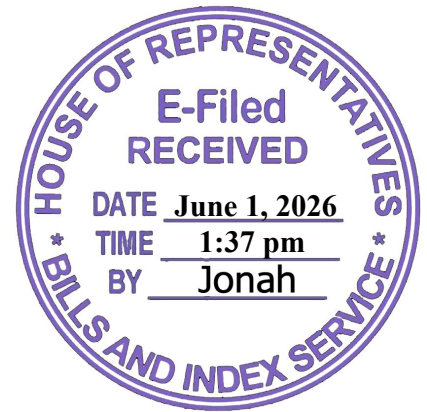




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



House Bill No. 9593

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Education remains one of the most powerful instruments for national development, social mobility, technological advancement, and economic transformation. As the country confronts the challenges of industrial modernization, digital transformation, and global competitiveness, there is an urgent need to strengthen institutions that specialize in technical, vocational, applied scientific, and professional education. The Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), as one of the largest state universities in the country and a leading institution in providing affordable and accessible higher education, is uniquely positioned to fulfill this national role.

Since its establishment, PUP has consistently produced graduates who contribute significantly to the nation's workforce, public service, industry, entrepreneurship, research, and innovation. However, the increasing complexity of economic and technological demands requires a stronger institutional framework that will enable the University to exercise greater academic leadership, expand its research and extension functions, strengthen industry linkages, and serve as a model for polytechnic education throughout the country.

This measure seeks to formally strengthen the Polytechnic University of the Philippines as the country's First National Polytechnic University. The bill affirms PUP's leadership role in advancing polytechnic education and mandates it to provide guidance and support to other polytechnic state universities and colleges in developing professional, technical, and applied academic programs responsive to national development priorities.

The proposed legislation further enhances the University's institutional and fiscal autonomy, strengthens its governance structure, expands its academic and administrative capacities, protects and maximizes the productive use of its assets and landholdings, and grants fiscal incentives necessary to support its educational mission. It likewise provides safeguards to ensure transparency, accountability, and

responsible stewardship of university resources while preserving the institution's academic independence and public character.

By elevating and strengthening PUP as the National Polytechnic University, the State invests in a strategic institution capable of producing highly skilled professionals, advancing applied research, promoting technological innovation, supporting industrial development, and expanding educational opportunities for millions of Filipinos. This measure is expected to contribute significantly to nation-building by cultivating a globally competitive workforce equipped to meet the demands of the twenty-first century economy.

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


EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9593

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representative
EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA

AN ACT
GRANTING DISTINCTIVE HONORS AND PRIVILEGES TO NATIONAL ATHLETES,
CREATING A NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND FOR SPORTS HEROES, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION. 1. Section 1 of PD 1341 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 1. Declaration of Policy. The Polytechnic University of the Philippines is hereby strengthened into the Country's National Polytechnic University. In order to execute its mandate, it is hereby declared as the country's First National Polytechnic University. Along with its elevated status as the country's first national polytechnic university, the University will aid support to other polytechnic state universities and colleges to raise the bar by having the former serve as the latter's guide in the development and delivery of professional and technical programs.

The University shall enjoy institutional autonomy and fiscal autonomy. It shall be treated in a manner consistent with its institutional requirements by the service-wide agencies in the exercise of their respective jurisdiction. Taking into account national goals and priorities, it shall exclusively determine its teaching, research, and extensions thrust, plans, policies, programs, and standards, consistent with the policies standards, and guidelines promulgated by the Commission on Higher Education. On the basis of such determination, the National Polytechnic University shall recommend its annual budget to the President of the Republic of the Philippines and Congress. Appropriations for the University shall not be reduced by the legislature below the amount appropriated for the previous year and after approval shall be automatically and regularly released."

