

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



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

1873

House Bill No. _____

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The prevention and control of diseases that threaten Filipinos today depend primarily on the proper implementation of environmental sanitation. Thus, the role of sanitary inspectors or sanitarians is very much indispensable. Since their job is more preventive rather than curative, and they are the first contact persons in the community, they occupy key positions in the delivery of health care by the Department of Health.

Sanitarians mingle with the people and are undoubtedly in a position to mold their sanitary habits and practices. Moreover, they translate sanitary principles and theories into everyday usage, disseminate and explain health rules and arrest the health hazards and dangers faced by the community.

However, many sanitarians are not equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively and efficiently carry out the duties and responsibilities attendant to their jobs. Further, no particular agency of the government is tasked to regulate the practice of sanitation and hygiene in the country and to control or prevent unethical practices and substandard services, thereby putting at greater jeopardy the health of the public.

This bill therefore seeks to give due acknowledgment to the efforts of sanitarians, and to institute mechanisms to guarantee the fitness of the individuals entrusted with the prime duty of ensuring the health and welfare of the Filipinos by professionalizing the practice of sanitation and hygiene.

With the aim of rendering quality service, ensuring the health of the public and providing an elevated social and professional status to sanitarians, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. **1873**

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE REGULATION, SUPERVISION AND PROFESSIONALIZATION OF
THE PRACTICE, LICENSING AND REGISTRATION OF SANITARIANS

ARTICLE I
TITLE AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

Sec.1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the "The Sanitarians Professionalization Act."

Sec. 2. Statement of Policy. – The State recognizes the vital role of sanitarians in promoting the health and general welfare of the people. Towards this end, the State shall ensure and promote the professional growth and development of sanitary inspectors for the improvement of public health.

Sec. 3. Objectives. – The Act has the following objectives: (a) the promotion, development and professionalization of sanitary inspection; and (b) the supervision and licensing of sanitary inspectors/sanitarians.

Sec. 4. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- (a) "Sanitation and Hygiene Profession or Practice of Sanitation and Hygiene"- refers to the profession concerned primarily wit education, prevention and control of diseases and other public health concerns using scientific methods and paramedical measures related to sanitation and hygiene.
- (b) "Sanitarians" – any person engaged in the practice of Sanitation and Hygiene Profession. This can be used interchangeably with the term "Sanitary Inspector" currently used by the government in the classification of position title.
- (c) "Board" – refers to the Board for Sanitarians duly established and constituted under this Act.
- (d) "Commission" –refers to the Professional Regulation Commission.

Sec. 5. Description and Scope of Work of Sanitary Inspectors. – The Sanitary Inspectors field of work shall involve the education and research, technical supervision, inspection of establishment and public places, monitoring, issuance of permits, control and prevention in the fields of:

- a) waste management;
- b) food and water supply sanitation;
- c) vermin and vector control;
- d) industrial hygiene;
- e) epidemiology;

- f) pollution control;
- g) environmental health planning and program development and implementation; and
- h) other community level activities that pertain to public hygiene.

ARTICLE II BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL SANITARY INSPECTORS

Sec. 6. Creation and Composition of the Board. – Within sixty (60) days after the approval of this Act, there shall be created a Board of Professional Sanitary Inspectors, a collegial body under the general supervision of the Professional Regulation Commission, herein referred to as the Board, to be composed of a Chairman and three (3) members, who shall be appointed by the President among the recommendees chosen from the list of nominees selected by the accredited association of Sanitary Inspectors: *Provided*, that the members of the First Board appointed shall be automatically registered as Sanitarians and issued certificates of registration and professional license upon payment of the fees for registration and other fees prescribed by the commission.

Sec. 7. Powers and Duties of the Board. – The Board shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) Promulgate, administer and enforce rules and regulations necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Act in accordance with the charter of the Professional Regulation Commission;
- (b) Prepare a curriculum for the sanitation and hygiene degree to be officially known as the "*Bachelor of Science in Sanitation and Hygiene*" ("BSSH") and prescribe the syllabi of the subjects and their relative weight in the licensure examination;
- (c) Prepare examination questions and determine and fix the frequency, dates and places of examination, appoint supervisors, proctors and other personnel as needed who shall be entitled a daily allowance as determined by the Board;
- (d) Issue, suspend or revoke certification of registration for the practice of sanitation and hygiene;
- (e) Promulgate rules and regulations including a Code of Ethics, administrative policies, orders and issuances to carry out the provisions of this Act;
- (f) Administer oaths in connection with the administration of this Act;
- (g) Supervise and regulate the registration, licensure and practice of professional sanitarians in the Philippines;
- (h) Adopt an official seal of the Board;
- (i) Investigate the violations of this Act; and
- (j) Discharge such other powers, duties and functions as the Board may deem necessary for the practice of the sanitation and hygiene profession and upgrading, enhancement, development and growth of sanitarians.

