



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 7939

Introduced by Representatives Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Yedda Marie K. Romualdez, Andrew Julian K. Romualdez and Jude A. Acidre

AN ACT
EXTENDING THE VALIDITY OF THE AUTHORIZATION TO SOLEMNIZE MARRIAGE ISSUED TO PRIESTS, MINISTERS, IMAMS, OR RABBIS, FROM A PERIOD OF THREE (3) YEARS TO FIVE (5) YEARS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6514, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This proposed measure aims to 1) extend the validity of the authorization to solemnize marriages from three (3) years to five (5) years; 2) ensure the inclusion of imams among the religious leaders duly authorized to perform marriage rites; and 3) institutionalize a seminar requirement for priests, ministers, imams, and rabbis as a prerequisite to the renewal of their authorization.

Marriage is a vital social institution that carries profound legal, moral, and cultural significance. The authority to solemnize marriages granted to priests, ministers, and rabbis ensures that this institution is respected, regulated, and properly recorded under the law.

Under Republic Act No. 6514, the authorization granted to priests, ministers, rabbis, and other religious officers to solemnize marriages is valid for a period of three (3) years. After the expiration of this period, they are required to renew their

authorization with the appropriate government authority. However, the limited validity period poses administrative challenges, resulting in frequent renewals, additional documentary requirements, and undue burden both on the religious sectors and on the concerned government agencies.

By extending the period of validity, the measure promotes administrative efficiency and reduces bureaucratic workload. Meanwhile, the inclusion of imams affirms the State's recognition of the diverse religious practices in the Philippines and ensures inclusivity in the exercise of religious functions. Finally, the requirement to undergo a seminar prior to renewal reinforces accountability and ensures that solemnizing officers remain updated with existing civil laws and regulations relating to marriage, family relations, and the registration of vital events.

The passage of this bill strikes a vital balance between enhancing administrative efficiency and upholding the professional and ethical standards of solemnizing officers, while upholding the constitutional guarantee of equal respect and recognition for all religions.



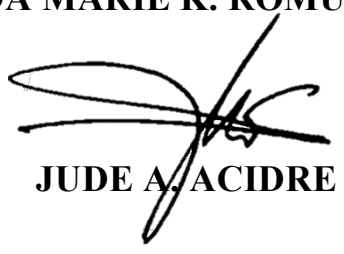
FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ



YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ



ANDREW JULIAN K. ROMUALDEZ



JUDE A. ACIDRE



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

SECTION 1. Section 1 of Republic Act No. 6514 is hereby amended to read
as follows:

"Section 1. Article 95 of Republic Act Numbered Three Hundred and eighty-
six is hereby amended to read as follows:"

"Art 95. The public official in charge of registration of priests, ministers, **IMAMS** or rabbis with the approval of the proper head of department, is hereby authorized to prepare the necessary forms and to promulgate rules and regulations for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of this Title: provided, that the authorization to solemnize marriages shall be valid for a period of [three] **FIVE** years, shall expire on the thirty-first day of December of every [third] **FIFTH** year, and shall be renewable within the said month of December: provided, further, that the authorizations to solemnize marriage issued prior to and valid on the date of the approval of this amendatory Act shall continue to be valid until the thirty-first day of December of the year when this amendatory Act takes effect, any regulation to the contrary notwithstanding: provided, finally, that the words "my authority to solemnize marriage expires on December 31, 19_" shall be indicated in all marriage contracts just below the title of the person so authorized to solemnize marriages."

"Priest or ministers, **IMAMS**, or rabbis belonging to one diocese, religious order, congregation, or sect, may apply for authorization, through their bishop, head of religious order or congregation chief of ministers, or duly authorized representative."

"PRIOR TO THE EXPIRATION OF THEIR AUTHORITY TO SOLEMNIZE MARRIAGES, PRIESTS, MINISTERS, IMAMS, AND RABBIS SHALL FIRST ATTEND A SEMINAR AS A REQUIREMENT FOR THE RENEWAL OF THEIR AUTHORIZATION."

"The public official who is in charge of registration may also by regulation fix and collect fees for the authorization to solemnize marriage."

SECTION 2. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid, the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid and subsisting.

SECTION 3. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, issuances, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 4. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,