

TWENTIETH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez and
Representative Maximo B. Rodriguez, Jr.*

House Bill No. **4720**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) plays a crucial role in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of statistical data in the Philippines.

At present, the PSA is attached to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) for purposes of policy coordination and is headed by a PSA Board.

At present, the PSA Board is composed of the following: the NEDA Director-General, as Chairperson; the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) or the duly designated Undersecretary, as Vice Chairperson; National Statistician; one (1) representative each from the other departments in the national government; a representative of the BSP; the Executive Director of the PSRTI; a representative of the Philippine Statistical Association; a representative from the GOCCs; a representative each from the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP) and the private sector to be appointed by the Chairperson of the PSA Board for a term of three (3) years, with reappointment, from a list of nominees submitted by the other members of the Board.

The PSA Board is currently the highest policy-making body on statistical matters.

To enhance its efficiency, credibility, and responsiveness to the dynamic needs of governance, business, and society, there is a compelling need to convert the PSA into the Philippine Statistics Commission. As can be seen, there are too many members in the PSA Board which could lead to a delay in getting approvals and other bureaucratic problems.

The establishment of a commission allows for a more robust governance framework and would reinforce the independence of the statistical agency. The Commission can also lead to faster decision-making processes.

Converting the Philippine Statistics Authority into the Philippine Statistics Commission is a move that will enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the national statistical system. It will also strengthen the operations of the office, at the same time raise the salaries of its officials and employees, making it at par with other national commissions.

Data and statistics play an important role in identify problems and solutions in healthcare, education, employment, agriculture, and environment. With this, it is vital that data and information are made readily available and accessible to the public.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly requested.


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ


MAXIMO B. RODRIGUEZ, JR.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez and
Representative Maximo B. Rodriguez, Jr.*

House Bill No. **4720**

AN ACT

**AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10625 OR THE PHILIPPINE STATISTICAL ACT OF 2013,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Statistical Act of [2013] **2024**”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State to effect the necessary and proper changes in the organizational and functional structures of the Philippine Statistical System (PSS), its agencies and instrumentalities, in order to rationalize and promote efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of statistical services, maintain an integrated statistical system characterized by independence, objectivity and integrity so as to enhance responsiveness to the requirements of equitable national development, promote the orderly development of a statistical system capable of providing timely, accurate and useful data for the government and the public, and support decentralization through the establishment of the statistical infrastructure necessary to service the statistical needs of local development planning.

SEC. 3. *Reorganization.* – The Philippine Statistical System, hereinafter referred to as the PSS, shall be reorganized structurally and functionally, in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Philippine Statistical System (PSS).* – The PSS shall consist of statistical organizations at all administrative levels, the personnel therein and the national statistical program. This includes a policy-making body, a coordinating body with primary data collection capability, a statistical research and training institute, and all executive departments, bureaus, offices, agencies and instrumentalities of the national and local governments and all government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and their subsidiaries that are engaged in statistical activities either as their primary functions or as part of their administrative or regulatory functions. The PSS shall remain decentralized with a strong coordination feature to be achieved through postings of trained personnel and closer linkage between statistical programming and budgeting.

SEC. 5. *Philippine Statistics [Authority] COMMISSION.* – There shall be created a Philippine Statistics [Authority] **COMMISSION**, hereinafter referred to as the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**. [, attached to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) for purposes of policy coordination. It shall be comprised of the PSA Board and offices on sectoral statistics, censuses and technical coordination, civil registration and central support and field statistical services.]

The [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall be the highest policy-making body on statistical matters. The data produced by the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall be the official and

controlling statistics of the government. The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall be primarily responsible for all national censuses and surveys, sectoral statistics, consolidation of selected administrative recording systems and compilation of the national accounts.

The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall be constituted from among the existing personnel of the major statistical agencies engaged in primary data collection and compilation of secondary data, i.e., the National Statistics Office, herein referred to as the NSO; the Technical Staff of the National Statistical Coordination Board herein referred to as the NSCB; the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, herein referred to as the BAS; and the Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics, herein referred to as the BLES.

