



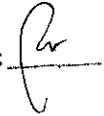
Senate
Office of the Secretary

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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SENATE

S.B. NO. **2617**

RECEIVED BY: 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

..recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world

—Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights provides for a very apt description of human rights when it defines it as “rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.”

Human rights is the cornerstone of our democracy as recognized in the 1987 Constitution. To respect and protect the rights of the people against the might and coercive power of the State the Constitution provides under Section 11 of Article II that: “the State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights”.

Pursuant to this mandate the government has ratified all the major human rights instruments, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1986); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1974); International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1967); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987); Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990); and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1995).

Parts of this bill is culled from Senate Bill No. 22 entitled “AN ACT PROTECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN SECURITY OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE, STRENGTHENING THE ORGANIZATION AND EXPANDING THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND CRIMINALIZING HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN SECURITY VIOLATIONS” which has been originally filed in the Fourteenth Congress. However, this bills treatment of human rights differs with that as originally filed as this creates the crime of human rights violations and provides the corresponding penalties. The *right to identity* and clear definition of the *right*

to life was incorporated in this bill in order to enrich the spirit of our basic freedoms.

This Bill cements our country's commitment to human rights by providing for a mechanism for its protection and the institutionalization of the principles of human rights pursuant to the treaties and instruments which we are signatories and parties to. It is the aim of this proposed act to balance the national security interest with human rights in the light of the truth, that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed with certain unalienable Rights.

By criminalizing human rights violations in this act, this bill intends to intensify the respect for the individual freedoms of all persons by ensuring that any violation of their basic rights are penalized and dealt with by law.

This proposed measure is an expression and guarantee in law as well as a statement of the general principles of human rights, by laying down the obligations of the government to act in certain ways or to refrain from doing certain acts in order to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people.

For the foregoing reasons, the passage of this bill is hereby sought.




MANNY VILLAR



'10 NOV 30 P4:20

SENATE

S.B. NO. 2617

RECEIVED BY: 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF
THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND CRIMINALIZING FOR
THE PURPOSE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

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

Chapter I
DECLARATION OF STATE POLICIES

Section 1. Declaration of State Policy. -It is the policy of the State to value the dignity of every human person and guarantee full recognition, respect, protection and fulfillment of human rights as the means for ensuring the security of its people. Towards this end, the State shall adopt human rights and human security measures to protect the people from pervasive threats to their rights, safety and lives.

The State shall enact measures to ensure the effective enforcement of the State's obligations under its treaty obligations in the following human rights treaties: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1986); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1974); International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1967); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987); Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990); and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1995).

To ensure the respect, protection and promotion of human rights, the State shall strengthen the organization of the Commission on Human Rights by granting it additional powers and functions.

Chapter II
HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 2. Definition of Human Rights. - For purposes of this Act, human rights will be limited to the rights affirmed and recognized in the treaties that have been ratified by the Republic of the Philippines in the following instruments: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1986); International Covenant

on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1974); International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1967); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987); Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990); and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1995).

The rights affirmed and recognized in the Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) shall also be recognized in this Act. It shall also include such rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and those found in Article III of the 1987 Constitution.

Section 3. *Human Rights Violation.* – For purposes of this Act, human rights violations shall mean any act of depriving any person of the enjoyment and possession of his civil and political rights enunciated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and other rights provided for under Chapter III of this Act that are civil and political in nature and rights found in Article III of the 1987 Constitution.

CHAPTER III CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Section 4. *Recognition and equality before the law.* - Everyone is entitled to equal protection before the law without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, gender, language, religion, political or opinion, national or social origin, property or other status.

Section 5. *Right to Life.* – The right to life shall be protected by law. It is inherent from the moment of conception.

Section 6. *Protection from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.* – No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

Section 7. *Protection of the Family and Children.* –

A. The family is the natural and basic social institution.

B. Every child shall have the right to be protected, without discrimination or distinction of any kind.

Section 8. *Privacy and Reputation.* - Everyone has the right not to have his privacy, family, home or correspondence interfered with unlawfully or arbitrarily; and not to have his reputation unlawfully attacked.