SEC. 2. Section 2, of PD 1341 is hereby amended to read as follows:

1
2 "Section 2. Primary Purpose. The University shall offer primarily
3 higher occupational, technical, and professional instruction and training in
4 the fields of engineering and architecture, applied sciences, accountancy,
5 law, education, business and management, and shall be strengthened as
6 the country's National Polytechnic University.
7

8 It shall also promote applied research, advance studies, and
9 progressive leadership in the stated fields. As a national polytechnic
10 university, PUP is committed in implementing programs designed to
11 address the pressing social and economic needs by rendering services to
12 individuals and communities and empowering citizenry for sustainable
13 development."
14

15 **SEC. 3.** Section 3 of PD 1341 is hereby amended to read as follows:
16

17 "Section 3. Secondary Purpose. The University shall offer
18 undergraduate and graduate programs in the field of accountancy,
19 engineering and architecture, applied sciences, law, education, business,
20 and management. In addition, the University shall offer other programs in
21 the polytechnic areas in light of its purpose as a national polytechnic
22 university.
23

24 **SEC. 4.** Section 4 of PD 1341 hereby amended to read as follows:
25

26 "Section 4. The University Administration. The Administration of the
27 university shall be vested in the President of the university who shall
28 render full-time service. He shall be appointed by the Board of Regents,
29 upon the recommendation of a duly constituted search committee. He
30 shall have a term of six (6) years without an eligibility for reappointment
31 for another term: Provided that this provision shall not adversely affect the
32 terms of the incumbents, that the incumbent President shall become the
33 first president of the university upon effectivity of this Act; Provided further,
34 that in case where no appointment was made thereafter, the incumbent
35 President shall continue to hold the office in a hold-over capacity, such
36 period shall in no case be more than 90 days.
37

38 The President shall be assisted by an Executive Vice President, Vice
39 Presidents for academic affairs, administration, research, planning and
40 development, finance, student affairs, external affairs, who shall be
41 appointed by the Board upon the President's recommendation without
42 prejudice to the appointment of additional Vice Presidents when so
43 warranted. In case of vacancy by reason of death resignation, removal for
44 cause or incapacity of the President to perform the functions of his office,
45 the Board of Regents shall have the authority to designate an officer-in-
46 charge pending the appointment of a new president. In case of vacancy
47 in the office of the President as mentioned in the immediately preceding
48 paragraph, his successors shall hold office for the unexpired term.
49

50 **SEC. 5.** Section 5 of PD 1341 is hereby amended to read as follows:

1 "Section 5. Powers and Duties of the President. Specifically, the President
2 of the University shall have the following powers and duties in addition to those
3 normally appertaining to the Office of the President of the University:

- 4 a. He shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the University as such,
5 progressive and dynamic, ethical, and intellectual administrative
6 leadership in the University is expected of him and vested in him;
- 7 b. He shall be the head of the University Faculties and of any branch
8 thereof;
- 9 c. He shall have general supervision over all academic as well as
10 business and financial operations of the University;
- 11 d. He shall promulgate and enforce general policies affecting any unit of
12 the University and take such actions which in his judgment are
13 necessary for the protection of property and general interest of the
14 University, students and personnel and for the operation of the
15 University as a whole and shall inform the Board on all matters relating
16 to the operation and welfare of the University;
- 17 e. He shall appoint qualified persons to fill all vacancies and new
18 positions subject to the approval of the Board and make such other
19 arrangements to meet emergencies occurring between meetings of
20 the Board so that the work of the University shall not suffer;
- 21 f. He shall institute disciplinary action against any member of the
22 University personnel, faculty or non-faculty as well as any student of
23 the University whose actions adversely affect the general interest of
24 the University.
- 25 g. He shall decide appeals in controversies between ranking officials of
26 the University, his decisions being final and conclusive;
- 27 h. He shall grant or deny sabbatical leaves and leaves of absence without
28 pay and/or extension of such leaves as well as extension of fellowships
29 or any form of scholarship for a period not exceeding one academic
30 year if the budget permits and for reasons he may deem satisfactory;
- 31 i. He shall make ad-interim appointments;
- 32 j. He shall grant or withhold permission to reveal confidential matters
33 affecting the University or any unit thereof, as well as any action taken
34 by the Board of Regents;
- 35 k. He shall grant permission for the use of buildings and premises of the
36 University for academic, professional and scientific conventions, for
37 students and related activities and to fix the fee thereof;
- 38 l. He is authorized to join the execution of all contracts, deeds, and
39 instruments for the proper conduct of the business of the University
40 and to assign the same in behalf of the University;
- 41 m. He shall prepare an annual report on the work of the past year and
42 needs of the current year including a budget with estimates of income
43 and expenditures; and
- 44 n. He shall have such other powers as may be specifically authorized by
45 the Board of Regents. He may delegate in writing any of his specific
46 functions to any office.