The Department of Economic Statistics of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) will continue to take charge of banking and financial statistics, including the Balance of Payments (BOP) and flow of funds.

THE PHILSTATSCOM SHALL HAVE THE SAME STATUS AS THAT OF A GOVERNMENTAL REGULATORY NATIONAL AGENCY ATTACHED TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT WITH THE CHAIRMAN THEREOF BEING OF THE SAME LEVEL AS A DEPARTMENT UNDERSECRETARY AND THE COMMISSIONERS THAT OF DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT SECRETARIES.

SEC. 6. *Functions of the [PSA] PHILSTATSCOM.* – The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall have the following functions:

- a. Serve as the central statistical authority of the Philippine government on primary data collection;
- b. Prepare and conduct periodic censuses on population, housing, agriculture, fisheries, business, industry and other sectors of the economy;
- c. Collect, compile, analyze, abstract and publish statistical information relating to the country's economic, social, demographic, political affairs and general activities and condition of the people;
- d. Prepare and conduct statistical sample surveys on all aspects of socioeconomic life including agriculture, industry, trade, finance, prices and marketing information, income and expenditure, education, health, culture and social situations as well as the government and the political sector for the use of the government and the public;
- e. Carry out, enforce and administer civil registration functions in the country as provided for in Act No. 3753, otherwise known as the Civil Registry Law;
- f. Collaborate with departments of the national government including GOCCs and their subsidiaries in the collection, compilation, maintenance and publication of statistical information, including special statistical data derived from the activities of those departments, corporations and their subsidiaries;
- g. Promote and develop integrated social and economic statistics and coordinate plans for the integration of those statistics, including the national accounts;
- h. Develop and maintain appropriate frameworks and standards for the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of data;
- i. Coordinate with government departments and local government units (LGUs) on the promotion and adoption of statistical standards involving techniques, methodologies, concepts, definitions and classifications, and on the avoidance of duplication in the collection of statistical information;
- j. Conduct continuing methodological, analytical and development activities, in coordination with the Philippine Statistical Research and Training Institute (PSRTI) to improve the conduct of censuses, surveys and other data collection activities;
- k. Recommend executive and legislative measures to enhance the development of the statistical activities and programs of the government;
- l. Prepare[, in consultation with the PSA Board,] a Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP);
- m. Implement policies on statistical matters and coordination; [, as directed by the PSA Board;] and

- n. Perform other functions [as may be assigned by the PSA Board and] as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Composition of the [PSA Board] PHILSTATSCOM.* – [The PSA Board shall be composed of the following: the NEDA Director-General, as Chairperson; the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) or the duly designated Undersecretary, as Vice Chairperson; National Statistician; one (1) representative each from the other departments in the national government; a representative of the BSP; the Executive Director of the PSRTI; a representative of the Philippine Statistical Association; a representative from the GOCCs; a representative each from the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP) and the private sector to be appointed by the Chairperson of the PSA Board for a term of three (3) years, with reappointment, from a list of nominees submitted by the other members of the Board.

In the absence or temporary incapacity of the NEDA Director-General, the DBM Secretary or the duly designated Undersecretary shall act as the Chairperson of the Board.]

THE PHILSTATSCOM SHALL BE COMPOSED OF A CHAIRMAN AND TWO (2) COMMISSIONERS ALL OF WHOM SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES AND SHALL HOLD OFFICE AT THE PLEASURE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES.

THE CHAIRMAN AND THE COMMISSIONERS MUST BE CITIZENS OF THE PHILIPPINES, AT LEAST THIRTY (30) YEARS OF AGE, POSSESS EXPERIENCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF DATA COLLECTION AND HAS AT LEAST A MASTER'S DEGREE IN STATISTICS. PUBLICLY-RECOGNIZED PERSONALITIES IN THE FIELD OF SPORTS, AND IS OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER.

