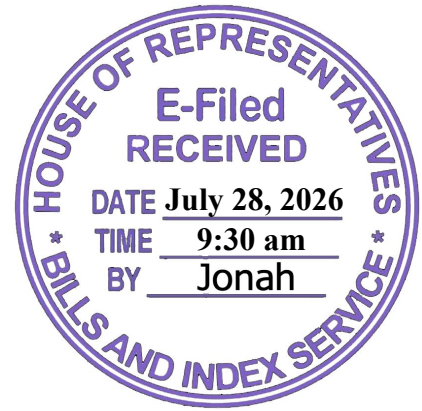


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10260



Introduced by
HON. ATTY. GERVILLE "JINKY BITRICS" R. LUISTRO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Access to court documents is a core function of court administration, ensuring that records of judicial proceedings are properly issued, reproduced, and certified in a manner that is consistent, reliable, and accessible to requesting parties. These documents form part of the official record of the judiciary and are routinely required for legal, administrative, and documentary purposes, including compliance with court processes and other lawful transactions.

In practice, however, the absence of a uniform and clearly regulated fee structure for the issuance, reproduction, and certification of court documents has resulted in variation in charges across different courts and offices. This lack of standardization may lead to administrative inconsistency, uncertainty in public service delivery, and inefficiencies in the processing of requests for court records.

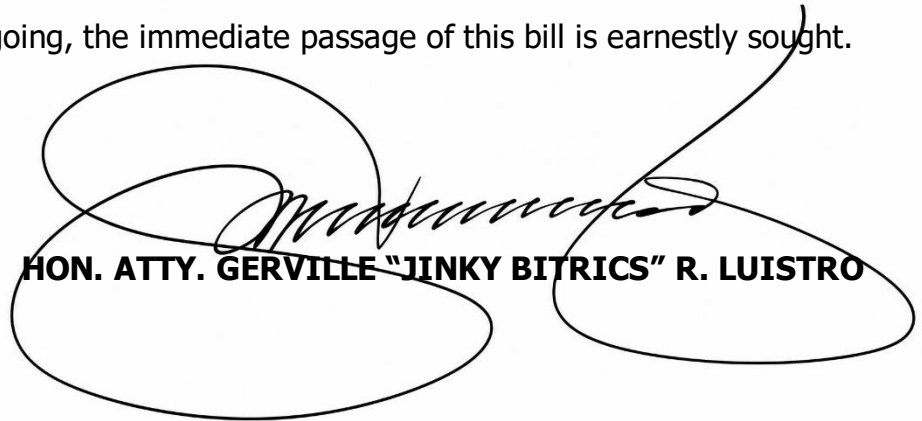
This measure seeks to address these concerns by establishing a standardized and reasonable fee structure applicable to all courts within the Philippine judicial system, thereby promoting uniformity in the delivery of court document services and ensuring predictable and transparent administrative procedures.

The bill likewise incorporates a defined exemption mechanism for Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs), consistent with Republic Act No. 8371, otherwise known as the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997. This exemption is intended as an administrative accommodation within court document services,

implemented through a clear verification process, without altering existing rules on judicial proceedings or court jurisdiction.

By institutionalizing standardized fees alongside a clearly defined exemption framework, this measure strengthens administrative consistency within the judiciary, improves the efficiency of court record services, and clarifies the parameters for the issuance, reproduction, and certification of judicial documents.

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



HON. ATTY. GERVILLE "JINKY BITRICS" R. LUISTRO

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10260

Introduced by
HON. ATTY. GERVILLE "JINKY BITRICS" R. LUISTRO

AN ACT
STANDARDIZING THE FEES FOR THE ISSUANCE, REPRODUCTION, AND
CERTIFICATION OF COURT DOCUMENTS, AND GRANTING FEE EXEMPTION TO
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title*** - This Act shall be known as the "Court Documents Fee
2 Standardization and Indigenous Peoples Exemption Act."