47
48 SEC. 6. Section 6 of PD 1341 is hereby amended to read as follows:
49

1 "Section 6. The Board of Regents. The governing body of the
2 University shall be the Board of Regents of the Polytechnic University of
3 the Philippines (hereinafter referred to the Board).
4

5 1. **Composition.** The Board shall be composed of:

- 6 a. The Chairperson of the Commission of Higher Education
7 as Chairperson;
- 8 b. The President of the University as Co-Chairperson;
- 9 c. The Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Education,
10 Arts and Culture;
- 11 d. The Chairperson of the House Committee on Higher and
12 Technical Education;
- 13 e. The Director-General of the National Economic
14 Development Authority;
- 15 f. The Secretary of the Department of Science and
16 Technology;
- 17 g. The President of the Alumni Association who will serve for
18 a period of two (2) years;
- 19 h. One Faculty Regent representing all teaching personnel,
20 elected by the said personnel in accordance with the rules
21 and qualifications set out by the same constituency who
22 shall serve for a period of two (2) years;
- 23 i. One Student Regent, elected by the students in
24 accordance with the rules and qualifications set out by
25 said constituency, who shall serve for a period of one
26 (1) year;
- 27 j. One Staff Regent representing all non-teaching personnel,
28 elected in accordance with the rules and regulations set
29 out by said constituency, who shall serve for a period of
30 two (2) years; and
- 31 k. Three (3) other Regents who have distinguished
32 themselves in their professions or fields of specialization.
33 All these Regents shall be appointed by the Board as
34 recommended by the search committee organized for the
35 purpose and shall each serve for a term of two (2) years.
36

37 The faculty and the student council shall be represented
38 by their respective federations. The private sector
39 representatives shall be appointed by the Board of Regents
40 upon recommendation of a duly constituted search committee.
41

42 2. **Compensation.** The members shall serve without compensation,
43 but they shall be reimbursed for necessary expense incurred in
44 their attendance of meetings of the Board or in connection with
45 their official business authorized by resolution of the Board.
46

47 3. **Vacancy.** In case of vacancy in the Board, except for the
48 President of the University, such vacancy shall be filled in the
49 same manner as provided for the predecessor and such
50 appointee shall hold the office only for the unexpired portion of

1 the term. In case of Regents representing a particular sector,
2 their membership shall cease upon suspension, separation or
3 recall. No person, however, who has succeeded and served for
4 more than 3 years of the unexpired portion shall be eligible for
5 appointment as president.
6

7 **SEC. 7.** Section 7 of PD 1341 is hereby amended to read as follows:
8

9 "Section 7. Powers and Duties of the Governing Board. The governing
10 board shall have the following specific powers and duties in addition to its
11 general powers of administration and the exercise of all the powers
12 granted to the board of directors of a corporation under Section 36 of
13 Batas Pambansa Blg. 68 otherwise known as the Corporation Code of the
14 Philippines;

- 15 a. to enact rules and regulations not contrary to law as may be
16 necessary to carry out the purpose and functions of the
17 university;
- 18 b. to receive and appropriate all sums as may be provided for the
19 support of the university in the manner it may determine, in its
20 discretion, to carry out the purpose and functions of the
21 university;
- 22 c. to receive in trust legacies, gifts and donations of real and
23 personal properties of all kinds, to administer and dispose the
24 same when necessary for the benefit of the university, subject to
25 limitations, directions and instructions of the donors, if any. Such
26 donations shall be exempt from all taxes and shall be considered
27 as deductible items from the income tax of the donor;
- 28 d. to fix the tuition fees and other necessary school charges such
29 as but not limited to matriculation fees, graduation fees and
30 laboratory fees, as the board may deem proper to impose after
31 due consultations with the involved sectors. Such fees and
32 charges, including government subsidies and other income
33 generated by the university, shall constitute special trust funds
34 and shall be deposited in any authorized government depository
35 bank and all interest that shall accrue therefrom shall form part
36 of the same fund for the use of the university. Any provision of
37 existing laws, rules and regulations to the contrary
38 notwithstanding, any income generated by the university from
39 tuition fees and other charges, as well as from the operation of
40 auxiliary services and land grants, shall be retained by the
41 university and may be disbursed by the Board of Regents for
42 instruction, research, extension, or other programs/projects of
43 the university; Provided that all fiduciary fees shall be disbursed
44 for the specific purposes for which they are collected. If for reason
45 of control, the university shall not be able to pursue any project
46 for which funds have been appropriated and allocated under its
47 approved program of expenditures, the Board of Regents may
48 authorize the use of said funds for any reasonable purpose,
49 which in its discretion, may be necessary and urgent for the
50 attainment of the objectives and goals of the university, Provided