Section 9. *Freedom of Movement.* - Everyone shall have the right to move freely in the country and to leave it, and the freedom to choose his residence.

Section 10. *Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.* -

A. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion and to be respected in his beliefs. This right includes:

1. The freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief of his or her choice; and
2. The freedom to demonstrate his or her religion *or* belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching, either individually or as part of a community and whether in public or private.
3. No one shall be coerced in a way that would limit his freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief in worship, observance, practice or teaching.

Section 11. *Peaceful Assembly and Freedom of Association.* - Everyone shall have the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association.

Section 12. *Freedom of Expression.* - Everyone has the right to freedom of expression and to hold opinions without interference. This right includes the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of borders, whether orally, in writing or in print, by way of art, or in another way chosen by him.

Section 13. *Right to Identity.* - Everyone has the right to freedom of expression of identity or personhood through speech, deportment, dress, bodily characteristics, choice of name, or any other means, as well as the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, including with regard to human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity, through any medium.

Section 14. *Taking part in public life.* - Everyone has the right and to have the opportunity, to:

- A. Take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen;
- B. Vote and be elected at periodic elections, provided under the constitution;
- C. Have access on general terms of equality, for appointment to the public representatives; and other laws; and service and public office.

Section 15. *Right to Access Public Services.*- Everyone has the right of equal access to public services regardless of sex, creed, or political affiliation.

Section 16. *Right to liberty and security of person.* -

- A. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be arbitrarily arrested or detained.
- B. No one may be deprived of liberty without due process of law.
- C. The rights of persons arrested, detained or under custodial investigation as provided for in Republic Act 7438 shall be respected at all times.
- D. Anyone who has been unlawfully arrested or detained shall have the right to compensation for the arrest or detention.

- E. No one shall be imprisoned only because of an outstanding debt.
- F. No one shall be labeled, arrested, detained, or imprisoned by reason of one's political or religious belief.

Section 17. *Humane Treatment when deprived of liberty.* -

- A. Anyone deprived of liberty must be treated humanely and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.
- B. An accused person must be segregated from convicted people.

Section 18. *Fair Trial.* - Everyone has the right that when faced with criminal charges, to have his rights and obligations recognized by law, and that such charges shall be decided by a competent, independent and impartial court or tribunal after a fair and public hearing. The press and the public may be excluded from all or part of a trial -

- A. To protect morals or public order;
- B. If the interest of the private lives of the parties require the exclusion; or
- C. If, and to the extent that, exclusion is strictly necessary, in special circumstances of the case, because publicity would otherwise prejudice the interests of justice, subject to the remedies provided for under the Rules of Court.

Section 19. *Compensation for wrongful conviction.* -

- A. This section applies if
 1. Anyone is convicted by a final decision of a criminal offense;
 2. The person suffers punishment because of the conviction; and
 3. The conviction is reversed, or he or she is pardoned, on the ground of insufficiency of evidence the circumstances of which would show conclusively that there has been a miscarriage of justice.
- B. If this section applies, the person wrongfully convicted shall be compensated according to law.

Section 20. *Freedom from forced work.* -

- A. No one shall be held in slavery or involuntary servitude; and
- B. No one shall be made to perform forced or compulsory labor.

Section 21. *Rights of Indigenous, Religious or Linguistic Groups.* - Any one who belongs to an indigenous, religious or linguistic group shall not be denied of his right to his culture, to declare and practice his religion and to use his own language.

Section 22. *Rights apart from this Act.* - This act does not limit the extent of human rights, it recognizes all the rights that an individual may have under domestic and international law.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 23. *Composition of the Commission on Human Rights.* - The strict application, enforcement and monitoring of the rights provided for in Chapter III of this Act shall be vested in the Commission on Human Rights.

A. The Commission on Human Rights shall be composed of a Chairperson and four Members who must be natural-born citizens of the Philippines, at least thirty years of age, holders of a college degree, of proven independence, integrity and competence, and have been consistently involved in human rights promotion and protection activities.

