

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



'22 AUG 31 A 8 :30

SENATE

RECEIVED BY

S. No. 1235

Introduced by SENATOR JOSEPH VICTOR EJERCITO

AN ACT
INSTITUTING THE CITIZEN SERVICE TRAINING COURSE, ESTABLISHING
THE CITIZEN SERVICE CORPS, CREATING THE CITIZEN SERVICE
MOBILIZATION COMMISSION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 4 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that:

"The prime duty of the Government is to serve and protect the people. The Government may call upon the people to defend the State and, in the fulfillment thereof, all citizens may be required, under conditions provided by law, to render personal military or civil service."

As also stated under Section 13 of the same article that:

"The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs."

The Reserve Officers Training Corp (ROTC) was founded in the country in 1912. It became mandatory after the effectivity of the Commonwealth Act 1 or the National Defense Act of 1935 by then President Manuel Quezon. After the World War II, the ROTC units were "disbanded and demobilized". However, in 1967, President Ferdinand Marcos, Sr. issued Executive Order 59 which restored the ROTC and making it mandatory. After the issues of corruption, hazing, among others, surrounding the

ROTC, it was made optional under Republic Act (RA) No. 9163 or the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Act of 2001.

With the enactment of RA No. 9163, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program became one of the components of the National Service Training Program (NSTP), together with Literacy Training Service (LTS) and Civic Welfare Training Service (CWTS). As the result of this, the enrollees to the ROTC dramatically declined. According to the Department of National Defense, there were around 800,000 enrollees every year when ROTC Program was mandatory. According to the records, an estimate of only 14% of all NSTP graduates have undergone the ROTC Program. Consequently, the number of reservists that fulfill the Citizen Armed Force mission has reduced. As of July 2018, there are only 398,988 total Armed Forces of the Philippines Reserve Force. ¹

As accurately stated in the case of People vs. Tranquilino Lagman GR No. 45892. July 13, 1938 : "To leave the organization of an army to the will of the citizens would be to make this duty of the Government excusable should there be no sufficient men who volunteer to enlist therein."

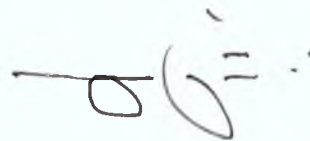
This bill seeks to establish the Citizen Service Training Course (CSTC), wherein a Basic Citizen Service Training Course (CSTC) shall be mandatory component in the curriculum of all tertiary-level male and female students enrolled in baccalaureate degree and all technical vocational courses. Under this bill, there will also be a Special CSTC for students with disabilities, those whose beliefs prohibit the use of firearms in rendering service to the country, and those who have been convicted by final judgment of crimes involving moral turpitude. Moreover, the measure also include the institutionalization of an Advance CSTC which shall consist of one hundred twenty eight (128) hours of lecture and practical training in external and territorial defense, internal security and peace and order, and disaster risk reductions and management. In line with these, a Citizen Service Corps will be established which shall be composed

¹ <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/opinion/2022/02/09/2159594/mandatory-military-service>

of all the graduates of the CSTC, who may be mobilized to assist the national government and local government units in relation to external and territorial defense, internal security and peace and order, and disaster risk reduction and management.

This measure aims not only to ensure that the youth is instilled with a sense of patriotism, civic responsibility and discipline, but also to make the youth our partners in nation building while being trained and organized for the noble purpose of serving the country.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO', with a stylized flourish at the end.

JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO

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

ARTICLE I
Title

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “**Citizen Service Act**”.

2 **ARTICLE II**
3 **Declaration of Policy**

4 *Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State:

- 5 a. To institutionalize the vital role of the youth in nation-building, promote and
6 protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being; to
7 inculcate in them patriotism and nationalism; and to encourage their
8 involvement in public and civic affairs;
- 9 b. To constitute the youth into a major component of the citizen reserve
10 envisioned in the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, which
11 shall undergo training and may be called upon to defend the State and to
12 render personal military or civil service under conditions provided by law;
13 and
- 14 c. To train, equip and organize the youth, within the current frameworks of
15 national and territorial defense, law enforcement and peace and order and

1 national disaster risk reduction and management, to prepare them for rapid
2 mobilization at the soonest possible time in order to address national and/or
3 local contingencies which may require manpower beyond the capabilities of
4 existing national government agencies or local government units.

