

RECORD OF THE SENATE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2007

OPENING OF THE SESSION

At 4:17 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Manny Villar, called the session to order.

The President. The 62nd session of the Third Regular Session of the Thirteenth Congress is hereby called to order.

Let us all rise for a minute of silent prayer.

Everybody rose for a minute of silent prayer.

The President. Miss Alegria Ferrer and Mr. Nelson Caruncho will lead us in the singing of the Philippine National Anthem and they will also render a song entitled *Minamahal Kita*.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Everybody remained standing for the singing of the national anthem.

The President. We would like to thank Ms. Alegria Ferrer and Mr. Nelson Caruncho. *[Applause]*

ROLL CALL

The Secretary will please call the roll.

The Secretary, reading:

Senator Edgardo J. Angara	Present*
Senator Joker P. Arroyo	Present
Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon	Present
Senator Compañera Pia S. Cayetano	Present
Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago	Present
Senator Franklin M. Dilon	Present
Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada	Present
Senator Luisa "Loi" P. Ejercito Estrada	Present
Senator Juan Ponce Enrile	Present
Senator Juan M. Flavie	Present
Senator Richard J. Gordon	Present*
Senator Panfilo M. Lacson	Present
Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid	Present
Senator Alfredo S. Lim	Present
Senator M. A. Madrigal	Present
Senator Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr.	Present
Senator Sergio R. Osmeña III	Present*
Senator Kiko Pangilinan	Present*
Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr.	Present
Senator Ralph G. Recto	Present
Senator Ramon Bong Revilla Jr.	Present
Senator Mar Roxas	Present
The President	Present

The President. With 19 senators present, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

THE JOURNAL

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we dispense with the reading of the *Journal* of the 60th session, January 30, 2007, and consider it approved.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

THE JOURNAL (Consideration Deferred)

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we defer the consideration and approval of the *Journal* of the 61st session, January 31, 2007 as it is still being finalized.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

The Secretary will please read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Secretary.

February 1, 2007

The Honorable
MANNY VILLAR
President of the Senate
Financial Center
Pasay City 1308

Mr. President:

I have been directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives on January 31, 2007 passed House Bill No. 6041, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE MUNICIPALITY OF
NAGA IN THE PROVINCE OF CEBU INTO A

* Arrived after the roll call

anybody frontally. I do not do things behind their backs and I want to do it in front of them so they can see who is talking to them. Unfortunately, he is not here, he left.

Senator Pimentel. Mr. President, on the point of the Comelec, I just want to put on record that I filed charges against the Comelec even with the Office of the Ombudsman.

Senator Gordon. We.

Senator Pimentel. We did, yes.

Senator Gordon. Just for the record, we filed.

Senator Pimentel. Wait a minute let me just finish this.

Before Senator Gordon was in this Chamber, I already filed a bill, not a bill but specific criminal charges against the Comelec regarding the P1.3 billion that was spent in the acquisition of those voting machines which contract was declared null and void by the Supreme Court.

Now, of course, Senator Gordon has brought up new matters about the Comelec, and this is a very good thing because we should indeed hold them to account. There is no question in my mind that we should do that. So, my intervention here is a limited one. I just want to cite instances where a sweeping statement may not necessarily hold water.

Thank you very much.

The President. The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we suspend the session for one minute.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the session is suspended for one minute.

It was 6:22 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:22 p.m., the session was resumed.

The President. The session is resumed.

SPECIAL ORDER

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we transfer from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders Committee Report No. 239 on Senate Bill No. 2589, entitled

AN ACT TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY IN THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC BY REDUCING BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE, PREVENTING GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

BILL ON SECOND READING S. No. 2589 - Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we consider Senate Bill No. 2589 as reported out under Committee Report No. 239.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

Consideration of Senate Bill No. 2589 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary will read only the title of the bill without prejudice to inserting in the *Record* the whole text thereof.