THE CHAIRMAN SHALL RECEIVE COMPENSATION AND BE ENTITLED TO OTHER BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES PROVIDED UNDER EXISTING LAWS FOR AN UNDERSECRETARY OF A DEPARTMENT AND THE COMMISSIONERS TO THAT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARIES.

The [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall constitute five (5) sections, each with a maximum of seven (7) members. Each section shall meet as often as possible to deliberate on matters to be discussed by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM**. These sections are the following:

- a. Agriculture, Industry, Trade and Services, Environment and Natural Resources, Prices and National Accounts;
- b. Labor and Employment, Population, Women and Gender, Health and Welfare, Education, Science and Technology and other Socioeconomic Sectors;
- c. Census and Survey Design;
- d. Theoretical Statistics and Statistical Modeling; and
- e. Statistical Information System and Information Technology.

The [Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** may create sections as deemed necessary and appropriate.

SEC. 8. *Meeting and Compensation.* – The [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall:

- a. Conduct its first organizational meeting within forty-five (45) days from the effectivity of this Act; and
- b. Hold regular quarterly meetings and have as many special meetings as may be necessary on call of the Chairperson or upon request of any [fifteen (15) members thereof] **OF THE COMMISSIONERS.**

[The members of the Board, except for the *ex officio* members, shall each receive *per diem* at rates to be determined by the DBM in accordance with existing rules and regulations: *Provided, however,* That the total *per diem*, collected each month shall not exceed the equivalent *per diem* for four (4) meetings.]

SEC. 9. *Powers and Functions of the [PSA Board] PHILSTATSCOM.* – The [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Establish appropriate mechanisms to promote and maintain an efficient and effective statistical system in the government;
- b. Formulate policies on all matters relating to government statistical operations, standards and classifications;
- c. Review the statistical programs of the departments and agencies of the national government and the LGUs and rationalize responsibilities in these government organizations on matters relating to such statistical programs;
- d. Review budgetary proposals involving statistical operations and submit an integrated budget for the PSS to the DBM;
- e. Prescribe appropriate frameworks for the improvement of statistical coordination and establish mechanisms for statistical coordination at the regional and LGU levels;
- f. Provide technical assistance and exercise supervision over major government statistical activities;
- g. Recommend executive and legislative measures to enhance the development and efficiency of the system, including the internal structure of statistical agencies; and
- h. Approve the Philippine Statistical Development Program.

[The PSA Board shall act on and decide matters before it by a majority vote of all its members. A majority of the members of the PSA Board shall constitute a quorum in the conduct of its day to day affairs and business.]

All agencies of government are hereby mandated to comply with any and all directives requested by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM**, either *motu proprio* or through the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**. Failure, without justifiable reason, by any agency to comply with this mandate shall result in the filing of administrative and criminal cases against the erring government personnel and the immediate superior concerned without prejudice to violation of any other law or regulation. In a criminal case, the penalties provided in the second paragraph of Section 27 hereof shall apply.

SEC. 10. *Inter-Agency Committees on Statistics.* – The following inter-agency statistical committees (IACs) shall be created by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** to coordinate and resolve agency and sectoral concerns on statistical matters. The IAC shall serve as a forum for discussion of the issues raised by concerned producers, users and other stakeholders of sectoral and agency-specific statistics:

- a. Committee on Agriculture;
- b. Committee on Trade and Industry Statistics;
- c. Committee on Infrastructure;
- d. Committee on Financial Statistics;
- e. Committee on Social Statistics;
- f. Committee on Gender Statistics;
- g. Committee on Environment and Natural Resources;
- h. Committee on Information and Communications Technology;
- i. Committee on Science and Technology;
- j. Committee on Governance;
- k. Committee on Migration;
- l. Committee on Fiscal Matters; and
- m. Committee on PSS Resources.

