

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1603**



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**Introduced by Rep. Precious Hipolito Castelo**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

It is high time for the government to grant to all its duly appointed judges of the Regional Trial Courts the incentive of a hazard pay equivalent to at least 20% of their basic pay and the same shall not be not subject to tax.

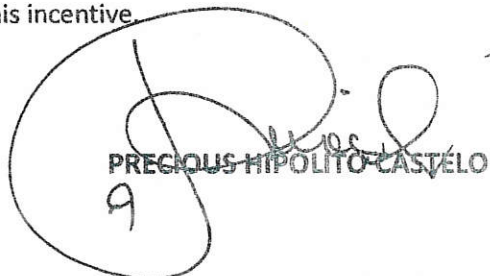
There is an interesting justification for this modest proposal. On one end of the scale, judges as a sector are now classified as high risk due to the nature of their work and this view is according to human rights group Amnesty International.

On the other end of the scale, available data otherwise also show that from 1999 to 2012 alone, some 22 judges have been murdered or assassinated in the Philippines and this translates into two judges being killed annually. If this pattern continues and unabated, it will wreak serious impact upon the role of the courts in this country and put at peril the criminal justice system.

Certainly, not a single pillar of the five pillars of the criminal justice system should be under siege or a kind of capture since it will severely distort the public purpose of a speedy, fair, and expeditious disposition of cases especially those relative to heinous crimes, drug cases, and other syndicate crimes. When judges are killed, assassinated or maimed, it makes a mockery of the justice system and places in the hands of disgruntled litigants the option to take the law into their hands.

This should never happen. This attendant occupational risk should be counterbalanced by a modest grant or entitlement such as a hazard pay that will encourage rather than discourage our judges to face their duties and responsibilities fairly and squarely.

Other such similar emoluments or remunerations should also be considered in the future in order to promote and preserve a truly vibrant criminal justice system, hence this humble submission. For the initial implementation of the Act, it is assumed that the judiciary branch is in a capacity to prioritize the grant of this hazard pay based on position and location. This means that a scientific and empirical inventory of all RTC positions and locations will be rationalized until such time that all RTC judges throughout the country would have already been granted this incentive.

  
**PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO**

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**AN ACT**  
**GRANTING DULY APPOINTED REGIONAL TRIAL COURT JUDGES AN INCENTIVE TO BE CALLED A**  
**HAZARD PAY EQUIVALENT TO AT LEAST TWENTY PERCENT (20%) OF THEIR MONTHLY BASIC**  
**SALARY/PAY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the 'Regional Trial Court Judges Incentives Act.'

SEC. 2. Every bonafide and duly appointed judge of the Regional Trial Court shall hereby be granted the incentive of a hazard pay equivalent to at least twenty percent (20%) of their monthly basic salary/pay.

SEC. 3. Under this Act, such grant of hazard pay or its equivalent shall not be subject to tax consistent with the very purpose of this grant of incentives to all *bonafide* and duly appointed judges of Regional Trial Courts.

SEC. 4. This Act shall take effect thirty (30) days upon its approval, publication in the Official Gazette, and in at least three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*