1. The Chairperson and two Members of the Commission shall be members of the Philippine Bar whose field of expertise and practice is human rights law.
2. At least one member of the Commission shall come from a Non-Government Organization whose advocacy is in the field of human rights.
3. No candidate in any election shall, within one year after such election, be appointed Chairperson or Member.
4. In choosing the composition of the Commission, regional and cultural diversity as well as gender balance shall be taken into consideration.

The choice of membership will give primordial consideration to independence and pluralism of the Commission's composition.

B. The Chairperson and the Members shall be appointed by the President with the consent of the Commission on Appointments for a term of seven (7) years without reappointment. Appointment to any vacancy shall be only for the unexpired portion of the term of the predecessor. In no case shall any Member be appointed or designated in a temporary or acting capacity.

C. The Chairperson and the Members shall not, during their tenure, hold any office or employment. Neither shall they engage in the practice of any profession or in the active management or control of any business which in any way may be affected by the functions of their office, nor shall they be financially interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract with, or in any franchise or privilege granted by, the Government, any of its subdivisions, agencies, or instrumentalities, including government-owned or controlled corporations or their subsidiaries.

Section 24. *Powers and Functions.* - The Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

- A. Investigate, on its own or on complaint by any party, all forms of human rights violations involving civil and political rights;

- B. Upon finding of probable cause, recommend the prosecution of human rights violations involving civil and political rights to the Department of justice;
- C. To submit to the executive, the legislative department and any other competent body, on advisory basis either at the request of the authorities concerned or through the exercise of its power to hear a matter without higher referral, opinions, recommendations, proposals and reports on any matters concerning the protection and promotion of human rights.
- D. To contribute to the reports which States are required to submit to the United Nations treaty bodies and committees pursuant to the treaty obligations of the Philippines, where necessary, to express an opinion on the subject, with due respect for their independence;
- E. To cooperate with the United Nations and any other agency in the United Nations system, the regional institutions of other countries which are competent in the areas of the protection and protection of human rights;
- F. Adopt its operations guidelines and rules of procedure, and cite for contempt violations thereof in accordance with the Rules of Court;
- H. Provide appropriate legal measures for the protection of human rights of all persons within the Philippines, as well as Filipinos residing abroad, and provide for preventive measures and legal aid services to the underprivileged whose human rights have been violated or need protection;
- I. Exercise visitorial powers over jails, prisons or detention facilities;
- J. Establish a continuing program of research, education, and information to enhance respect for the primacy of human rights;
- K. Recommend to Congress effective measures to promote human rights and to provide for compensation to victims of violations of human rights or their families;
- L. Grant immunity from prosecution to any person whose testimony or whose possession of documents or other evidence is necessary or convenient to determine the truth in any investigation conducted by it or under its authority;
- M. Request the assistance of any department, bureau, office or agency in the performance of its functions;
- N. Appoint its officers and employees in accordance with law;
- P. Perform such other duties and functions as may be provided by law.

Section 25. Structural Organization. - The Commission shall have the following line and staff offices:

- A. **Office of the Executive Director.** - This Office shall be responsible for managing the day-to-day affairs, activities and operation of the

Commission, in accordance with its policies and instructions; it shall have general supervision over all line and staff offices, regional offices, and personnel; and it shall perform such other duties and functions as the Commission may assign to it.

It shall be headed by an Executive Director appointed by the President with the consent of the Commission on Appointments, who shall be a member of the Philippine Bar with proven integrity and competence and has been in the actual practice of law for at least five (5) years prior to his appointment and has consistently been involved in human rights protection and promotion activities. He shall have the rank and salary of a department undersecretary.

- B. Education, Training and Information Office.** - This Office shall implement the programs for research, education and information to enhance respect for human rights, particularly the education and training programs provided in Section 24 of this Act, and perform such other duties and functions as the Commission may assign to it.

It shall be headed by a Director appointed by the President with the consent of the Commission on Appointments, who shall be a holder of a college degree in education, mass communication, or in a related field, with proven integrity and competence and has been in the actual practice of his profession for at least five (5) years prior to his appointment or has held during such period any position in the government requiring the qualifications of his profession, and has consistently been involved in human rights promotion and protection activities. He shall have the rank and salary of an Assistant Secretary.