The Secretary. Senate Bill No. 2589, entitled

AN ACT TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY IN THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC BY REDUCING BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE, PREVENTING GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR

The following is the whole text of the bill:

Senate Bill No. 2589

AN ACT TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY IN THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC BY REDUCING BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE, PREVENTING GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared policy of the State to promote integrity, accountability, proper management of public affairs and public property as well as to establish effective practices aimed at the prevention of graft and corruption in government. Towards this end, the State shall maintain honesty and

responsibility among its public officials and employees, and shall take appropriate measures to promote transparency in each agency with regard to the manner of transacting with the public, which shall encompass a program for the adoption of simplified procedures that will reduce red tape and expedite transactions in government.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* - This Act shall apply to all government offices and agencies including local government units and government-owned or controlled corporations that provide frontline services as defined in this Act. Those performing judicial, quasi-judicial and legislative functions are excluded from the coverage of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (a) "Simple transactions" refer to requests or applications submitted by clients of a government office or agency which only require ministerial actions on the part of the public officer or employee, or that which present only inconsequential issues for the resolution by an officer or employee of said government office.
- (b) "Complex transactions" refer to requests or applications submitted by clients of a government office which necessitate the use of discretion in the resolution of complicated issues by an officer or employee of said government office, such transaction to be determined by the office concerned.
- (c) "Frontline service" refers to the process or transaction between clients and government offices or agencies involving applications for any privilege, right, permit, reward, license, concession, or for any modification, renewal or extension of the enumerated applications and/or requests which are acted upon in the ordinary course of business of the agency or office concerned.
- (d) "Action" refers to the written approval or disapproval made by a government office or agency on the application or request submitted by a client for processing.
- (e) "Officer or employee" refers to a person employed in a government office or agency required to perform specific duties and responsibilities related to the application or request submitted by a client for processing.

- (f) "Irrelevant requirements" refer to any document or performance of an act not directly material to the resolution of the issues raised in the request or needed in the application submitted by the client.
- (g) "Fixer" refers to any individual whether or not officially involved in the operation of a government office or agency who has access to people working therein, and whether or not in collusion with them, facilitates speedy completion of transactions for pecuniary gain or any other advantage or consideration.

SEC. 5. *Re-engineering of Systems and Procedures.*

- All offices and agencies which provide frontline services are hereby mandated to regularly undertake time and motion studies, undergo evaluation and improvement of their transaction systems and procedures and re-engineer the same if deemed necessary to reduce bureaucratic red tape and processing time.

SEC. 6. *Citizen's Charter.* - All government agencies including departments, bureaus, offices, instrumentalities, or government-owned and/or controlled corporations, or local government or district units shall set up their respective service standards to be known as the Citizen's Charter in the form of information billboards which should be posted at the main entrance of offices or at the most conspicuous place, and in the form of published materials written either in English, Filipino, or in the local dialect, that detail:

- (a) The procedure to obtain a particular service;
- (b) The person/s responsible for each step;
- (c) The maximum time to conclude the process;
- (d) The document/s to be presented by the customer, if necessary;
- (e) The amount of fees, if necessary; and
- (f) The procedure for filing complaints.

SEC. 7. *Accountability of the Heads of Offices and Agencies.* - The head of the office or agency shall be primarily responsible for the implementation of this Act and shall be held accountable to the public in rendering fast, efficient, convenient and reliable service. All transactions and processes are deemed to have been made with the permission or clearance from the highest authority having jurisdiction over the government office or agency concerned.

SEC. 8. *Accessing Frontline Services.* - The following shall be adopted by all government offices and agencies:

(a) Acceptance of Applications and Requests - (1) All officers or employees shall accept written applications, requests, and /or documents being submitted by clients of the office or agency.

(2) The responsible officer or employee shall acknowledge receipt of such application and/or request by writing or printing clearly thereon his/her name, the unit where he/she is connected with, and the time and date of receipt.

(3) The receiving officer or employee shall perform a preliminary assessment of the request so as to promote a more expeditious action on requests.

(b) Action of Offices

(1) All applications and/or requests submitted shall be acted upon by the assigned officer or employee during the period stated in the Citizen's Charter which shall not be longer than five working days in the case of simple transactions and ten (10) working days in the case of complex transactions from the date the request or application was received. Depending on the nature of the frontline services requested or the mandate of the office or agency under unusual circumstances, the maximum time prescribed above may be extended. For the extension due to nature of frontline services or the mandate of the office or agency concerned the period for the delivery of frontline services shall be indicated in the Citizen's Charter. The office or agency concerned shall notify the requesting party in writing of the reason for the extension and the final date of release for the extension and the final date of release of the frontline service/s requested.

