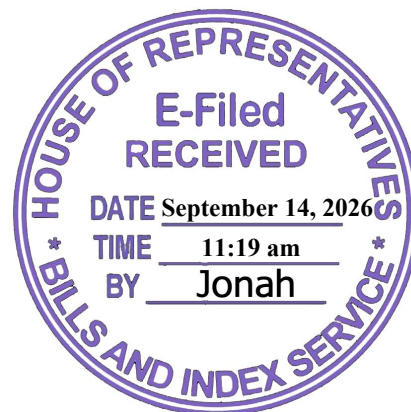


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **11288**



Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to increase the number of Associate Justices from sixty-nine (69) to seventy-eight (78). It amends Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, otherwise known as the "*Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980*", and improves the accessibility, efficiency, and responsiveness of the justice system.

According to the Supreme Court of the Philippines (2024)¹, the judiciary continues to experience substantial appellate caseloads that require sustained institutional strengthening to preserve the constitutional right to the speedy disposition of cases. The concentration of appellate divisions in Metro Manila also imposes additional logistical burdens on litigants, lawyers, witnesses, and government agencies coming from far-flung regions. This often results in higher litigation costs and delays in the administration of justice.

This proposed measure decentralizes appellate services in the country and establishes permanent regional stations in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Every unresolved appeal represents individuals, families, businesses, and communities waiting for justice to take its course. Delayed appellate review prolongs uncertainty and burdens those who seek the protection of the law. Strengthening the Court of Appeals through expanded judicial capacity and broader regional accessibility shall bring the administration of justice closer to the Filipino people.

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


HON. ERIC G. YAP

¹ Supreme Court of the Philippines. (2024). *2024 Supreme Court Annual Report*. Accessed from: <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/annual-reports/>. Accessed on July 26, 2026.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. **11288**

Introduced by **Representative ERIC G. YAP**

AN ACT
CREATING ADDITIONAL DIVISIONS IN THE COURT OF APPEALS,
INCREASING THE NUMBER OF COURT OF APPEALS JUSTICES FROM
SIXTY-NINE (69) TO SEVENTY-EIGHT (78), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “JUDICIARY
REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980”, AS AMENDED, 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. Section 3 of Batas Pambansa (BP) Blg. 129, otherwise known as “*The Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980*”, as amended by Executive Order No. 33, s. 1986, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 3. *Organization.* – There is hereby created a Court of Appeals which shall consist of a Presiding Justice and [fifty] **SEVENTY-SEVEN (77)** Associate Justices who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Presiding Justice shall be so designated in his appointment, and the Associate Justice shall have precedence according to the dates of their respective appointments, or when the appointments of two **(2)** or more of them shall bear the same date, according to the order in which their appointments were issued by the President. Any member who is reappointed to the Court after rendering in any other position in the government shall retain the precedence to which he was entitled under his original appointment, and his service in the Court shall, for all intents and purposes, be considered as continuous and uninterrupted.”

SEC. 2. Section 4 of the same Act is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 4. *Exercise of Powers and Functions.* – The Court of Appeals shall exercise its powers, functions, and duties through [seventeen (17)] **TWENTY-SIX (26)** divisions, each composed of three (3)

members. The Court may sit en banc for the purpose of exercising administrative, ceremonial, or other non-adjudicatory functions.”

SEC. 3. Section 10, Chapter 1 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 129, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 10. *Place of Holding Sessions.* – The Court of Appeals shall have its permanent [station in the City of Manila.] **STATIONS AS FOLLOWS:**

“(A) THE FIRST SEVENTEEN (17) DIVISIONS SHALL BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF MANILA FOR CASES COMING FROM THE THIRD (3RD) TO THE FIFTH (5TH) JUDICIAL REGIONS;

“(B) THE EIGHTEENTH (18TH), NINETEENTH (19TH), AND TWENTIETH (20TH) DIVISIONS SHALL BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF CEBU FOR CASES COMING FROM THE SIXTH (6TH), SEVENTH (7TH), AND EIGHTH (8TH) JUDICIAL REGIONS;

“(C) THE TWENTY-FIRST (21ST), TWENTY-SECOND (22ND), AND TWENTY-THIRD (23RD) DIVISIONS SHALL BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF CAGAYAN DE ORO FOR CASES COMING FROM THE NINTH (9TH) AND TENTH (10TH) JUDICIAL REGIONS;

“(D) THE TWENTY-FOURTH (24TH) DIVISION SHALL BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF VIGAN FOR CASES COMING FROM THE FIRST (1ST) AND SECOND (2ND) JUDICIAL REGIONS; AND

“(E) THE TWENTY-FIFTH (25TH) AND TWENTY-SIXTH (26TH) DIVISIONS SHALL BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF DAVAO FOR CASES COMING FROM THE ELEVENTH (11TH) AND TWELFTH (12TH) JUDICIAL REGIONS.

“Whenever demanded by public interest OR WHENEVER JUSTIFIED BY AN INCREASE IN CASE LOAD, the Supreme Court, upon its own initiative or upon recommendation of the Presiding Justice OF THE COURT OF APPEALS, may authorize aNY division of the Court to hold sessions [outside Manila,] periodically, or for such periods and at such places as the Supreme Court may determine, for the purpose of hearing and deciding cases.

“TRIALS OR HEARINGS IN THE COURT OF APPEALS MUST BE CONTINUOUS AND MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN THREE (3) MONTHS UNLESS EXTENDED BY THE CHIEF

JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT.”

SEC. 4. *Referral of Pending Cases.* – Upon the effectivity of this Act, all pending cases, except those which have been submitted for resolution, shall be referred to the proper division of the Court of Appeals.

SEC. 5. *Transfer of Assignment.* – Nothing in this Act shall be construed to allow the transfer, except in cases of temporary assignment, of any member of the Court of Appeals to any place or station without such member’s written consent, or to undermine the security of tenure of its members as provided in the Constitution, or alter the seniority in the Court of Appeals in accordance with existing laws.

SEC. 6. *Funding.* – The amounts necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision thereof not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, letters of instruction, executive orders, rules, or regulations, or any part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,