- C. Legal Office.** - This Office shall investigate complaints of human rights violations; conduct preliminary investigation to determine the existence of a prima facie case for possible prosecution; provide other legal services to the Commission; provide legal aid services to victims of human rights violations; conduct periodic visits to the national penitentiary and penal colonies, detention facilities, and provincial, city or municipal jails; and perform such other duties and functions as the Commission may assign to it.

It shall be headed by a Director appointed by the President with the consent of the Commission on Appointments, who shall be a member of the Philippine Bar with proven integrity and competence and has been in the actual practice of law for at least five (5) years prior to his appointment and has been consistently involved in human rights protection and promotion activities. He shall have the rank and salary of an Assistant Secretary.

- D. Regional Offices.** - The Commission shall establish and maintain a regional office in each of the administrative regions, which shall exercise the powers and perform the functions of the Commission in the provinces, cities and municipalities, and barangays in the region, and perform such other duties and functions as the Commission may assign to regional offices. It shall be headed by a Regional Director appointed by the President with the consent of the Commission on Appointments, who shall be a holder of a college degree with proven integrity and competence, and

has consistently been involved in human rights protection and promotion activities.

He shall have the rank and salary of an Assistant Secretary. Human rights promotion officers in all departments, bureau, offices, agencies, subdivisions and instrumentalities of the Government including government owned or controlled corporations, who shall be chosen on the basis of their education, training and experience, and attitude on human rights, upon the recommendations of their office heads. They shall coordinate the activities of human rights advocates; participate in human rights research, education and training, and information programs, projects and activities; protect and promote human rights and encourage respect for human dignity; monitor reports of human rights violations; and perform such other duties as the Commission or the Regional Director may assign to them from time to time. All human rights promotion officers shall undergo orientation and training on human rights before entering upon the performance of their duties.

E. Education and Training Programs. -

1. At every level of formal education, the Department of Education, in coordination with the Commission, shall require private and public schools, including State colleges and universities, to offer courses designed to inculcate in the minds and hearts of the youth the need to respect human dignity and to protect and promote human rights. Similar courses shall likewise be included in the non-formal education program.
2. The Civil Service Commission, the Civil Service Academy and the Development Academy of the Philippines, in coordination with the Commission, shall include a course design on human rights in their training programs for civil service officers and employees and for Career Executive Officers.
3. The Department of National Defense, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the National Defense College, and the Philippine Military Academy and other military training schools, in Coordination with the Commission, shall include the study of human rights in their programs for the education and training of all military officers and enlisted men, in the reserve or active service, especially of arresting or investigating officers and agents, prison or jail guards, and other personnel assigned to the national penitentiary or penal colonies, detention facilities, and prisons or jails.
4. The Philippine National Police, the National Police Academy of the Philippines, the National Police Commission, and the provinces, cities, and municipalities, in coordination with the Commission, shall include the study of human rights in their programs for the education and training of police officers, policemen and firemen, jail or prison guards, and other personnel in charge of or assigned to the national penitentiary or penal colonies, detention facilities, and provincial, city or municipal jails, and private security guards (blue guards), as the case may be.