(2) No application or request shall be returned to the client without appropriate action. In case an application or request is disapproved, the officer or employee who rendered the decision shall send a formal notice to the client within five (5) working days from the receipt of the request and/or application, stating therein the reason for the disapproval including a list of specific requirements which the client failed to submit.

(c) Denial of Request for Access to Government Service - Any denial of request for access to government

service shall be fully explained in writing, stating the name of the person making the denial and the grounds upon which such denial is based. Any denial of request is deemed to have been made with the permission or clearance from the highest authority having jurisdiction over the government office or agency concerned.

(d) Limitation of Signatories - The number of signatories in any document shall be limited to a maximum of five signatures which shall represent officers directly supervising the office or agency concerned.

(e) Adoption of Working Schedules to Serve Clients - Heads of offices and agencies which render frontline services shall adopt appropriate working schedules to ensure that all clients who are within their premises prior to the end of official working hours are attended to and served even during lunch break and after regular working hours.

(f) Identification Card - All employees transacting with the public shall be provided with an official identification card which should be visibly worn during office hours.

(g) Establishment of Public Assistance/Complaints Desk - Each office or agency shall establish a public assistance/complaints desk in all their offices.

SEC. 9. *Automatic Extension of Permits and Licenses.*

- If a government office or agency fails to act on an application and/or request for renewal of a license, permit or authority subject for renewal within the prescribed period said permit, license or authority shall automatically be extended until a decision or resolution is rendered on the application for renewal: *Provided*, That the automatic extension shall not apply when the permit, license, or authority covers activities which pose danger to public health, public safety, public morals or to public policy including but not limited to natural resource extraction activities.

SEC. 10. *Report Card Survey.* - All offices and agencies providing frontline services shall be subjected to a Report Card Survey to be initiated by the Civil Service Commission, in coordination with the Development Academy of the Philippines, which shall be used to obtain feedback on how provisions in the Citizen's Charter are being followed and how the agency is performing.

The Report Card Survey shall also be used to obtain information and/or estimates of hidden costs incurred by clients to access frontline services which may include, but is not limited to, bribes and payment to fixers.

A feedback mechanism shall be established in all agencies covered by this Act and the results thereof shall be incorporated in their annual report.

SEC. 11. *Violations.* - After compliance with the substantive and procedural due process, the following shall constitute violations of this Act together with their corresponding penalties:

(a) Light Offense - (1) Refusal to accept application and/or request within the prescribed period or any document being submitted by a client;

(2) Failure to act on an application and/or request or failure to refer back to the client a request which cannot be acted upon due to lack of requirement/s within the prescribed period;

(3) Failure to attend to clients who are within the premises of the office or agency concerned prior to the end of official working hours and during lunch break;

(4) Failure to render frontline services within the prescribed period on any application and/or request without due cause;

(5) Failure to give the client a written notice on the disapproval of an application or request;

(6) Imposition of additional irrelevant requirements other than those listed in the first notice.

(a) Penalties for light offense shall be as follows:

First Offense - Thirty (30) days suspension without pay and mandatory attendance in Values Orientation Program

Second Offense - Three (3) months suspension without pay; and

Third Offense - Dismissal and perpetual disqualification from public service

(b) Grave Offense - Fixing and/or collusion with fixers in consideration of economic and/or other gain or advantage.

Penalty - Dismissal and perpetual disqualification from public service.

SEC. 12. *Criminal Liability for Fixers.* - In addition to Sec. 11 (b), fixers, as defined in this Act, shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment not exceeding six years or a fine not less than Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) but not more than Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00) or both fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

SEC. 13. *Civil and Criminal Liability, Not Barred.* - The finding of administrative liability under this Act shall not be a bar to the filing of criminal, civil or other related charges under existing laws arising from the same act or omission as herein enumerated.

SEC. 14. *Administrative Jurisdiction.* - The administrative jurisdiction on any violation of the provisions of this Act shall be vested in either the Civil Service Commission (CSC), Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) or the Office of the Ombudsman as determined by appropriate laws and issuances.