5 **ARTICLE III**

6 **Institution of Citizen Service Training Course**

7 *Sec. 3. Basic Citizen Service Training Course.* – There is hereby instituted a
8 Basic Citizen Service Training Course (Basic CSTC) which shall form part of the
9 curricula of all baccalaureate degree courses and all technical vocational courses
10 (which may be completed in at least two (2) years).

11 The Basic CSTC shall have a duration of at least four (4) semesters over two
12 (2) school years, unless otherwise allowed by the Citizen Service Training Board.
13 Except for justifiable causes, the Basic CSTC must be completed, as far as practicable,
14 within the first two (2) years of all baccalaureate degree courses and technical
15 vocational courses.

16 The Basic CSTC is hereby declared as a requisite for graduation in the said
17 courses.

18 *Sec. 4. Coverage.* – All tertiary-level, male and female, enrolled in
19 baccalaureate degree courses or technical vocational courses (which may be
20 completed in at least two (2) years in all public and private colleges, universities, or
21 similar learning institutions shall be required to undergo the Basic CSTC.

22 *Sec. 5. Special CSTC for Students under Specific Circumstances.* – There shall
23 be no exemptions from the Basic CSTC. However, the Citizen Service Mobilization
24 Commission shall prescribe Special CSTC to address the peculiar needs and
25 circumstances of students under the following circumstances:

- 26 a. Those who are classified and officially registered as persons with disabilities;
- 27 b. Those whose religious beliefs prohibit the use of firearms in rendering
28 service to the country; and
- 29 c. Those who have been convicted by final judgement of crimes involving
30 moral turpitude;

31 *Provided,* That foreign citizens enrolled in baccalaureate degree courses or
32 technical vocational courses where CSTC is required shall also undergo a Special CSTC

1 education, must have distinguished themselves as best-suited to discharge the duties
2 of their offices. They must not have been candidates for any elective national or local
3 offices in the immediately preceding elections, whether regular or special. The
4 Chairperson and the Commissioners, who shall have the rank equivalent of cabinet
5 secretary and undersecretary, respectively, shall be appointed by the President.

6 Sec. 11. *Quorum.* – Five (5) members of the Commission shall constitute a
7 quorum and the affirmative vote of at least a majority of those present, there being a
8 quorum, shall be necessary for the adoption of any rule, ruling, order, resolution,
9 decision, or other acts of the Commission; Provided, That the affirmative vote of at
10 least five (5) members of the Commission shall be necessary for the exercise of the
11 powers and functions of the Commission under Section 13(a),(d),(f), (j), and (k), as
12 well as those under Section 18, paragraph 4, Section 27, and Section 29.

13 Sec. 12. *Term of Office.* - The term of office of the Chairperson and the
14 Commissioners shall be four (4) years, subject to reappointment: *Provided,* That no
15 person shall serve as Chairperson or Commissioner for more that two (2) consecutive
16 terms.

17 Of those first appointed, the Chairperson and the two (2) Commissioners first
18 to be appointed shall hold office for four (4) years, while the two (2) Commissioners
19 last to be appointed shall hold office for two (2) years. Appointment to any vacancy
20 shall only be for the unexpired term of the predecessor.

