

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **6144**



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

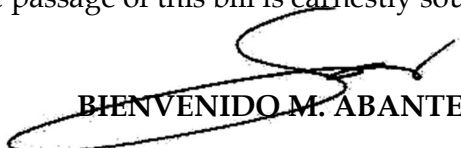
AN ACT
AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO
PURCHASE LAND AND CONSTRUCT THEREON AN ADEQUATE AND
PERMANENT BUILDING FOR ITS CENTRAL OFFICE, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution declares that the State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights (Sec. 11, Art. II), mandates the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) as an independent office tasked with the vital role of investigating all forms of human rights violations involving civil and political rights (Sec. 18[1], Art XIII) and provides for the automatic and regular release of the CHR's annual appropriations, underscoring the State's commitment to its independence and effective functioning (Sec. 17[4], Art. XIII).

Unfortunately, since its creation on May 5, 1987, and despite its constitutional mandate, the CHR continues to face challenges in fulfilling its duties due to inadequate and temporary office facilities. The CHR has been renting in the old dilapidated Commission on Audit building at the University of the Philippines for several years now. Providing the CHR with a permanent and adequate building will not only enhance its operational efficiency and provide accessibility and convenience to those who desire to avail itself of its services, but also symbolize the State's unwavering commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights. This bill seeks to authorize the CHR to acquire land and construct a permanent building thereon for its offices, similar to the authority granted to other government agencies under existing laws, such as Republic Act No. 5143, which pertains to the Public Service Commission. The measure will ensure that the CHR is equipped with the necessary infrastructure to perform its constitutional functions independently, efficiently, and effectively.

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


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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 "**Commission on Human Rights Building Act.**"

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to strengthen the independence, operational capacity, and efficiency of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and to promote and portray its respectability by providing it with adequate, permanent, and decent office facilities, in accordance with its constitutional mandate.

SEC. 3. Authority to Acquire Land and Construct Building. — The Commission on Human Rights is hereby authorized to acquire, by purchase or other legal means, a suitable parcel of land in Metro Manila or any other appropriate location, and to construct thereon an adequate and permanent building for its central offices, including necessary facilities for its operations. Provided, that the offices and facilities that will be constructed shall include an adequate space to be used exclusively as Human Rights Museum to be administered and managed by the National Museum of the Philippines (**a Human Rights Museum**), to document, exhibit, and educate the public on all recorded human rights violations committed from the Spanish colonization of the Philippines up to the present, in order to foster respect for human rights and prevent the recurrence of violations thereof.

SEC. 4. Appropriation of Funds. — The amount of Seven Hundred Million Pesos (P700,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated from the General Appropriations Act for the purchase of land and the construction thereon of an adequate and permanent building for the CHR, including necessary facilities for its operation, to include an adequate space to be used exclusively as a Human Rights Museum.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — The Commission on Human Rights, in coordination with the Department of Budget Management, Department of Public Works and Highways, National Museum of the Philippines, and other relevant agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.