3
4 **SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy*** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 ensure that access to court documents is fair, transparent, uniform, and not unduly
6 burdened by unreasonable or inconsistent fees.

7
8 The State recognizes that court records are essential to the protection and
9 enforcement of rights and the proper administration of justice.

10
11 Accordingly, the State shall:

12
13 (a) ensure the adoption of a uniform and standardized system of fees for the
14 issuance, reproduction, and certification of court documents across all courts;

15
16 (b) prevent the imposition of excessive, arbitrary, or inconsistent charges for
17 substantially similar court document services; and
18

1 (c) ensure that Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs),
2 upon proper verification, are exempt from the payment of such fees in recognition
3 of their distinct circumstances under Republic Act No. 8371.
4

5 **SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms*** - For purposes of this Act, the following terms
6 are hereby defined:
7

8 (a) Court – refers to all courts within the Philippine judicial system, including the
9 Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Sandiganbayan, Court of Tax Appeals, Regional
10 Trial Courts, Metropolitan Trial Courts, Municipal Trial Courts in Cities, Municipal
11 Trial Courts, Municipal Circuit Trial Courts, Shari’ah Courts, and such other courts
12 as may be established by law;
13

14 (b) Court Document – refers to any official record, pleading, order, decision,
15 resolution, transcript, certification, or other judicial document issued, filed, or
16 maintained by a court in connection with any judicial proceeding, whether civil,
17 criminal, or special proceedings;
18

19 (c) Certification – refers to the official attestation issued by an authorized court
20 officer that a document is a true, correct, and faithful copy of the original record
21 on file with the court;
22

23 (d) Reproduction – refers to the copying, printing, scanning, digital conversion, or
24 duplication of court documents, whether in physical or electronic form;
25

26 (e) Issuance – refers to the official release, furnishing, or provision of court
27 documents to a requesting party upon request and compliance with applicable
28 requirements;
29

30 (f) Requesting Party – refers to any natural or juridical person who requests the
31 issuance, reproduction, or certification of court documents for lawful purposes;
32

33 (g) Indigenous Peoples (IP) – refers to Indigenous Cultural
34 Communities/Indigenous Peoples as defined under Republic Act No. 8371,
35 otherwise known as the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997;
36

37 (h) Qualified Beneficiary – refers to any Indigenous Peoples individual whose
38 membership in an Indigenous Cultural Community has been duly certified,
39 recognized, or verified by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)
40 in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations;
41

42 (i) National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) – refers to the national
43 government agency created under Republic Act No. 8371 mandated to protect and
44 promote the rights and welfare of Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous

1 Peoples, including the issuance or recognition of certifications confirming
2 Indigenous Peoples membership for purposes of this Act;

3
4 (j) Court Records Unit or Office – refers to the designated office or personnel within
5 a court responsible for the safekeeping, management, and release of court
6 documents and judicial records;

7
8 (k) Standard Fee – refers to the uniform and fixed amount authorized under this
9 Act for the issuance, reproduction, or certification of court documents, exclusive
10 of any prohibited additional charges;

11
12 (l) Judicial Proceeding – refers to any civil, criminal, special, or administrative
13 matter heard or decided by a court of competent jurisdiction.

14
15 **SECTION 4. Coverage** - This Act shall apply to all courts within the Philippine
16 judicial system, including the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Sandiganbayan, Court of
17 Tax Appeals, Regional Trial Courts, first-level courts, Shari'ah Courts, and such other
18 courts as may be created by law.

19
20 This Act shall govern all requests made to any court for the issuance, reproduction,
21 certification, authentication, or release of court documents, whether in physical or
22 electronic form, and whether requested for judicial, quasi-judicial, administrative,
23 academic, employment-related, professional, personal, or other lawful purposes.

24
25 This Act shall apply to all stages of request and processing of court documents,
26 including but not limited to retrieval from archives, duplication, certification, and official
27 release by the appropriate court office or personnel.