The [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** may create IACs to assist in the exercise of its functions or abolish them as appropriate. It shall define the functions and terms of reference of the IACs which will allow flexibility and the ability to respond to future emerging statistical concerns on various sectors.

The membership of the IACs may be increased or decreased as the exigencies of the work require: *Provided*, That these shall be authorized by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM**. The IACs may create subcommittees or working groups as the need arises in the work to be done. Membership of said subcommittees or working groups shall come from the technical staff of the government agencies represented and other private entities.

The IACs shall submit to the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** their work programs and report on the progress of their work, including findings and recommendations on technical issues referred to them.

SEC. 11. *The National Statistician.* – THERE SHALL BE AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO BE KNOWN AS [T] the National Statistician[, as head of the PSA,] WHO IS A CITIZEN OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, must possess experience in the management of data collection and at least a Master's degree in Statistics.

The National Statistician shall be appointed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines from among a list of nominees submitted by a Special Committee. The Special Committee shall be composed of representatives from the Philippine Statistical Association, the University of the Philippines' School of Statistics (UPSS), the University of the Philippines-Los Baños Institute of Statistics (UPLB-INSTAT), the Department of Economic Statistics of the BSP and the NEDA.

The National Statistician shall serve for a term of five (5) years and may be reappointed.

The National Statistician shall perform the following duties:

- a. Direct and supervise the general administration of the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**;
- b. Prescribe rules and regulations, instructions, schedule and form of business of the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and other information and in the conduct of any census;
- c. Provide overall direction in the implementation of the Civil Registry Law and related issuances and exercise technical supervision over the local civil registrars as Civil Registrar General;
- d. Direct and manage the implementation and execution of policies, standards, rules and regulations formulated by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM**;
- e. Issue appointments of [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** personnel below the rank of Director;
- f. Represent [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** as signatory to all contracts, researches and other awards;
- g. Represent the Philippines in regional and international conferences and meetings as the country's highest authority with respect to statistical matters;
- h. Submit a report to the President of the Republic of the Philippines through the NEDA Director-General on the activities of the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** in the preceding year. Such report shall also be submitted separately in the annual report to Congress during the presentation of the President's budget; and
- i. Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM**.

SEC. 12. *Organizational Structure of the PSA.* – The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM offices shall be composed of the Sectoral Statistics Office, Censuses and Technical Coordination Office, Civil Registration and Central Support Office, Field Statistical Services comprising of the regional offices and provincial statistical offices.**

The [PSA shall be headed by a] National Statistician [and] **SHALL BE** assisted by three (3) Deputy National Statisticians:

- (a) Deputy National Statistician for Sectoral Statistics;
- (b) Deputy National Statistician for Censuses and Technical Coordination; and
- (c) Deputy National Statistician for Civil Registration and Central Support.

There shall be established, directly under the Office of the National Statistician, the following support units:

- (1) Legal Services;
- (2) Statistical Methodology;
- (3) International Cooperation; and
- (4) Management and Corporate Planning.

The Deputy National Statistician for Sectoral Statistics shall supervise three (3) Assistant National Statisticians (ANS), who shall oversee the following offices:

- (1) Macroeconomic Accounts Statistics – shall be responsible for the development and maintenance of national accounts, regional accounts, satellite accounts, input/output tables and other related, macroeconomic accounts;
- (2) Economic Sector Statistics – shall be responsible for the production of primary data on agriculture, industry, trade, services, environment and natural resources, prices and other related economic statistics; and
- (3) Social Sector Statistics – shall be responsible for the production of primary data on labor and employment, population, women and gender, health and welfare, education, science and technology, housing and urbanization, emerging concerns and other related social statistics.

The Deputy National Statistician for Censuses and Technical Coordination shall supervise three (3) Assistant National Statisticians, who shall oversee the following offices:

- (1) National Censuses – shall be responsible for the planning and production of data from censuses on population and housing, agriculture, fisheries and economic activities; and development and maintenance of sampling frames and geographic information on population and housing, agriculture, fisheries and economic activities;
- (2) Standards – shall be responsible for the formulation and monitoring of statistical development programs, formulation of standards and classification, including glossary of statistical terms and geographic classification; and
- (3) Information Technology (IT) and Dissemination – shall be responsible for the development and maintenance of IT systems and programs, IT operations, statistical data archives, communication and information services.

