

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

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1534

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
RECEIVED	
DATE:	13 JUL 2016
TIME:	3:24 PM
BY:	JS
REGISTRATION UNIT BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE	

Introduced by Honorable Alexandria P. Gonzales

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Legislative Branch is the policy-making body of the country. It requires competent, efficient and honest public servants to complement the earnest aspiration of lawmakers to serve the people with utmost responsibility, integrity and efficiency.

The Congressional secretariat officers and employees have the primary responsibility of providing the lawmakers with professional, technical and other necessary services for legislation. Such expectations shall only be achieved by the recruitment of highly qualified personnel and the provision of a system of training and continuing education program for the legislative officers and employees.

With these in mind, and to maintain the highest level of morale among the personnel assisting in the lawmaking process and to ensure the highest degree of professionalism in the service, it is proposed that the Philippine Legislative Academy be established. Through this measure, the guidelines needed to maintain a high level of technical and professional personnel in the Legislative Branch shall be maintained.


ALEXANDRIA P. GONZALES

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE LEGISLATIVE ACADEMY, DEFINING ITS
POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to ensure an efficient and credible Career Service of the Legislature (CSL). Toward this end, it is imperative to provide members of the CSL with continuing appropriate education and training.

The CSL shall include the officers and employees of Congress, composed of the Senate, House of Representatives, the Commission on Appointments and the Senate and House of Representatives Electoral Tribunals.

SEC. 2. *Objectives.* – It is the purpose of this Act to professionalize, upgrade and strengthen the workforce of Congress in order to:

- (a) Enable its officers and employees to efficiently and effectively provide the necessary legislative and administrative support services to Congress and its Members;

- (b) Create a pool of competent and development-oriented career legislative service officers and employees; and
- (c) Provide a system of training and continuing education for personnel in order to ensure that only competent and qualified persons are recruited into the career legislative service.

SEC. 3. *Philippine Legislative Academy.* – To carry out the policy and objectives enunciated in Sections 1 and 2 hereof, there is hereby established a Philippine Legislative Academy, herein referred to as the Academy. The Academy shall be a unit of both Houses of Congress and shall operate under its administration, supervision and control. It shall be located at the House of Representatives, Batasan Complex, Quezon City.

SEC. 4. *Functions.* – The Academy shall serve as a training school for legislative officers and employees for positions in the CSL. For this purpose, it shall provide and implement a curriculum for legislative education as well as conduct seminars, workshops and other training programs to upgrade legislative support services, capabilities and efficiency, and shall perform such other functions as may be necessary in carrying out its mandate.

SEC. 5. *Governing Board.* – The Academy shall have, as its governing body, a Board of Trustees composed of the Chair of the Civil Service Commission, the Secretary of the Senate and the Secretary General of the House of Representatives, as *ex officio* members; and an incumbent Deputy Secretary of the Senate chosen by the Senate President , and an incumbent Deputy Secretary General of the House of Representatives chosen by the Speaker, both of whom shall have served in such positions for at least five (5) years, as designated members.

The *ex officio* members of the Board of Trustees shall serve as such for the duration of their incumbency in their respective offices.

All Members shall serve without compensation, but shall be entitled to reasonable honoraria/allowance for the performance of their duties.

SEC. 6. *Executive Board.* - The Executive Board of the Academy shall be designated by the Board of Trustees, and shall be composed of a Chancellor, two (2) Vice Chancellors and an Executive Secretary. The Executive Board shall serve for a term of three (3) years without prejudice to subsequent reappointments.

In case of a vacancy in any Executive position, the Board of Trustees shall designate a replacement who shall serve in such position for the remainder of the unfinished term.

The Chancellor shall have as requisite qualifications meritorious service as an incumbent Deputy Secretary of the Senate or an incumbent Deputy Secretary General of the House of Representatives, who shall have served as such for at least three (3) years, and belongs to the ranks of the Career Executive Service.

A Vice Chancellor shall be chosen from each House. A Vice Chancellor shall have as requisite qualifications meritorious service as an incumbent Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director of the Senate or the House of Representatives, who shall have served as such for at least three (3) years, and belongs to the ranks of the Career Executive Service.

The Executive Secretary shall have the same requisite qualifications and the same compensation at least as a Service Director II. He or she shall serve on a full-time basis and shall be the Recorder-Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

If no persons meet the abovementioned requirements for any position, the Board of Trustees shall designate such official with the closest qualifications.

The Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor shall serve without compensation, but shall be entitled to reasonable honoraria/allowance for the performance of their designated duties as determined by the Board of Trustees or as provided by law.

The members of the Executive Board shall not engage in the private policies of any profession.

SEC. 7. *Academy Staff.* - The Academy shall be staffed by a corps of professional lecturers. A lecturer shall be nominated by any of the members of the Executive Board of the

Academy; and, such nominations are approved by the Board of Trustees shall be included in the list of lecturers, and shall be entitled to reasonable honoraria/allowance as deemed fit by the Board of Trustees or as provided by law.

SEC. 8. *Academic Courses.* – The academic courses and the publications of a legislative service journal and such other documents shall be determined by the Executive Board and subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

SEC. 9. *Criteria for Selection and Admission to the Academy.* – The criteria for the selection and admission to the Academy shall be determined by the Executive Board and subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

SEC. 10. *Appointment and Promotion.* – Legislative officers and employees who have completed the programs prescribed by the Academy and have satisfactorily completed all the requirements incident thereto shall be given priority for appointment, selection or promotion to any position or vacancy in the CSL.

SEC. 11. *Consortium Agreements.* – The Academy may enter into consortium and similar or related agreements with educational and training institutions for the development and implementation of programs for capability building, career development and legislative orientation.

SEC. 12. *Tax Exemptions.* – The provision of any general or special law to the contrary notwithstanding:

- (a) All revenues and assets of the Academy used actually, directly and exclusively for educational purposes shall be exempt from all taxes and duties;
- (b) Gifts and donations of real and personal properties of all kinds to the Academy shall be exempt from the donor's tax and the same shall be considered as allowable deductions from the gross income of the donor, in

accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended;

- (c) Importation of economic, technical, vocational, scientific, philosophical, historical and cultural books, supplies, equipment, machinery and other materials, including scientific and educational computer and software equipment, shall be exempt from customs duties and taxes; and;
- (d) Educational services rendered by the Academy shall be exempt from value-added tax.

SEC. 13. *Legislative Academy Fund.* – All legacies, gifts, and donations to the Academy established under this law shall constitute a special fund to be known as the Legislative Academy Fund. This fund shall be administered and disbursed by the Board of Trustees exclusively for the purpose of this Act.

SEC. 14. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act, including the operation, maintenance and improvement of the Academy, shall be charged against the General Appropriations Act of 2014 and every year thereafter under the programs of the Congress of the Philippines.

SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision under this Act be deemed invalid, the remainder of this Act not otherwise affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 17. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved.