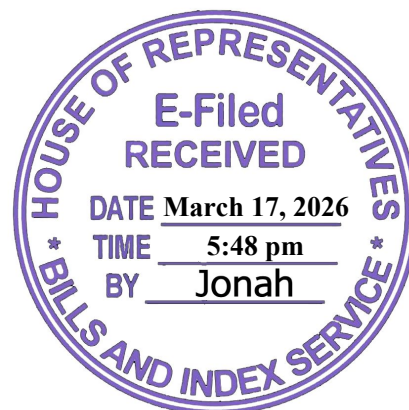


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8637



Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to create an Independent People's Commission (IPC) to investigate and document anomalies involved in the completion of infrastructure projects, and to recommend reforms that will strengthen transparency, accountability, and technical oversight in the use of public funds.

Corruption in public infrastructure remains a persistent issue to national development. The Philippines ranked one hundred and twentieth (120th) out of one hundred and eighty two (182) countries monitored in the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) report¹. This reflects continuing concerns regarding public sector corruption and weak accountability mechanisms. Infrastructure spending is particularly vulnerable to corruption because of the huge amounts of public funds involved in procurement, project implementation, and contract variation.

The Commission on Audit (COA) has repeatedly reported systemic deficiencies in infrastructure implementation. In 2024, COA flagged seven hundred and forty seven (747) projects implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) that became unusable and idle because of technical defects, improper supervision, and violations of contract provisions², which has resulted in government losses of approximately P6.45 Billion. These findings highlight the need for a specialized and independent oversight mechanism that focuses specifically on infrastructure integrity. While institutions such as the COA, the Department of Justice, and congressional oversight bodies conduct investigations and audits, they primarily address compliance or criminal liability. The technical complexity of modern infrastructure projects requires a multidisciplinary approach that integrates legal, engineering, forensic accounting, and governance expertise.

The proposed IPC will serve as an independent fact finding body composed of experts from the judiciary, engineering, forensic accounting, civil society, and the academe. This proposed measure strengthens the State's capacity to detect ghost projects, overpricing schemes, substandard construction, and other forms of corruption in infrastructure

¹ CABALZA, DEXTER. (2026, February 12). *PH drops anew in world corruption rankings*. Inquirer. <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/308729/ph-drops-anew-in-world-corruption-rankings>

² SALONGA, KAXANDRA. 2025. *COA: Gov't lost P6.45B in 2024 from 'unusable or idle' DPWH projects*. <https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/nation/2025/12/4/coa-gov-t-lost-p6-45b-in-2024-from-unusable-or-idle-dpwh-projects-1308>

development by granting the IPC access to government records, conduct technical investigations, and issue subpoenas.

Through strengthened investigative oversight and public accountability, this vital piece of legislation ensures that government infrastructure projects deliver safe, efficient, and sustainable public services, and that public funds are used solely for the benefit of the Filipino people, rather than enriching a favored few.

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



HON. ERIC G. YAP

Republic of the Philippines
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HOUSE BILL NO. 8637

Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

AN ACT
CREATING AN INDEPENDENT PEOPLE’S COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE
ANOMALIES IN ALL GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS,
DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, 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 “*Independent People’s Commission Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – As enshrined in the Philippine constitution, public office is public trust, and that public officers and employees must at all times be accountable to the people. It is hereby the declared policy of the State to recognize that government infrastructure projects inherently involve public interest, as public funds are utilized. Moreover, as a recognized policy in government auditing, all government resources must be safeguarded against loss or wastage through illegal or improper disposition, with a view of ensuring the economy, and the efficiency and effectiveness in government operations. Further, the State shall ensure that public funds are utilized honestly and transparently in the construction of all government infrastructure. Towards this end, a non-partisan and independent commission must be established to investigate and recommend measures to address corruption, mismanagement, and negligence in these projects.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the Independent People’s Commission.* – There is hereby created an Independent People’s Commission, herein referred to as the Commission, to document and investigate anomalies in all government infrastructure projects, and to recommend measures to address corruption, mismanagement, and negligence in the planning, procurement and implementation of public infrastructure projects.

The Commission shall specialize in the technical, engineering, and financial audit of such projects including, but not limited to, procurement processes, contract variations, right-of-way acquisitions, and project implementation. It shall serve as the primary repository of government infrastructure data.

SEC. 4. *Mandate and Scope.* – The Commission shall serve as an independent, non-partisan, and fact-finding body mandated to investigate, document, and recommend

actions on anomalies in government infrastructure projects. In the exercise of this mandate, the Commission shall:

- a) Conduct comprehensive, independent, and technical investigations of all reported or alleged anomalies in the planning, procurement, and implementation of government infrastructure projects, including but not limited to, corruption, ghost projects, overpricing, and the use of substandard materials. Such investigations shall cover all projects implemented by the National Government, its agencies and instrumentalities, local government units (LGUs), and government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs);
- b) Identify individuals and entities, both in the public and private sectors, who are responsible for, participated in, or benefited from such anomalies;
- c) In coordination with the Office of the Ombudsman, the Department of Justice (DOJ), or other concerned agencies, the Commission may recommend the prosecution or further investigation of individuals or entities; and
- d) Formulate and submit to the President and Congress a set of concrete and actionable recommendations for legislative and executive reforms to prevent future anomalies.

SEC. 5. *Composition and Appointment.* – The members of the Commission shall be composed of the following:

- a) a retired Supreme Court Justice or Court of Appeals Justice, who shall serve as Chairperson;
- b) a Certified Public Accountant with expertise in auditing or a forensic accounting specialist with professional certifications such as Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) and Certified in Finance Forensics (CFF) and demonstrable experience in fraud detection in government or public institutions, with at least ten (10) years of experience either in public or private practice;
- c) a Civil Engineer or an Architect, with at least ten (10) years of experience either in public or private practice;
- d) a representative from a reputable non-governmental organization (NGO), the primary purpose and/or expertise of which is in good governance, anti-corruption, public financial management, public procurement and open contracting, or citizen monitoring of infrastructure projects; and
- e) a representative from the academe with expertise in governance reform and corruption prevention studies, especially in the context of public administration, disaster and climate risk management, natural resource management, urban planning and development, or application of artificial intelligence and data science.

The members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines, with a term of three (3) years, and may be once reappointed. To ensure independence and impartiality, the chairperson shall be chosen from a list of nominees

submitted by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines; and the other members, from a list of nominees submitted by the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers, United Architects of the Philippines, and a recognized national coalition of governance and anti-corruption NGOs. Each member shall be of good moral character, of unquestionable integrity, or known probity and patriotism, and with recognized competence in their respective fields.

In case of death, resignation, or removal of any member, the vacancy shall be filled by the appointment of a new member to complete the unexpired period of the term of the member concerned.

No member of the Commission shall, within one (1) year after the expiration of their term, be eligible for appointment or designation to any office or employment in any government agency or GOCC engaged in infrastructure, planning, procurement, or implementation.

SEC. 6. *Powers and Functions.* – The Commission is hereby granted powers related to the investigation of all government infrastructure projects. The authority of the Commission, which shall be concurrent with that of other agencies vested by law with investigative powers, shall not be exercised as to diminish or encroach upon ongoing investigations conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman or the DOJ. To the extent permitted by the law and in accordance with delegation by the Office of the Ombudsman or the DOJ, the Commission may assist in specific areas arising from its investigations.

In the exercise of its mandate, the Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

a) Investigative Powers

i) Investigate government infrastructure projects, *motu proprio*, upon referral by the Commission on Audit (COA), or through a verified complaint from any person or from any source in whatever form concerning matters within the Commission's mandate and jurisdiction;

ii) To terminate within sixty (60) days therefrom an investigation opened within fifteen (15) days from the submission of the recommendation from COA or a verified complaint, regardless of the manner of its initiation;

b) To issue *subpoena ad testificandum* and *subpoena duces tecum* to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents, records, and other evidence;

c) To administer oaths and take testimony;

d) To have full and unrestricted access to all government records, including but not limited to, contracts, bidding documents, financial and audit reports, and official correspondences related to the projects under investigation;

e) To file appropriate charges against government officials and employees who shall obstruct any inquiry and investigation of the IPC;

f) To conduct private and public hearings to gather information, with due regard for the rights of all persons;

g) To seek the assistance of any department, bureau, office, or agency of the government, including the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), to ensure the integrity of the investigation and the protection of witnesses;

h) To recommend to the Department of Justice (DOJ) the grant of witness immunity for any person who provides vital material information relevant to the investigation; and

i) To promulgate its rules and regulations, and rules of procedures as it deems necessary to efficiently and effectively carry out its objectives, within the ambit of the law.

SEC. 7. *Mandatory Report.* – The IPC shall submit its final report to the President and Congress within thirty (30) working days from the termination of its investigation. The report shall detail its findings, name individuals and entities found culpable, recommend the filing of criminal, civil and/or administrative charges, and provide specific recommendations for legislative and executive action. The report shall be made public immediately upon submission.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Office of the President. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued operation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *Organizational Structure and Staffing Pattern.* – The IPC shall determine its organizational structure and staffing pattern, subject to the approval of the Department of Budget and Management, and consistent with civil service laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,