- 1 further, that a portion of any amount of fees increased, however,
2 shall inure to the benefit of the College or Institute for the purpose
3 of faculty, physical facilities and equipment development.
- 4 e. to authorize the construction or repair of its buildings,
5 machineries, equipment and other facilities and the purchase and
6 acquisition of real and personal properties including necessary
7 supplies, materials and equipment. Purchases and other
8 transactions entered into by the university through the Board of
9 Regents shall be exempt from all taxes and duties.
- 10 f. to appoint upon the recommendation of the president, vice
11 presidents, deans, directors, heads of departments, faculty
12 members and other officials and employees of the University;
- 13 g. to fix and adjust salaries of faculty members and administrative
14 officials and employees subject to the provisions of the revised
15 compensation and classification system and other pertinent
16 budget and compensation laws governing hours of service and
17 such other duties and conditions as it may deem proper to grant
18 them, at its discretion, leaves of absence under such regulation
19 as it may promulgate, any provision of existing law to the contrary
20 notwithstanding, and to remove them for cause in accordance
21 with the requirements of due process of law;
- 22 h. to approve the curricula, institutional programs, and rules of
23 discipline drawn by the administrative and academic councils as
24 herein provided;
- 25 i. to set policies on admission and graduation of students;
- 26 j. to award honorary degrees upon persons in recognition of
27 outstanding contribution in the field of education, public service,
28 arts, science and technology or in any field of specialization
29 within the academic competence of the university and to
30 authorize the award of certificates of completion of non-degree
31 and non-traditional courses;
- 32 k. to absorb non-chartered tertiary institutions within their
33 respective provinces in coordination with the CHED and in
34 consultation with the Department of Budget and Management
35 and to offer therein needed programs or courses to promote and
36 carry out equal access to educational opportunity mandated by
37 the Constitution;
- 38 i. to establish research and extension centers of the SUC where
39 such will promote the development of the latter;
- 40 l. to establish professorial chairs in the university and to provide
41 fellowships to qualified faculty members and scholarship to
42 deserving students;
- 43 m. to delegate any of its powers and duties provided for hereabove
44 to the president and/or other officials of the university as it may
45 deem appropriate so as to expedite the administration of the
46 affairs of the university;
- 47 n. to authorize an external management audit of the institution and
48 to institute reforms, including academic and structural changes,
49 on the basis of the audit results and recommendations:

- o. to collaborate with other governing boards of SUCs within the province or the region, in coordination with the CHED and the Department of Budget and Management, the restructuring of said colleges and universities to become more efficient, relevant, productive, and competitive;
- p. to enter into joint ventures with business and industry for the profitable development and management of the economic assets of the college or institution, the proceeds from which to be used for the development and strengthening of the university;
- q. to develop consortia and other forms of linkages with local government units, institutions and agencies, both public and private, local and foreign, in furtherance of the purposes and objectives of the institution.
- r. to develop academic arrangements for institution capability building with appropriate institutions and agencies, public or private, local or foreign, and to appoint experts/specialists as consultants, or visiting or exchange professors, scholars, researchers, as the case may be;
- s. to set up the adoption of modern and innovative modes of transmitting knowledge such as the use of information technology, the dual system, open learning, community laboratory etc., for the promotion of greater access to higher education;
- t. to establish policy guidelines and procedures for participative decision-making and transparency within the institution;
- u. to create, organize, reorganize, merge or abolish colleges, institutes, and other academic and administrative units of the University; and
- v. to privatize, where most advantageous to the institution, management of non-academic services such as health, food, building or grounds or property maintenance and similar such other objectives."

