this Act. All other laws, rules, and regulations
9 inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

10 **SECTION 5.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
11 the **Official Gazette** or in a newspaper of general circulation.