28
29 The coverage of this Act shall apply regardless of the status of the requesting
30 party, provided that exemptions under this Act, including those granted to Indigenous
31 Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs), shall be applied in accordance with
32 its provisions.

33
34 **SECTION 5. Standardized Fee Structure** - All courts within the Philippine judicial
35 system shall adopt and strictly implement a uniform fee structure for the issuance,
36 reproduction, and certification of court documents covered under this Act.

37
38 The fee for reproduction of court documents shall be fixed at the rate of Two Pesos
39 (₱2.00) per page, or such amount as may be adjusted in accordance with law by the
40 Supreme Court of the Philippines or the competent authority exercising rule-making
41 powers over the judiciary.

42
43 No court shall impose or collect any amount beyond the standardized fees
44 expressly provided under this Act, whether directly or indirectly. This prohibition shall

1 include, but not be limited to, processing fees, administrative fees, convenience fees,
2 system fees, archival fees, or any similar or analogous charges, regardless of
3 nomenclature or form.

4
5 All fees shall be uniform and shall apply consistently across all courts, offices, and
6 personnel involved in the issuance, reproduction, and certification of court documents.

7
8 **SECTION 6. *Exemption of Indigenous People*** - All Qualified Beneficiaries who are
9 Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) shall be fully exempt
10 from the payment of any and all fees, charges, or costs for the issuance, reproduction,
11 certification, authentication, or release of court documents covered under this Act.

12
13 The exemption shall apply only upon proper establishment of Indigenous Peoples
14 status through any of the following:

15
16 (a) a certification issued by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)
17 confirming membership in a recognized Indigenous Cultural Community;

18
19 (b) inclusion in an official NCIP registry or database of ICCs/IPs beneficiaries; or

20
21 (c) such other official document or proof of recognition issued or validated by the
22 NCIP in accordance with its rules and regulations.

23
24 For purposes of implementation, courts shall not require any additional
25 certification, endorsement, or clearance beyond those issued or recognized by the NCIP,
26 except for reasonable verification of identity through a valid government-issued
27 identification card or equivalent official document.

28
29 The exemption shall be applied at the time of request or application for court
30 documents, and shall not require prior approval from any court officer beyond verification
31 of NCIP-issued or NCIP-recognized documentation.

32
33 **SECTION 7. *Documents Covered*** - This Act shall cover all court documents,
34 records, and judicial issuances maintained, issued, or kept by any court within the
35 Philippine judicial system, whether in physical, electronic, or archived form, and whether
36 existing at the time of enactment or created thereafter.

37
38 The coverage shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

39
40 (a) Judicial Decisions and Issuances - Decisions, final and interlocutory orders,
41 resolutions, minute resolutions, and other judicial issuances resolving incidents or
42 cases;

1 (b) Pleadings and Filed Submissions - Complaints, informations, answers, petitions,
2 motions, replies, memoranda, manifestations, affidavits, and other similar
3 submissions filed in court;
4

5 (c) Records and Case Materials - Case dockets, index cards, case summaries,
6 records of proceedings, exhibits formally offered and admitted, and entries of
7 judgment;
8

9 (d) Transcripts and Hearing Records - Transcripts of stenographic notes, audio or
10 video recordings of proceedings where officially maintained, and certified
11 summaries of hearings;
12

13 (e) Certified and Authenticated Documents - Certified true copies of any court
14 record, authenticated records, and official reproductions of documents on file with
15 the court;
16

17 (f) Court Certifications and Administrative Issuances - Certifications issued by court
18 offices, including certifications of pending cases, no pending case, finality of
19 judgment, record verification, and similar attestations;
20

21 (g) Processes and Judicial Writs - Writs of execution, summons, subpoenas,
22 notices, orders to produce, writs of attachment, garnishment, and other court-
23 issued processes;
24

25 (h) Electronic Court Records - Digitized records, electronic filings, e-court
26 documents, and other court records maintained in electronic case management
27 systems; and
28