SEC. 8. Section 8 of PD 1341 is hereby amended insofar as a section title, and to read as follows:

"Section 8. Quorum and Services of Processes. - A quorum of the Board of Regents shall consist of a majority of all members. All processes against the Board of Regents shall be served on the President or Secretary thereof."

SEC. 9. Section 9 of PD 1341 is hereby amended insofar as a section title was inserted, and to read as follows:

"Section 9. Meetings. - Regular meetings of the Board of Regents shall be held at least once every quarter. The Chairman of the Board of Regents may call a special meeting whenever necessary. In both cases, notice of such meetings shall be issued at least three (3) days prior to the meeting."

SEC. 10. Section 10 of PD 1341 is hereby amended to read as follows;

1 "Section 10. University Officials. The administration of the university shall
2 be vested in the President. The President shall be assisted by the Executive
3 Vice President, the Vice-President for Administration, the Vice-President for
4 Academic Affairs, the Vice- President for Student Affairs, the Vice-President for
5 Research and Extension, the Vice-President for Planning and Development,
6 the Vice-President for Finance, the Vice- President for External Affairs, the
7 Secretary of the University and such other academic and administrative officials,
8 whose positions and functions are deemed necessary to assist in the effective
9 and efficient administration of the University as may be determined by the
10 Board of Regents."

11
12 **SEC. 11.** A new Section 11 is hereby inserted and to read as follows:

13
14 "Section 11. The Faculty. The teaching staff of each college shall constitute
15 its faculty. The College Faculty shall be presided over by a Dean. The Dean shall
16 be appointed by the Board of Regents, upon recommendation of the President,
17 selected from a shortlist of three nominees submitted by a special selection
18 committee established for the purpose. If a dean fails to complete his/her term,
19 the President shall appoint an Acting Dean while a search process is in progress.
20 In no case shall the search and election of the next Dean be longer than sixty
21 (60) calendar days from the date when the vacancy occurs."

22
23 **SEC. 12.** A new Section 12-A is hereby inserted amending PD 1341 to read as
24 follows:

25
26 "Section 12-A. Land Grants and Other Real Properties of the University. -

- 27 a. The State shall support the Polytechnic University of the
28 Philippines as the national polytechnic university in the form of
29 lump sum amount, through general appropriations and other
30 financial benefits, and in kind, through land grants and donations
31 and use of other real properties. To carry out the intent of these
32 grants, income derived from the development of all land grants
33 and real properties shall be used to further the ends of the
34 National Polytechnic University, as may be decided by the board;
35 b. Such parcels of land ceded by law, decree or presidential
36 issuance to the Polytechnic University of the Philippines are
37 hereby declared to be reserved for the purposes intended. The
38 absolute ownership of the national polytechnic university over
39 these landholdings, including those covered by original and
40 transfer certificates of title in the name of the Polytechnic
41 University of the Philippines and their future derivatives, is hereby
42 confirmed. Where the issuance of proper certificates of title is yet
43 pending for these landholdings, the appropriate government
44 office shall expedite the issuance thereof within six months from
45 the date of effectivity of this Act: Provided, that all registration
46 requirements necessary for the issuance of the said titles have
47 been submitted and complied with;
48 c. The Board may plan, design, approve and/or cause the
49 implementation of land leases: Provided, that such mechanisms
50 and arrangements shall sustain and protect the environment in

accordance with law, and be exclusive of the academic core zone of the campuses of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines: Provided, further, that such mechanisms and arrangements shall not conflict with the academic mission of the national polytechnic university;

- d. The Board may allow the use of the income coming from real properties of the national polytechnic university as security for transactions to generate additional revenues when needed for educational purposes;
- e. The Board may approve the implementation of joint ventures: Provided, that in the event real properties of the national polytechnic university are involved, only the income derived by the University from the use of the real properties shall be the subject of its participation or obligation in the joint ventures: Provided, further, That no joint venture shall result in the alienation of the real properties of the national polytechnic university; and
- f. Any plan to generate revenues and other sources from land grants and other real properties entrusted to the national polytechnic university shall be consistent with the academic mission and orientation of the national polytechnic university as well as protect it from undue influence and control of commercial interests: Provided, that such programs, projects or mechanisms shall be approved by the Board subject to a transparent and democratic process of consultation with the constituents of the national polytechnic university: Provided, further, that funds generated from such programs, projects or mechanisms shall not be meant to replace, in part or in whole, the annual appropriations provided by the national government to the national university."