21 Sec. 13. *Powers of the Commission.* – The Commission shall have the following
22 powers:

- 23 a. Design, prescribe and/or approve the programs of instruction for the CSTC,
24 including special courses for students under specific circumstances;
- 25 b. Ensure the proper administration of the CSTC;
- 26 c. Exercise supervision and control over all agencies, offices and persons,
27 directly implementing the CSTC;
- 28 d. Recommend to the President of the Philippines the general, nationwide or
29 large-scale mobilization of the Corps;
- 30 e. Approve, as required under this Act, the development of a limited number
31 of the Corps to national government agencies and local government units

1 to assist in regional, provincial, city, municipal or barangay level disasters,
2 emergencies and other contingencies;

- 3 f. Approve the regular deployment of a limited number of the Corps to the
4 Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Philippine National Police (PNP)
5 and the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) to serve as reservists and active-duty
6 cadres to meet the peace time stand by reserve requirements of said
7 agencies. To complement the existing AFP Reserve Force, the Commission
8 is hereby authorized and mandated to organize the reserve components of
9 the PNP and the OCD within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.
10 Thereafter, the administration, operational control and funding of the newly
11 organized reserve components shall be vested upon the PNP and the OCD,
12 respectively. However, the Commission retains the authority to determine
13 the allocation of the Corps to each of the reserve components;
- 14 g. Investigate or secure the services or assistance of the appropriate agencies
15 to investigate cases of corruption, graft, hazing, sexual harassment and
16 other abuse in the conduct of the CSTC, mobilization of the Corps and
17 implementation of this Act;
- 18 h. Issue serial number to all graduates of the CSTC;
- 19 i. Maintain a registry of all trainees and graduates of the CSTC;
- 20 j. Promulgate the appropriate rules and regulations, in accordance with
21 Section 26 hereof, to fully implement the provisions of this Act;
- 22 k. Appoint, fix the compensation and determine the status, qualifications, and
23 duties of the staff of the Commission. The members of the technical staff,
24 except those performing purely clerical functions, shall possess at least a
25 baccalaureate degree;
- 26 l. Generate and utilize resources to fully implement the provisions of this Act;
- 27 m. Audit the utilization of the fees collected by public and private colleges,
28 universities and similar learning institutions under Section 32 of this Act;
- 29 n. Exercise such other powers as are necessary or essential to fully implement
30 the provisions of this Act.

31 *Sec. 14. Organization of the Commission.* – The Commission shall have a Citizen
32 Service Training Board and a Citizen Service Mobilization Board.

1 Sec. 15. *Citizen Service Training Board.* – The Citizen Service Training Board
2 (Training Board) shall be composed of the Chairperson as head, the four (4)
3 Commissioners, the Chairperson of the CHED and the Director General of the TESDA,
4 or their duly authorized representatives, which shall be a Commissioner for the CHED
5 and a Board Member for the TESDA.

6 The Training Board shall come up with the initial CSTC Programs of Instruction
7 (CSTC POI), including the officer qualifying course, within sixty (60) days from the
8 organization of the Commission. For this purpose, the Training Board is hereby
9 directed to tap the technical expertise of the AFP, the PNP and the OCD, the expertise
10 and experience of stakeholders in both public and private sector, and the curriculum
11 development expertise of the CHED, the TESDA and the DepEd, as well as public and
12 private colleges, universities and similar learning institutions. The CSTC POI shall be
13 subject to the approval of the Commission. The Training Board shall also supervise
14 the continuous development of the CSTC POI.

15 Thereafter, the Commission, through the Training Board, shall ensure the
16 incorporation of the CSTC POI in the curricula of all baccalaureate degree courses and
17 al technical vocational courses (which may be completed in at least 2 years) officered
18 by public and private colleges, universities and similar learning institutions, and in the
19 curricula of Grade 11 and Grade 12 in all public and private learning institutions.

20 The Training Board shall adopt guidelines, which shall be incorporated in the
21 rules and regulations of the Commission, for the organization of a Department of
22 Citizen Service Training in every public and private colleges, universities and similar
23 learning institutions. For colleges and universities with multiple campuses, there shall
24 be a Department of Citizen Service Training for each campus.