SEC. 15. *Immunity; Discharge of Co-Respondent/ Accused to be a Witness.* - Any public official or employee or any person having been charged with another under this Act and who voluntarily gives information pertaining to an investigation or who willingly testifies therefore, shall be exempt from prosecution in the case/s where his/her information and testimony are given. The discharge may be granted and directed by the investigating body or court upon the application or petition of any of the respondent/accused-informant and before the termination of the investigation: *Provided, That:*

- (a) There is absolute necessity for the testimony of the respondent/accused-informant whose discharge is requested;
- (b) There is no other direct evidence available for the proper prosecution of the offense committed, except the testimony of said respondent/accused-informant;
- (c) The testimony of said respondent/accused-informant can be substantially corroborated in its material points;
- (d) The respondent/accused-informant has not been previously convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude; and,
- (e) Said respondent/accused-informant does not appear to be the most guilty.

Evidence adduced in support of the discharge shall automatically form part of the records of the investigation.

Should the investigating body or court deny the motion or request for discharge as a witness, his/her sworn statement shall be inadmissible as evidence.

SEC. 16. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Civil Service Commission in coordination with the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), the Office of the Ombudsman and the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC), shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 17. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this Act.

SEC. 18. *Repealing Clause.* - All provisions of laws, presidential decrees, letters of instruction and other presidential issuances which are incompatible or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby deemed amended or repealed.

SEC. 19. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, to sponsor the measure, I move that we recognize the sponsor of the measure, Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson.

The President. Senator Lacson is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR LACSON

Senator Lacson. Mr. President, esteemed colleagues, it is an honor to present before this Chamber Senate Bill No. 2589, under Committee Report No. 239, entitled

AN ACT TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY IN THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC BY REDUCING BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE, PREVENTING GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR.

Red tape has been a systematic encumbrance to improving the environment of business and industry, and increasing the competitiveness of the Philippine economy. Characterized by superfluous and deterring procedures, red tape has burdened the

impact produced by our valuable time and financial resources, and has led to the apparent ineptitude of government agencies in developing programs for the Filipino interest.

To cull a passage from a World Bank study entitled "*Doing Business 2007: How to Reform*", an entrepreneur in the Philippines who plans to start up a business has to comply with 11 separate procedures that will take an average of 48 days, with an estimated cost of 18.7% of income per capita to complete.

This rite of passage is discrete from the process of obtaining a business license since such requires 23 steps, 197 days, and a cost of 113.4% of income per capita. The same business of obtaining a license in an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development or OECD member country, translates to only 14.1 steps, 146.9 days, and costs 75% of income per capita.

The obvious disparity in the number of procedures and/or steps, days, and percentage cost practiced in our country versus those in OECD countries is a cause for despondency and even shame to those of us in the public service. These figures form the shameful summation of why we have increasingly lost our competitive advantage in attracting foreign investments.

The environment of serpentine yet mandatory bureaucratic rules and procedures have naturally given rise to diverse, opportunistic networks of corruption. The 2006 SWS survey attests to a decline in the net sincerity among government institutions in fighting corruption. Indeed, red tape is like the mythical hydra, always ready to grow another of its kind but that is not all, Mr. President. The somewhat insurmountable problem of red tape is further compounded by the presence of its inevitable cohort, corruption, and these two have maniacally orchestrated the sisyphian mess that is our country's business climate.

Public office is a public trust

It is indicating that the government should function as a "partner in growth." However, this phrase has developed into a pedestrian nomenclature, a pocket of change only attended to when a convenient by-line or campaign speech filler is called upon. The attributes that ought to characterize public officers and employees put forth by the Constitution have already been distorted like a giant freak show through the labyrinthine warren of corrupt practices prevalent in our present-day bureaucracy.

Past efforts to simplify and revitalize the efficacy of government processes by reducing or eliminating red tape have failed to produce tangible results. But that precedent should not become a deterrent. There is no better time than now to put our house in order, to seek and eliminate red tape once and for all and to simplify processes whenever possible. Like Hercules in the epic battle against the hydra, we must strike at the very root of the problem

to prevent its reemergence in the future. Thus, it is the policy of the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 to promote integrity, accountability, proper management of public affairs and public property as well as to establish effective practices aimed at the prevention of graft and corruption in the government.