Sec. 8. Qualifications of Chairman and Board Members. –

The Chairman and each member of the Board must at the time of his appointment:

- (a) Be a Filipino citizen and resident of the Philippines for at least five (5) consecutive years;
- (b) Be at least thirty-five (35) years of age, of proven integrity and high moral values in his personal as well as professional conduct;
- (c) Not have been convicted by final judgment of any offense involving moral turpitude;
- (d) Be a holder of a degree of Bachelor of Science in Sanitation and Hygiene from a university, school, college, academy, or institutions duly constituted, recognized and accredited by the Philippine government: *Provided*, that this provision shall not apply within the first fifteen (15) years after the approval of this Act;

- (e) Be a registered Sanitarian with a valid Certificate of Registration and a valid license to practice sanitation and hygiene;
- (f) Have practiced sanitation and hygiene for a period of not less than ten (10) years prior to his appointment; and
- (g) Not be an official member of the faculty, nor have a pecuniary interest in any university, college, school or institution conferring a bachelor's degree in sanitation and hygiene or its equivalent for at least three (3) years prior to his appointment, nor connected with any review center or with any group where lectures in preparation for the licensure examination are offered or conducted.

Sec. 9. Removal of the Members of the Board. – The Chairman and any member of the Board may be removed by the President of the Philippines, upon the recommendation of the Commissioner for neglect of duty; incompetence; unprofessional, unethical, immoral or dishonorable conduct; commission or tolerance of anomalies in the examination; and other similar grounds after having been given the opportunity to defend himself in a proper administrative investigation.

Sec. 10. Compensation of the Chairman and the Board Members. – The Chairman and the members of the Board shall receive compensation comparable to the compensation received by existing regulatory boards under the Professional Regulation Commission, computed on the basis of the number of examinees or candidates,

Sec. 11. Supervision of the Board and Custodian of its Records. – The Commissioner shall be the executive officer of the Board and shall conduct the examination given by the Board. He shall designate any subordinate officer of the Commission to act as Secretary or custodian of all records including all examination papers and minutes of the deliberations of the Board.

ARTICLE III EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION

Sec. 12. Examination, Registration, and License Required. – Except as otherwise specifically allowed under the provisions of this Act, all applicants for registration as professional sanitarian shall be required to undergo a written examination which shall be given at least once a year in such places and on such dates as the Board may determine upon approval by the Commission. A valid certificate of registration and valid professional license from the Commission shall be required before any person is allowed to practice sanitation and hygiene in the Philippines except as otherwise allowed under this Act.

Sec. 13. Examination Fees. – All applicants for written examination for registered sanitary inspectors shall be subject to payment of fees prescribed by the Commission.

Sec. 14. Scope of Examination. – The examination to be given to the applicants for licensure shall include the Code of Sanitation and its implementing rules and regulations together with topics on Arithmetic, Chemistry, Biology, Microbiology and Parasitology, Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Food and Milk Sanitation, Household and Industrial Hygiene, Waste Management, Environmental Health Planning, Pollution Assessment and Control, Occupational Health, Practical Problems and others determined by the Board.

Sec. 15. Qualification Requirements of Applicants. – No applicant shall be admitted to take the examination unless, on the date of the filing of the application, he shall have established to the satisfaction of the members of the Board that he possesses the following qualifications:

- (a) A citizen of the Philippines or an alien whose country has reciprocity with the Philippines in the practice of sanitation and hygiene;
- (b) At least twenty (20) years of age;
- (c) In good health and good reputation with high moral values;
- (d) Not finally convicted by final judgment by the court of any offense involving moral turpitude; and
- (e) A holder of the degree of BSSH from a university, college, school, Academy or institution duly constituted, recognized and accredited by the Philippine government. Toward this end, all government universities and state colleges are encouraged to offer this course.

Sec. 16. Report of Results of Examination. – The Board shall within One Hundred Twenty (120) days after the examination, report the ratings obtained by each candidate to the Commission.

Sec. 17. Re-examination. – An applicant, who for the third time fails to pass the examination, shall not be allowed to take another examination, except upon showing to the members of the Board a certificate of attendance of review classes and a certificate duly signed by the proctors that he obtained at least a grade of seventy percent (70%) in all the review examinations.