29 (i) Other Analogous Judicial Records - Any other document, record, or issuance of
30 similar nature maintained, issued, or recognized by a court in connection with
31 judicial proceedings, whether existing, emerging, or hereafter created.
32

33 The enumeration under this Section shall be interpreted as illustrative and not
34 restrictive, and shall be construed in favor of a broad and comprehensive coverage of all
35 judicial records subject to issuance, reproduction, or certification under this Act.
36

37 **SECTION 8. *Excluded Fees*** - The standardized fee structure prescribed under this
38 Act shall apply exclusively to the issuance, reproduction, certification, authentication, and
39 release of court documents. It shall not apply to, nor be construed to affect, the following
40 fees, costs, or charges imposed under existing laws, rules of procedure, or court
41 issuances:
42

43 (a) Filing Fees - fees required for the commencement or initiation of actions,
44 proceedings, or special cases before any court;

(b) Docket and Court Appearance Fees - fees associated with case docketing, calendaring, or appearance-related charges as may be required under court rules;

(c) Legal Research Fund Fees - statutory fees intended for the Legal Research Fund or similar judicial funds authorized by law;

(d) Alternative Dispute Resolution Fees - fees related to mediation, judicial dispute resolution, arbitration, or other court-annexed or court-referred dispute resolution processes;

(e) Sheriff's and Enforcement Fees - fees related to service of summons, writs, notices, levies, executions, or other enforcement of court processes;

(f) Bail, Bonds, and Related Security Charges - including bail bonds, property bonds, or other forms of security required for provisional liberty or court orders;

(g) Other Judicial Fees Unrelated to Court Documents - any other fees, charges, or assessments imposed by courts that are not directly connected to the issuance, reproduction, certification, authentication, or release of court documents.

For the avoidance of doubt, no provision of this Act shall be interpreted to reduce, modify, or eliminate any court fees or charges not expressly covered by its scope, except those relating strictly to court document services as defined herein.

SECTION 9. *Duties of Courts* - All courts shall:

All courts within the Philippine judicial system shall be responsible for the effective implementation of this Act and shall have the following duties:

(a) Transparency of Fees and Procedures - Ensure the clear, visible, and continuous posting of standardized fee schedules, documentary requirements, processing timelines, and step-by-step procedures for the issuance, reproduction, and certification of court documents, including posting in official court premises and, where applicable, official websites or electronic platforms;

(b) Efficient Processing of Requests - Process all requests for court documents within reasonable and defined time periods to be prescribed in the Implementing Rules and Regulations, taking into account the nature, volume, and availability of records, and ensuring that delays are not caused by unjustifiable administrative inefficiency;

(c) Designation of Responsible Officers or Units - Designate a specific office, unit, or authorized court personnel responsible for the receipt, tracking, processing, and

1 release of court documents, as well as the proper implementation of fee collection
2 and exemption mechanisms under this Act;

3
4 (d) Standardized Application of Fees - Ensure strict and uniform application of the
5 standardized fee structure prescribed under this Act across all branches, stations,
6 and offices, without variation or discretionary adjustment unless expressly
7 authorized by law or competent authority;

8
9 (e) Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Fee Exemption - Recognize and
10 implement the fee exemption granted to Indigenous Cultural
11 Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) under this Act, ensuring that qualified
12 beneficiaries are not required to pay any covered fees upon presentation of valid
13 NCIP-issued or NCIP-recognized documentation;

14
15 (f) Records Management and Accountability - Maintain accurate records of all
16 requests for court documents, including those availing of exemptions, for purposes
17 of audit, monitoring, and compliance review, in accordance with rules to be issued
18 by the Supreme Court; and

19
20 (g) Non-Discrimination in Access to Services - Ensure that no requesting party is
21 denied, delayed, or subjected to additional requirements, treatment, or procedures
22 beyond those prescribed by law and the Implementing Rules and Regulations.