This proposed legislation aims to provide a feasible approach to this problem by requiring all government agencies and instrumentalities to adopt a fixed time period within which transactions passing through the respective agencies ought to be completed. Under this Act, simple transactions must be completed within five (5) working days; as for complex transactions, a period of ten (10) days is given for its accomplishment. In order to ensure the speedy processing of applications and/or requests, this bill also limits the number of required signatories for any document to a maximum of five (5) signatures.

The Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 seeks to revive the principles of expediency, transparency and integrity back among the ranks of government. In line with this, a citizen's charter or informative billboards shall be created in all concerned agencies. These billboards will aid the public as they go about the different steps involved in obtaining their application and/or requests from the said agency. More importantly, Mr. President, this measure proposes a regular assessment and upgrading of the frontline services of such government offices to ensure that red tape is kept a minimum, if not eliminated.

At the cornerstone of every encumbrance to economic growth are indefensible government regulations. It has been already well-documented that one of the paramount reasons why most people are robbed of the opportunity or the desire to start up a business is the unnecessary burden of dealing with the bureaucracy. It is simply deplorable that what would take months in our country to obtain all the necessary permits and approvals from all the pertinent authorities takes only weeks in other more progressive countries and often through just one kiosk or even through the internet.

I hope today's initiative, the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 will gain the full support of my colleagues in these hallowed halls.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. The Majority Leader is recognized.

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, we are in the period of interpellations. However, there are no reservations for interpellation. I move that we close the period of interpellations.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, we are in the period of committee amendments.

Senator Lacson. There are no committee amendments, Mr. President.

Senator Cayetano. I move that we close the period of committee amendments.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, we are in the period of individual amendments. However, we have no reservations for individual amendments. I move that we close the period of individual amendments.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

APPROVAL OF S. NO. 2589 ON SECOND READING

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we vote on Second Reading on Senate Bill No. 2589 as reported out under Committee Report No. 239.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, we shall now vote on Second Reading on Senate Bill No. 2589.

As many as are in favor of the bill, say *aye*.

Several Members. *Aye.*

The President. As many as are against the bill, say *nay*. *[Silence]*

The *ayes* have it; Senate Bill No. 2589 is approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF S. NO. 2589

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we suspend consideration of Senate Bill No. 2589.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we suspend the session for one minute.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the session is suspended for one minute.

It was 6:31 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:33 p.m., the session was resumed.

The President. The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SPECIAL ORDER

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we transfer from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders Committee Report No. 241 on House Bill No. 5934, entitled

AN ACT CREATING FOUR ADDITIONAL METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT BRANCHES IN THE CITY OF MARIKINA, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 27 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

BILL ON SECOND READING H. No. 5934 – Creating Four Additional Metropolitan Trial Court Branches in the City of Marikina

Senator Cayetano. Mr. President, I move that we consider House Bill No. 5934 as reported out under Committee Report No. 241.

The President. Is there any objection? *[Silence]* There being none, the motion is approved.

Consideration of House Bill No. 5934 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary will read only the title of the bill, without prejudice to inserting in the *Record* the whole text thereof.

The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes]. House Bill No. 5934, entitled

AN ACT CREATING FOUR ADDITIONAL METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT BRANCHES IN THE CITY OF MARIKINA, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 27 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129,

OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

The following is the whole text of the bill:

House Bill No. 5934

AN ACT CREATING FOUR ADDITIONAL METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT BRANCHES IN THE CITY OF MARIKINA, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 27 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Section 27, Chapter III of Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, otherwise known as the Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 27. *Metropolitan Trial Courts of the National Capital Region.* - There shall be a Metropolitan Trial Court in the National Capital Region, to be known as the Metropolitan Trial Court of Metro Manila, which shall be composed of [eighty-two (82)] EIGHTY-SIX (86) branches. There shall be:

“xxx

“[Two] SIX branches [(Branches LXXV and LXXVI)] for Marikina with seats thereat;

“xxx.”

SEC. 2. The Supreme Court shall assign the additional four branches of the Metropolitan Trial Court in the City of Marikina with seats thereat.

SEC. 3. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Justice, shall immediately include in the Court's program the operationalization of four additional branches of the Metropolitan Trial Courts for the City of Marikina, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.