SEC. 13. A new Section 12-B is hereby inserted amending PD 1341 to read as follow:

"Section 12-B Safeguards on Assets Disposition. The preservation of the value of the assets of the national polytechnic university shall be of primordial consideration. The sale of any existing real property of the national polytechnic university shall be prohibited: Provided, That the Board may alienate real property donated after the effectivity of this Act if the terms of the donation specifically allow it. Notwithstanding the provision of this Act or any other law to the contrary, the lease of more than five (5) years of the assets of the national polytechnic university and any transactions referred to in Section 22 shall be subject to the following conditions and procedures:

- a. The transactions shall be discussed with the members of the Board in any of its formally convened regular or special meeting, at least one (1) month before a decision is to be made;
- b. The transactions shall be based on a multi-year comprehensive development
- c. plan, crafted and developed by qualified urban planning professionals having at least five (5) years experience, with prior

- 1 consultations with and concurrence of third-party experts and
2 duly approved by a majority vote of all the members of the Board;
3 d. The transactions shall be subject to competitive and public
4 bidding as provided under Republic Act No 9184, otherwise
5 known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act"; and
6 e. If the contract or transaction involves an amount more than fifty
7 million pesos (P50,000,000.00), it shall be approved by three
8 fourths (3/4) of all the members of the Board:
9

10 Provided, that the splitting of contracts, which is by breaking up a contract
11 into smaller quantities or amounts or dividing contract implementation into
12 artificial or arbitrary phases or subcontracts for the purposes of circumventing
13 this provision, shall not be allowed."
14

15 **SEC. 14.** A new Section 12-C is hereby inserted amending PD 1341 to read as
16 follows:
17

18 "Section 12-C Tax Exemptions. The provisions of any general or special
19 law to the contrary notwithstanding:

- 20 a. All revenues and assets of the Polytechnic University of the
21 Philippines used for educational purposes or in support thereof shall
22 be exempt from all taxes and duties;
23 b. Gifts and donations of real and personal properties of all kinds shall
24 be exempt from the donor's tax and the same shall be considered as
25 allowable deductions from the gross income of the donor in
26 accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code
27 of 1997, as amended; Provided, that the allowable deductions shall
28 be equivalent to one hundred fifty percent (150%) of the value of such
29 donation. Valuation of assistance other than money shall be based on
30 the acquisition cost of the property, such valuation shall take into
31 consideration the depreciated value of property in case said property
32 has been used;
33 c. Importation of economic, technical, vocational, scientific,
34 philosophical, historical, legal and cultural books, supplies and
35 materials duly certified by the Board, including scientific and
36 educational computer and software equipment, shall be exempt from
37 customs duties;
38 d. The University shall only pay 0% value-added tax for all transactions
39 subject to this tax; and
40 e. All academic awards shall be exempt from taxes."
41

42 **SEC. 15.** Section 14 of PD 1341 is hereby amended and shall read as follows:
43

44 "Section 14. Appropriations. In addition, to the amount already
45 appropriated for the Polytechnic University of the Philippines for the
46 current fiscal year, there is hereby appropriated an initial sum of Eight
47 Billion pesos (P8,000,000,000.00) from any amount available in the
48 Treasury of the Philippines for the purposes of carrying out the
49 implementation of this Act. Further, an additional sum of One Hundred
50 Million pesos (P100,000,000.00) shall be appropriated separate and

1 above the said initial funding for each fiscal year for the first three years
2 of the implementation of this Act."
3

4 **SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.*** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared
5 unconstitutional, the remainder hereof or any provisions not affected thereby shall
6 remain in force and effect.
7

8 **SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.*** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
9 executive order, letter of instruction, rule, or regulation inconsistent with the provisions
10 of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.
11

12 **SEC. 18. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
13 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
14

15 *Approved,*