23
24 **SECTION 10. *Implementing Agencies*** - The Supreme Court of the Philippines,
25 through the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA), shall be the primary implementing
26 authority of this Act and shall have the responsibility to issue the necessary administrative
27 circulars, guidelines, and operational procedures for its effective implementation across
28 all courts.

29
30 For purposes of verifying the status of Indigenous Cultural
31 Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) availing of the exemption under this Act, the
32 Supreme Court, through the OCA, shall coordinate with the National Commission on
33 Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), which shall serve as the competent authority for the issuance,
34 validation, and recognition of certifications of Indigenous Peoples membership.

35
36 All courts under the judicial system shall comply with and implement the rules,
37 standards, and mechanisms issued pursuant to this Act.

38
39 **SECTION 11. *Prohibited Acts*** - It shall be unlawful for any court, court personnel,
40 officer, or any person acting on behalf of the judiciary to commit any of the following
41 acts:
42

1 (a) impose, demand, collect, or receive any fee, charge, cost, or consideration in
2 excess of, or not authorized under, the standardized fee structure prescribed in
3 this Act;

4
5 (b) refuse, deny, or fail to process, receive, or act upon any request for the
6 issuance, reproduction, certification, or authentication of court documents on the
7 ground of non-payment of fees that are exempted under this Act;

8
9 (c) delay, withhold, suspend, or unreasonably defer the release or processing of
10 court documents without lawful, valid, and documented justification as provided
11 under applicable rules;

12
13 (d) impose, require, or enforce any additional documentary requirements,
14 certifications, clearances, approvals, or procedures not expressly authorized under
15 this Act or its implementing rules and regulations;

16
17 (e) discriminate against, treat unfavorably, or otherwise disadvantage any
18 requesting party or qualified beneficiary in the processing or release of court
19 documents in violation of this Act;

20
21 (f) engage in any act, scheme, practice, or omission intended to circumvent,
22 frustrate, or defeat the rights, objectives, or intent of this Act.

23
24 **SECTION 12. *Penalties***- Any court, court personnel, officer, or person acting on
25 behalf of the judiciary who violates any provision of this Act shall be held administratively
26 liable and shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with applicable civil service
27 laws, the Rules of Court, and the internal rules and procedures of the Supreme Court.

28
29 The penalties that may be imposed, after due notice and hearing, shall include
30 reprimand, suspension, fine, demotion, or dismissal from service, as may be warranted
31 by the gravity of the offense. In determining the appropriate penalty, due consideration
32 shall be given to the nature of the violation, the frequency or repetition of the offense,
33 the presence of bad faith, fraud, gross negligence, or willful intent, and the extent of
34 prejudice caused to the requesting party or qualified beneficiary.

35
36 This shall be without prejudice to the filing of civil, criminal, or other administrative
37 actions that may arise under existing laws, rules of court, or other applicable regulations
38 arising from the same act or omission.

39
40 **SECTION 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*** - Within ninety (90) days from
41 the effectivity of this Act, the Supreme Court of the Philippines, through the Office of the
42 Court Administrator, shall issue the necessary administrative issuances, circulars, and
43 operational guidelines to ensure the uniform and efficient implementation of this Act
44 across all courts nationwide.

1
2 Such issuances shall establish clear procedures for the receipt, processing, and
3 release of requests for court documents, including standardized timelines, fee collection
4 protocols consistent with the fee structure under this Act, and mechanisms for the proper
5 application of exemptions.
6

7 In the formulation of these guidelines, the Supreme Court shall coordinate with
8 the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) for the establishment of a reliable
9 and practical process for verifying Indigenous Peoples status, and may consult other
10 relevant government agencies and stakeholders as may be necessary to ensure effective
11 implementation and administrative feasibility.
12

13 **SECTION 14. *Separability Clause*** - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid
14 or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in
15 full force and effect.
16

17 **SECTION 15. *Repealing Clause*** - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
18 administrative issuances, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act
19 are hereby modified, superseded, or repealed accordingly.
20

21 **SECTION 16. *Effectivity*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
22 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
23

24 **Approved,**