25 Sec. 16. *Citizen Service Mobilization Board.* – The Citizen Service Mobilization
26 Board (Mobilization Board) shall be composed of the Chairperson as head, the four
27 (4) Commissioners, the Secretary of the DND, the Secretary of the DILG, and the
28 Secretary of the Social Welfare and Development, or their duly authorized
29 representatives, with a rank of at least Assistant Secretary, and the Chief of Staff of
30 the AFP and the Director General of the PNP, or their duly authorized representatives
31 with a rank of at least Brigadier General, Commodore or Chief Superintendent, as the
32 case may be.

1 **Deployment of the Citizen Service Corps**

2 Sec. 21. *Requests for Deployment.* – The Corps may be called upon and
3 mobilized to assist the national government, its agencies and instrumentalities and the
4 local government units in their functions related to external and territorial defense,
5 internal security and peace and order, and disaster risk reduction and management,
6 through requests for deployment by the heads of such national government agencies
7 or local government units submitted to the Mobilization Board. The requests shall
8 contain a justification for the deployment of the Corps and shall contain information
9 as may be required by the Commission, including the nature of the national or local
10 contingencies to be addressed, the purpose of the requested deployment, the number
11 of personnel requested to be deployed and the period of deployment.

12 Sec. 22. *Evaluation of the Requests for Deployment.* - The Mobilization Board
13 shall evaluate the requests for deployment. When the number of personnel requested
14 does not exceed one hundred and fifty (150) and the period of deployment does not
15 exceed sixty (60) days, the Mobilization Board shall decide whether to approve or
16 disapprove the request within twenty-four (24) hours from receipt thereof. When the
17 number of personnel requested one hundred and fifty (150) or the period of
18 deployment exceeds sixty (60) days, the Mobilization Board shall make a
19 recommendation to the Commission within twenty-four (24) hours from receipt of the
20 request. The Commission shall decide whether to approve or disapprove the request
21 within twenty-four (24) hours from receipt of the recommendation of the Mobilization
22 Board.

23 In case of the approval of the request for deployment, the Mobilization Board
24 shall issue an Order of Deployment requiring the Corps, or a number thereof, to assist
25 the national government, its agencies and instrumentalities and the local government
26 units in their functions related to external and territorial defense, internal security and
27 peace and order, and disaster risk reduction and management.

28 Sec 23. *Deployment in Case of Declaration of a State of War, State of Lawless*
29 *Violence or State of Calamity; Nationwide Mobilization.* - In case of a declaration of a
30 state of war, state of lawless violence or state of calamity, the Commission may *motu*
31 *proprio* recommend the mobilization of the Corps to the President of the Philippines.
32 The President of the Philippines, by himself, shall also have the power to order the

1 mobilization of the Corps to respond to national or local contingencies related to
2 external and territorial defense, internal security and peace and order and/or disaster
3 risk reduction management.

4 Sec. 24. *Mobilization Centers.* – There shall be established in each province and
5 city as many mobilizations as needed according to the number and geographical
6 distribution of the Corps, where they will report in case of deployment. The local
7 government units shall provide an office, which shall be known as the Citizen Service
8 Office, which shall handle the administrative aspects of mobilization.

9 In case of mobilization, the equipment of the Corps shall be supplied in close
10 coordination with the AFP, the PNP and the OCD, with the end in view of achieving
11 rapid mobilization.

12 Sec. 25. *Lines of Command.* – Upon deployment, operational control over the
13 Corps shall be vested upon the head of the requesting national government agency
14 or local government unit: *Provided, That,* in case of deployment for purposes of
15 external and territorial defense, when the Corps is mobilized to expand the AFP in the
16 event of war, invasion, rebellion or similar circumstances, operational control shall be
17 vested upon the AFP.

18 Sec. 26. *Expenses of Deployment.* – The role of the Commission shall be to
19 provide and marshal the required personnel to address national or local contingencies
20 involving external and territorial defense, internal security and peace and order, and
21 national disaster risk reduction and management. Upon deployment, the national
22 government agency or the local government unit to which the Corps is deployed shall
23 shoulder the operational expenses of deployment.

