

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*First Regular Session* )

'22 AUG 16 P2:35

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**SENATE**  
**S No. 1186**

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Introduced By Senator Christopher Lawrence "Bong" T. Go

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**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 BILANG 129, AS AMENDED OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE**  
**JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, APPROPRIATING FUNDS**  
**THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Every Filipino, when accused, has the right to a speedy trial and to a speedy disposition of a case against him. This is to prevent the oppression of the citizen by holding criminal prosecution suspended over him for an indefinite period of time, and to avoid delays in the administration of justice. The right to a speedy trial and a speedy disposition of a case is infringed when the proceeding is attended by vexatious, capricious and oppressive delays.

In order to attain a just, peaceful and progressive society, our country must have a strong and efficient Judiciary which ensures the protection and enforcement of fundamental rights. Thus, the Judiciary must remain steadfast if it is to fulfill its role in the administration of justice pursuant to the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

However, the fulfilment of this mandate is jeopardized by the sheer number of cases being handled by the Judiciary, resulting to clogged dockets. These problems

cause inevitable delays in deciding and resolving cases, diluting the public's confidence and trust in the country's justice system. In this regard, the Court of Appeals, as the country's foremost appellate court, has been instituting internal measures to alleviate the problem.

In light of these circumstances, the Legislative must not leave it to the Judiciary to fix the problem, as it takes a whole-of-government effort to properly address it. In this regard, this proposed measure seeks to add three additional divisions of the Court of Appeals, each with three members. These additional members and divisions will enable the Court of Appeals to handle its case load in a more efficient manner.

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



**SENATOR CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE "BONG" T. GO**

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**JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, APPROPRIATING FUNDS**  
**THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

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

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

4 "Sec. 3. *Organization.* – There is hereby created a Court of  
5 Appeals which shall consist of a Presiding Justice and seventy-  
6 seven (77) Associate Justices who shall be appointed by the  
7 President of the Philippines. The Presiding Justice shall be so  
8 designated in his appointment, and the Associate Justices shall  
9 have precedence according to the dates of their respective  
10 appointments or, when the appointments of two or more of them  
11 shall bear the same date, according to the order in which their  
12 appointments were issued by the President. Any member who is  
13 reappointed to the Court after rendering service in any other  
14 position in the government shall retain the precedence to which he  
15 was entitled under his original appointment, and his service in the  
16 court shall, for all intents and purposes, be considered as  
17 continuous and uninterrupted."  
18

19 Sec. 2. Section 4, Chapter 1 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 129, as amended, is  
20 hereby further amended to read as follows:  
21

1                   “Sec. 4. *Exercise of Powers and Functions.* – The Court of  
2 Appeals shall exercise its powers, functions, and duties through  
3 twenty-six (26) divisions each composed of three (3) members.  
4 The Court may sit en banc for the purpose of exercising  
5 administrative, ceremonial, or other non-adjudicatory functions.”  
6

7           Sec. 3. Section 10, Chapter 1 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 129, as amended, is  
8 hereby further amended to read as follows:  
9

10                   “Sec. 10. *Place of Holding Sessions.* – The Court of Appeals  
11 shall have its permanent stations as follows:  
12

13                   “The first seventeen (17) Divisions shall be stationed in the  
14 City of Manila for cases coming from the Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) to the Fifth  
15 (5<sup>th</sup>) Judicial Regions;  
16

17                   “The Eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>), Nineteenth (19<sup>th</sup>), and Twentieth  
18 (20<sup>th</sup>) Divisions shall be stationed in the City of Cebu for cases  
19 coming from the Sixth (6<sup>th</sup>), Seventh (7<sup>th</sup>), and Eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) Judicial  
20 Regions;  
21

22                   “The Twenty-first (21<sup>st</sup>), Twenty-second (22<sup>nd</sup>), and Twenty-  
23 third (23<sup>rd</sup>) Divisions shall be stationed in the City of Cagayan de  
24 Oro for cases coming from the Ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) and Tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) Judicial  
25 Regions;  
26

27                   “The Twenty-fourth (24<sup>th</sup>) Division shall be stationed in the  
28 City of Vigan for cases coming from the First (1<sup>st</sup>) and Second (2<sup>nd</sup>)  
29 Judicial Regions; and  
30

31                   “The Twenty-fifth (25<sup>th</sup>) and Twenty-sixth (26<sup>th</sup>) Divisions  
32 shall be stationed in the City of Davao for cases coming from the  
33 Eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) and Twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) Judicial Regions.  
34

35                   “Whenever demanded by public interest or whenever  
36 justified by an increase in case load, the Supreme Court, upon its  
37 own initiative or upon recommendation of the Presiding Justice of  
38 the Court of Appeals, may authorize any division of the Court to  
39 hold sessions periodically or for such periods and at such places as  
40 the Supreme Court may determine for the purpose of hearing and  
41 deciding cases.  
42

1                    "Trials or hearings in the Court of Appeals must be  
2                    continuous and must be completed within three (3) months unless  
3                    extended by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court."  
4

5                    Sec. 4. *Funding.* – The amounts necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act  
6 shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment  
7 into law and thereafter.  
8

9                    Sec. 5. Upon the effectivity of this Act, all pending cases, except those which  
10 have been submitted for resolution, shall be referred to the proper division of the Court  
11 of Appeals.  
12

13                    Sec. 6. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to allow the transfer, except in  
14 cases of temporary assignment, of any member of the Court of Appeals to any place or  
15 station without such member's written consent, or to undermine the security of tenure  
16 of its members as provided in the Constitution, or alter the seniority in the Court of  
17 Appeals in accordance with existing laws.  
18

19                    Sec. 7. Separability Clause. – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared  
20 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision thereof not affected thereby  
21 shall remain in full force and effect.  
22

23                    Sec. 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, letters of instruction,  
24 executive orders, rules, or regulations, or any part thereof inconsistent with the  
25 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.  
26

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

*Approved,*