The Deputy National Statistician for Civil Registration and Central Support shall supervise two (2) Assistant National Statisticians, who shall oversee the following offices:

- (1) Civil Registration – shall be responsible for the civil registry document management and archiving, data center, policy advocacy and research on civil registration matters, outlet and customer services and other civil registration concerns; and
- (2) Central Support – shall be responsible for the general administration, financial services, human resource management, human resource development and procurement.

SEC. 13. *Sectoral Statistics Office.* – The Sectoral Statistics Office shall:

- (a) Provide technical staff support to the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** in the areas of agriculture, natural resources, agrarian reform, mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water, energy, construction, foreign and domestic trade, services, science and technology, finance, investment, population, women and gender, health, nutrition, education, labor and employment, social welfare, governance, public order and justice;
- (b) Provide technical staff support to the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** in generating the national accounts and the development and maintenance of economic and social accounts;
- (c) Plan and conduct surveys as may be required, in accordance with the approved statistical calendar; and
- (d) Perform such other tasks as may be assigned by the National Statistician.

SEC. 14. *Censuses and Technical Coordination Office.* – The Censuses and Technical Coordination Office shall:

- (a) Prepare, conduct, process and disseminate census results in accordance with the approved statistical calendar;
- (b) Maintain and develop statistical standards and classification systems;
- (c) Provide technical assistance to other concerned government offices to meet their statistical requirements for policy-making, planning and programming;
- (d) Coordinate the activities of the Regional Statistical Services;
- (e) Provide information technology systems and programming and IT operations support for the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** projects;
- (f) Provide other [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** offices with cartographic services;
- (g) Maintain archives and communication and information services of [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** generated data;
- (h) Provide the data center for statistics and civil registration; and
- (i) Perform such other tasks as may be assigned by the National Statistician.

SEC. 15. *Civil Registration and Central Support Office.* – The Civil Registration and Central Support Office shall provide technical and support services to the various units of the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** in the areas of administrative services, financial management services and human resources. It shall likewise provide technical and support services for the efficient functioning of civil registration system and perform such other tasks as may be assigned by the National Statistician.

SEC. 16. *Field Statistical Services.* – A Regional Statistical Services Office (RSSO) and Provincial Statistical Office (PSO) shall be established in each of the administrative regions and provinces, respectively. The RSSO and PSO shall:

- (a) Provide technical staff support to the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**;
- (b) Provide technical assistance as may be required by the implementing agencies and local governments in the regions and provinces; and
- (c) Perform such other tasks as may be assigned by the National Statistician.

SEC. 17. *Philippine Statistical Research and Training Institute (PSRTI).* – The PSRTI is hereby created and shall be attached to the [NEDA] **PHILSTATSCOM** for purposes of policy coordination. As such, the Statistical Research and Training Center (SRTC) is hereby abolished and all SRTC assets and liabilities, appropriations, records and personnel, if any, shall be transferred to the PSRTI.

SEC. 18. *Functions of the PSRTI.* – The PSRTI shall carry out the following functions:

- (a) Develop a comprehensive and integrated research and training program on the theories, concepts and methodologies for the promotion of the statistical system;
- (b) Undertake research on statistical concepts, definitions and methods;
- (c) Promote collaborative research efforts among members of the academic community, data producers and users;
- (d) Conduct nondegree training programs to upgrade the quality of statistics personnel and expand the statistics human resource base in support of the needs of the PSS;
- (e) Provide scholarships, financial and other forms of assistance to build statistical manpower and enhance training and statistical research and development;
- (f) Serve as repository of all statistical researches and studies to be generated by the PSA as well as back-up/duplicate files of data archives and other statistical databases of the PSS; and
- (g) Invest its funds in such undertaking as it may deem wise or necessary to carry out its objectives with due consideration to existing guidelines on investing government funds.

SEC. 19. *Composition of the PSRTI.* – The PSRTI shall be headed by an Executive Director, who shall be nominated by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM** and appointed by the President of the Republic of the Philippines. The PSRTI Executive Director shall possess a Master's degree in Statistics.

The PSRTI shall have a governing board that shall formulate policies for its management and operations. The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** Chairperson shall be the Chairperson of the PSRTI Governing Board, with the following as members: Dean of the University of the Philippines' School of Statistics, Executive Director of the Philippine Social Science Council (PSSC), a representative of the NEDA and the Executive Director of the PSRTI, as *ex officio* members. The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** Chairperson may appoint two (2) representatives from the private sector to the PSRTI Governing Board from among a list of nominees submitted by the Board.

The PSRTI Governing Board shall meet at least every semester to discuss and formulate policies for the management and operations of the PSRTI. The PSRTI shall provide reasonable allowances to its Governing Board.

SEC. 20. *PSRTI Fellows and Associates.* – The PSRTI shall be authorized to engage professionals either as fellows or associates, for purposes of conducting training sessions and researches for the PSRTI. Fellows should have experience in research or training and have preferably earned a doctorate degree in Statistics, Economics, Social Sciences, Computer Sciences or related disciplines while associates should have earned at least a Masteral degree in these fields. Those so engaged by the PSRTI shall be issued appointments and paid fees as determined by the PSRTI, and as approved by the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**.

SEC. 21. *PSRTI Endowment Fund.* – The existing SRTC Endowment Fund shall be transferred to the PSRTI and serve as the initial PSRTI endowment fund. The PSRTI is authorized to accept into its endowment fund any contributions, donations, bequests, grants and loans from domestic and/or foreign sources, government appropriations and other incomes accruing from the operations of the PSRTI, for purposes of executing its mandate and functions.

The amount necessary to augment the endowment fund shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 22. *PSRTI Operating Funds.* – The amount appropriated for the operating fund of the SRTC under the current General Appropriations Act shall constitute the initial operating fund of the PSRTI. Thereafter, the government contribution necessary to support the research and training programs of the PSRTI shall be determined based on the annual financial plan approved by its Governing Board and submitted to the DBM.

SEC. 23. *Posting of Statistical Personnel in Government Offices.* – In the exercise of its functions and in accordance with the priorities set by the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**, the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** may post teams of its statistical personnel in other government offices to carry out the work program to be drawn up in coordination with the host offices. The posted teams shall be proportional to the size and needs of the government offices. Personnel posted in a government office shall be supervised by the Deputy National Statistician for Sectoral Statistics and shall render fortnightly statistical reports to the Office of the National Statistician. The heads of the host offices shall submit periodic performance evaluation reports on posted personnel to the National Statistician.

SEC. 24. *Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP).* – The PSDP shall consist of all statistical activities to be undertaken by the PSS in response to the requirements of development planning and policy formulation.

SEC. 25. *Obligation to Provide Information.* – The National Statistician shall determine whether a statistical inquiry or survey to be conducted is with or without an obligation to provide

information. If such obligation is stipulated, all respondents whether natural or legal persons shall be liable to reply to the statistical inquiry or survey. This section applies to all statistical inquiries or surveys conducted by other statistical offices in the PSS.

The respondents under this Act are required to give truthful and complete answers to statistical inquiries or surveys of the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** and other statistical offices of the PSS. The respondent is considered to have complied with the obligation only upon receipt of the duly completed statistical inquiry or survey forms. The government shall provide franking privileges, charges and postings to the survey offices, unless otherwise disallowed by law.

The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** is authorized to gather data from other government agencies for statistical purposes.

SEC. 26. Confidentiality of Information. – Individual data furnished by a respondent to statistical inquiries, surveys and censuses of the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall be considered privileged communication and as such shall be inadmissible as evidence in any proceeding.