24 Sec. 27. *Operationalization of Deployment.* – The Mobilization Board, subject
25 to the approval of the Commission, shall promulgate the specific mechanisms by which
26 deployment is efficiently implemented, including the organization of the Corps to be
27 deployed, their territorial assignments, how deployment orders are communicated to
28 each member of the Corps and to which mobilization center they will report.

29 Sec. 28. *Serial Numbers and Registry.* - Upon completing of the Basic CSTC,
30 the graduates shall be issued individual serial numbers, which will serve as their
31 identification in case of deployment.

1 a. Failure to respond to the order of deployment for external and territorial
2 defense shall be punishable in accordance with the Articles of War, and shall,
3 upon conviction by a court-martial, be punishable by imprisonment of not less
4 than six (6) months but not more than two (2) years;

5 b. Failure to respond to the order of deployment for internal security and peace
6 and order or disaster risk reduction and management shall, upon conviction by
7 a civil court, be punishable as follows:

8 First Offense: One hundred and twenty (120) hours
9 of community service

10
11 Second Offense: Two hundred and forty (240) hours of
12 community service; and

13
14 Third and Subsequent Six (6) months imprisonment and four
15 Offenses: hundred and eighty (480) hours of
16 community service.

17 Sec. 35. *Corruption, graft, hazing and other abuses.* – For acts already
18 penalized under existing laws such as corruption, graft, hazing, sexual harassment,
19 and other abuses committed by persons authorized to administer the CSTC and
20 deployment of the Corps, the maximum penalty imposable under existing laws shall
21 be impose.

22 ARTICLE X

23 **Implementing Rules and Regulations**

24 Sec. 36. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* - The Commission shall
25 be tasked to formulate and approve the necessary rules and regulations to implement
26 the objectives and purposes of this Act within sixty (60) days from its organization.
27 The rules and regulations shall include provisions on the structure and organization of
28 the Corps under Section 8, the structure of the Department of Citizen Service Training
29 under Section 18, the specific mechanisms for the efficient mobilization and
30 deployment of the Corps under Section 27, the incentives for students pursuing
31 Advance CSTC under Sec 33, and such other matters as the commission may be deem
32 necessary or essential to fully implement the objectives and purposes of this Act.

1 ARTICLE IX

2 **Transitory Provisions**

3 *Sec 37. Transitory Provisions.* - To ensure efficient transition and to enable all
4 public and private colleges, universities, and similar learning institutions to adopt the
5 necessary structural changes within their units in accordance with the provisions oof
6 this Act, the CSTC shall be administered in all public colleges, universities, and similar
7 learning institutions after the Commission has formulated the necessary implementing
8 rules and regulations described in Section 36.

9 The Training Board shall ensure that the initial set of program managers who
10 shall instruct and train the first sets of enrollees in the CSTC in all public and private
11 colleges, universities and similar learning institutions are properly trained and
12 equipped. For this purpose, the Training Board shall develop a Program Managers
13 Training Course. All covered institutions are required to send program managers in a
14 number sufficient to implement the CSTC.

15 In all cases, students who are currently enrolled under the curriculum
16 implemented by virtue of Republic Act No. 9163, otherwise known as the National
17 Service Training Program Act of 2001, shall be allowed to finish the curriculum and be
18 deemed to have satisfied the requirement for graduation after completion thereof.

19 ARTICLE XIII

20 **Final Provisions**

21 *Sec. 38. Repealing Clause.* - Republic Act No. 9163, otherwise known as the
22 National Service Training Program Act of 2001, is hereby repealed. The relevant
23 provisions of Republic Act No. 7707, otherwise known as the Citizen Armed Forces of
24 the Philippines Reservist Act, are hereby amended as appropriate. All other laws,
25 orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are
26 likewise hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

27 *Sec. 39. Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
28 unconstitutional, the provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force
29 and effect.

30 *Sec. 40. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect immediately after fifteen (15)
31 days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general
32 circulation.