5. The Department of Justice particularly the National Prosecution Service, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Prisons, the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, the Public Attorney's Office, and the Office of the Ombudsman and the Office of the Special Prosecutor, in coordination with the Commission, shall include the study of human rights in their programs for the training and investigating or arresting officers or agents, jail or prison guards, and other personnel in charge of or assigned to the national penitentiary and penal colonies,, detention facilities, and provincial, city or municipal jails.
6. The Department of Finance particularly the Bureau of Customs, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and the Finance Intelligence and Investigation Bureau, and other agencies or offices whose agents are authorized to conduct investigations and make arrests, shall, in coordination with the Commission, include the study of human rights in their programs for the training of investigating or arresting officers and agents, and personnel in charge of detention facilities.
7. The Supreme Court, through its Philippine Judicial Academy (PHILJA) in coordination with the Commission shall include lectures on human rights in its career development program for judges and court personnel.
8. The Commission shall, in coordination with the commissions, departments, bureaus, and local governments concerned, conduct seminars on human rights for detention and convicted prisoners and inmates of the national penitentiary and penal colonies, detention facilities, and provincial, city and municipal jails, at least once a year for each of those facilities.
9. The education and training programs herein prescribe, among others, the teaching or lectures on the following subjects:
 - a. Bill of Rights and other provisions of the Constitution on human rights;
 - b. Crimes against the fundamental laws of the State, offenses or irregularities of public officers, and crimes against personal liberty;
 - c. Offenses punished in special penal laws, including that committed by any public officer or employee or anyone acting under his orders or in his place, who shall obstruct, prohibit, or otherwise prevent an attorney entitled to practice in the courts of the Philippines from visiting and conferring privately with a person arrested (R.A. 857, as amended);
 - d. Provision of the Administrative Code directing the Bureau of Prisons to supply a national prisoner, upon his release, with transportation to his home including a gratuity to cover the probable cost of subsistence in route, and a set of clothes;
 - e. Human Relations provisions of the New Civil Code providing that any person suffering material or moral loss because a public servant or employee refuses or neglects, without just cause, to perform his official duty may file an action for damages and other relief against the latter, without prejudice to any disciplinary administrative

action that may be taken (Article 27); or providing that any public officer or employee, or any private individual, who directly or indirectly obstructs, defeats, violates or in any manner impedes or impairs any of the civil and political rights and liberties of another person shall be liable to the latter for damages (Article 32); or providing that when a member of a city or municipal police force refuses or fails to render aid or protection to any person in case of danger to life or property, such peace officer shall be primarily liable for damages, and the city or municipality shall be subsidiarily responsible therefore (Article 34);

- f. Rules for the treatment of prisoners provided in the Department of Justice Manual on the general rules, policies and operating procedures adhered to in the prison service; and
- g. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the other human rights treaties and conventions that the Philippines has ratified but not limited to: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1986); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1974); International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1967); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987); Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990); and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1995).

The Commission shall avail of the facilities and services of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), National Printing Office, and other government information agencies in the preparation, publication or reproduction of education and training materials, and in the dissemination of information on human rights.

The completion of the education or training program herein prescribed shall be considered by the appointing authority and the Civil Service Commission in the appointment or promotion of said officers, agents, jail or prison guards, and other personnel, or in their continuance in the service if they are temporary or casual employees.

Section 26. Investigation of Human Rights Violations. -The Commission shall investigate all violations of human rights, whether or not they constitute any crime or offense, including violations of human rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the following human rights treaties: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1986); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1974); International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1967); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981); Convention against

Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1987); Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990); and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1995).

Section 27. Human Rights Clearance. - All public officers and their agents are not eligible for promotion and appointment unless they obtain a human rights clearance from the Commission.

No person who has been convicted of a human rights violation or who has a pending case before any Court constituting a human rights violation will be given a human rights clearance by the Commission.

Section 28. Appropriations. - The approved annual appropriations of the Commission shall be automatically and regularly released. In addition to the appropriations for the Commission in the current calendar year's General Appropriations Act, such sum as shall be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act for the ensuing calendar year.

CHAPTER V PENALTIES

Section 29. Penalties. - The following penalties shall be imposed on the violations under this act:

- A. Any person found guilty of human rights violation shall be punished with six years of imprisonment or a fine of at least Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) but not exceeding Two hundred fifty thousand (P250,000.00) or both;
- B. Where a human rights violation constitutes any of the crimes against the fundamental law of the State, or offenses or irregularities of public officers, or crimes against personal liberty, defined and punished in the Revised Penal Code the penalty provided for by law shall be imposed in the maximum period and a fine of at least Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) but not exceeding Two hundred fifty thousand (P250,000.00).

CHAPTER VI GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 30. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The necessary rules and regulations to implement this act shall be formulated by the Department of Justice after consultation with the Commission on Human Rights and the various stakeholders including civil society groups, human rights advocates and victims of human rights violations and their families.

Section 31. Congressional Oversight. - A special congressional oversight on human rights and human security shall be created by Congress to exercise oversight functions over the implementation of this Act.

Section 32. Repealing Clause. - All other laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, and administrative regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

Section 33. *Separability Clause.* - In the event that any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the other provisions.

Section 34. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,