

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5798



Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines' pursuit of robust economic growth and improved public services relies heavily on the efficient and honest execution of its infrastructure program. Public works projects—including roads, bridges, flood control, transportation systems, and utilities—are the foundational pillars of national development, yet they are recurrently plagued by issues of corruption, mismanagement, and collusion. These irregularities lead to exorbitant project costs, substandard quality of construction, delayed completion, and ultimately, a tremendous waste of taxpayer money. The endemic nature of this problem severely undermines public trust, cripples the nation's competitive advantage, and deprives citizens of much-needed services.

While existing anti-graft bodies perform vital work, the complexity, technical nature, and significant financial scale of infrastructure projects necessitate a specialized, focused, and independent agency. Standard anti-corruption investigations often lack the specific engineering, financial, and project management expertise required to effectively uncover and prosecute sophisticated schemes like padding of costs, ghost projects, and manipulated bidding processes.

This bill seeks to establish the Independent People's Commission Against Corruption (IPCAC). The IPCAC is designed to be a dedicated, non-partisan, and expert-driven entity with exclusive jurisdiction over major infrastructure corruption cases.

Key features of the proposed Commission include:

- Independence: Its independence is guaranteed by its unique statutory creation and its non-political appointment process, ensuring it can investigate high-ranking officials without fear or favor.
- Specialized Focus: Its composition requires Commissioners to have expertise in fields directly related to infrastructure, ensuring thorough and technically sound investigations.
- Full Prosecutorial Powers: Granting it the authority to investigate, file cases, and prosecute before the Sandiganbayan ensures a direct and swift path to accountability.

The establishment of the IPCAC represents a critical institutional reform to safeguard the national treasury and ensure that public funds for infrastructure are used judiciously and effectively. This body will serve as a powerful deterrent and a mechanism to recover stolen public wealth, accelerating the country's development by ensuring quality, transparency, and integrity in all public works.

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



SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.

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AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE INDEPENDENT PEOPLE'S COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION (IPCAC), DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 "Independent People's Commission Against Corruption (IPCAC)".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to eliminate corruption in all forms, particularly within the planning, bidding, execution, and post-completion phases of public infrastructure projects. The State shall promote transparency, accountability, and integrity in the use of public funds allocated for nation-building, and shall establish an independent, non-partisan, and specialized body to investigate and prosecute such corrupt activities.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the Commission.* - There is hereby created an Independent People's Commission Against Corruption (IPCAC), hereinafter referred to as the "Commission" or "IPCAC", an independent body tasked to investigate anomalies in all government infrastructure projects. The Commission shall be an independent and non-partisan body attached to the Office of the President for budgetary purposes only.

SEC. 4. *Composition and Qualifications.* - The Commission shall be composed of five (5) Commissioners, all of whom shall be natural-born citizens of the Philippines, at least forty (40) years of age, with proven probity, integrity, and independence, and with a minimum of ten (10) years of professional experience in fields relevant to infrastructure, such as engineering, law,

accountancy, or public administration. The President shall appoint the Commissioners from a list of nominees submitted by a special ad-hoc committee. The Chairperson of the Commission shall be a retired Justice of the Supreme Court or *Sandiganbayan*.

SEC. 5. *Powers and Functions.*

The Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Investigate and Recommend Prosecution: Exclusively investigate and conduct preliminary inquiry on all cases involving alleged corruption in public infrastructure projects amounting to P50,000,000.00 and above, involving any official or employee of the government, and recommend prosecution to the Department of Justice (DOJ) or the Office of the Ombudsman.
- b. Subpoena Powers: Issue *subpoena ad testificandum* and *subpoena duces tecum* to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents.
- c. Contempt Powers: Cite persons in contempt for refusal to obey lawful orders.
- d. Hold Departure Order: Directly recommend to the proper courts the issuance of an HDO against an individual or individuals under investigation by the IPCAC.
- e. Arrest and Search: Apply for warrants of arrest and search warrants with the appropriate courts.
- f. Preventive Suspension: Recommend to the appropriate authority the preventive suspension of public officials or employees under investigation.
- g. Filing of Cases: Recommend the filing of appropriate criminal, civil, administrative cases against those found to be involved in infrastructure corruption before the Sandiganbayan or the appropriate courts.
- h. Policy Review: Propose policy and legislative reforms to Congress and the Executive Department to improve procurement, planning, and oversight systems for infrastructure projects.

SEC. 6. *Non-Interference Clause.* - No court, except the Supreme Court, shall issue any restraining order or writ of preliminary injunction against the Commission in any case, dispute, or controversy arising from or relating to the enforcement of this Act.

SEC 7. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to carry out the initial operation of IPCAC shall be charged against the appropriate funds of the Office of the President. Thereafter, such amounts necessary for its continuous operation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and operative.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,