Sec. 18. Oath. – All successful candidates in the examination shall be required to take a professional oath before the Board.

Sec. 19. Issuance of Certificate of Registration and Professional Licenses. – The registration as a sanitarian shall commence from the date his name is entered in the roll of registrants or licenses for his profession.

A professional license signed by the Commission and bearing the registration number and date of issuance and date of expiry shall be issued to every registrant who has paid the annual registration fee for three (3) consecutive years. This license shall serve as evidence that the licensee can lawfully practice his profession until the date of expiry.

Sec. 20. Integration of the Sanitary Profession. – The sanitary profession shall be integrated into one national organization which shall be recognized by the Board as the sole integrated and accredited association of registered sanitarians. Membership in the integrated organization shall not be a bar to membership in other organizations.

Sec. 21. Revocation of the Certificate of Registration, Suspension from the Practice of the Sanitary Profession and Cancellation of Temporary or Special Permit. – The Board shall have the power, upon proper notice and hearing, to suspend or revoke the certification of any registrant, to reprimand or to cancel the temporary/special permit of a holder thereof who is exempt from registration, for any of the following causes:

- (a) Conviction for any criminal offense involving moral turpitude by any court of competent authority;
- (b) Immoral, unprofessional and dishonorable conduct;
- (c) Violation of any of the provisions of this Act, rules and regulations and other policies of the Board and the Code of Professional Ethics;
- (d) Declaration by a court of competent authority for being mentally unsound or insane;
- (e) Chronic inebriety or habitual use of drugs; and
- (f) Malpractice of the profession.

The decision of the Board to revoke or suspend a certificate shall be final and executory unless appealed by the respondent to the Commission within fifteen (15) days from the receipt of such decision. The Board's or Commission's decision is appealable by the respondent to the Regional Trial Court of the place where the Board or Commission

holds office within twenty (20) days from receipt of said decision or of the denial of the motion for reconsideration filed in due time

Sec. 22. Re-issuance of Revoked Certificates and Replacement of Lost Certificate. – The Board, subject to the approval of the Commission may, after one (1) year after the revocation of the Certificate of Registration, re-issue such certificate in the same manner as an application for an original one. It may however, exempt the applicant from the necessity of undergoing an examination.

A new certificate of registration may be issued to replace any certificate that has been lost, destroyed or mutilated subject to the rules issued by the Board.

Sec. 23. Roster of Professional Sanitarians. – A roster of professional sanitarians containing the names and addresses of the professional sanitarian, date of registration or issuance of certificate and other data which in the opinion of the Board is pertinent shall be maintained. Copies of the roster shall be provided by the Commissioner to the Board, the Department of Education and the integrated and accredited organization of professional sanitarians.

ARTICLE IV PROVISIONS RELATIVE TO THE PRACTICE OF THE SANITARY PROFESSION

Sec. 24. Field of Practice. – The field of practice for sanitarians shall include the sole authority to sign and seal sanitary plans, etc. and to practice sanitation and hygiene in its full scope as defined in Article I of this Act.

Sec. 25. Prohibition Against the Practice of the Sanitation and Hygiene Profession, - Except as otherwise allowed under this Act, no person shall practice or offer to practice the Sanitation and Hygiene Profession in the Philippines without having previously obtained a valid certificate of registration and a valid professional license from the Commission.

Sec. 26. Personnel Required. – Except as otherwise provided in this Act, every industrial plant or factory, commercial establishment or any government institution which shall require the services of a sanitarian, shall only employ a duly registered sanitarian to ensure safe operation and to safeguard the public welfare, health and hygiene.

Sec. 27. Enforcement of the Act by Officers of the Law. – It shall be the duty of all constituted officers of the law of the National Government or any provincial, city or municipal government to prosecute any person violating the provisions of this Act. The Secretary of Justice or his assistant shall act as legal adviser of the Board and render such legal assistance as may be necessary in carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 28. Penalty Clause. – Any person who shall violate any provision of this Act shall be guilty of misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to a fine of not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000) but not less than Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000) and/or imprisonment for a period not less than Thirty (30) days but not more than two (2) years at the discretion of the court.

Sec. 29. Appropriations. – The sum of Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000) is hereby initially appropriated out of any of the funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to be disbursed by the Chairman of the Board in accordance with the provisions of this Act. Thereafter, it shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 30. Implementing Guidelines. – The Board shall formulate and adopt the necessary guidelines for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act within ninety (90) days of its approval.

Sec. 31. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions shall not be affected and shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 32. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to this Act are thereby deemed accordingly repealed or amended.

Sec 33. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,