The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** may release aggregated information from statistical inquiries, surveys and censuses in the form of summaries or statistical tables in which no reference to an individual, corporation, association, partnership, institution or business enterprise shall appear.

The National Statistician and all staff of the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall take a solemn oath regarding confidentiality of information. However, confidentiality of information does not apply to:

(a) Information in the form of a list or index of individual business firms, establishments or organizations that contain any or all of the following information:

- (1) The name, address and telephone numbers;
- (2) The business and products that they are engaged in; and
- (3) The specific ranges of number of employees.

(b) Microdata from statistical inquiries or survey form/questionnaire/schedule prepared by the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** for purposes of research, with care to ensure that identities of a particular person, business or organization will not be disclosed in whatever form; and

(c) Access to census data after one hundred (100) years for historical, genealogical, scientific or other research purposes.

SEC. 27. Penalties. – Respondents of primary data collection activities such as censuses and sample surveys are obliged to give truthful and complete answers to statistical inquiries. The gathering, consolidation and analysis of such data shall likewise be done in the most truthful and credible manner.

To ensure compliance, any violation of this Act shall result in the imposition of the penalty of one (1) year imprisonment and a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00). In cases where the respondent who fails to give a truthful and complete answer to such statistical inquiries is a corporation, the above penalty shall be imposed against the responsible officer, director, manager and/or agent of said corporation. In addition, such erring corporation or any other juridical entity, depending on the category of the enterprise or business concerned whether small, medium or large, shall be imposed a fine ranging from One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) to Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00).

Any person, including parties within the [PSA Board and the PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**, who breach the confidentiality of information, whether by carelessness, improper behavior, behavior with malicious intent, and use of confidential information for profit, are considered guilty of an offense and shall be liable to fines as prescribed by the PSA Board which shall not be less than Five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) nor more than Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00) and/or imprisonment of three (3) months but not to exceed one (1) year, subject to the degree of breach of information.

Failure to comply with the survey clearance provision shall be penalized by a fine of Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) to One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00), depending on the gravity and seriousness of such noncompliance.

SEC. 28. *Abolition of Existing Government Bodies.* – The NSO, the BAS of the Department of Agriculture, the BLES of the Department of Labor and Employment, and the NSCB shall be abolished and their appropriations, records, properties and personnel shall be transferred to the PSA.

SEC. 29. *Transitory Provisions.* – The [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall carry out the reorganization of the PSS in such a manner that personnel of the agencies absorbed by the [PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM** shall continue to perform their respective duties and responsibilities in a holdover capacity so as not to unduly delay the production of statistics from ongoing censuses, surveys and processing of administrative records.

SEC. 30. *Early Retirement, Separation Pay and Other Benefits.* – Personnel of the merged agencies who will not be absorbed into the new staffing pattern due to redundancy or failure to comply with the standards of competence and proficiency, or who will be offered positions under the new staffing pattern but who decline such appointment by reason of diminution in rank, benefits and work conditions, or who are offered positions under the new staffing pattern without any diminution in rank, benefits and work conditions but who decline such appointment, if qualified, 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.

SEC. 31. *Funds for Reorganization.* – The amount necessary for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act shall be taken from funds available to the agencies enumerated in Section 28 hereof. Additional requirements shall be charged to the appropriations under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be needed for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 32. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The [PSA Board together with the PSA] **PHILSTATSCOM**, the PSRTI, the NEDA and other concerned agencies of government that may be determined by the [PSA Board] **PHILSTATSCOM**, shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within ninety (90) days after its approval. Such rules and regulations shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

SEC. 33. *Separability Clause.* – If any part, section or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, no other parts, sections or provisions hereof shall be affected thereby.

SEC. 34. *Repealing Clause.* – Executive Order No. 121 is hereby repealed. All other laws, decrees, ordinances, rules, regulations, other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 35. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,