

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

18th Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 597



Introduced by: **HON. LORNA C. SILVERIO**

**AN ACT GRANTING HAZARD PAY TO REGIONAL TRIAL COURT JUDGES DURING THEIR
INCUMBENCY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

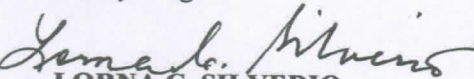
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Being a judge oftentimes fall under the "high risk profession" category by some insurance providers, which eventually lead to add-ons or prohibitive premium payments for their plans. Their profession bears a huge responsibility in the administration of equitable justice and the speedy disposition of cases. It is in this manner that judges are in the receiving end of disgruntled litigants, vindictive parties, grave threats and are mainly exposed to persons who have criminal intents coupled with violent tendencies. Hazard pay as defined by law is the "premium given only to government personnel exposed to hazardous situations such as but not limited to, assignment in strife-torn or embattled areas, distressed or isolated stated stations, prison camps, mental hospitals, leprosaria, radiation-exposed clinics, laboratories, and workshops, disease infested areas and areas declared under state of calamity or emergency which pose occupational risks or perils to life". Relative to President Duterte's all-out war on drugs, the risk of curbing criminality thru the justice system poses grave frontline threats to judges. Citing the Chief Justice's figures as of May 2016, there are 138,368 pending drug related cases in trial courts which represent 29% of the 439,606 criminal cases filed.

There are also documented cases recently involving judges killed while adhering to their sworn duty. Sometime 2015, the Supreme Court in response to the alarming assassinations and killings of judges, created a multi-agency panel to conduct in-depth investigations on these cases. There was the case of Judge Wilfredo Nieves from our province who died when he was ambushed on his way home from work. He handled high profile cases involving car theft syndicate members and was threading the needle in terms of his personal safety.

This proposal is just a meager benefit compared to the benefits the society are enjoying whenever justice is being rendered properly by these front-liners who consistently safeguard the very essence of democracy and stability for the common man.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


LORNA C. SILVERIO

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

SEC 1. Short Title.- This Act shall be known as the "Hazard Pay for Regional Trial Court Judges Act".

SEC 2. Scope of Coverage - All duly appointed judges in the Regional Trial Court shall be granted hazard pay during their incumbency in the amount equivalent to twenty five percent (25%) of their basic salary per month.

SEC 3. Appropriations.- The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the available appropriations of the Judiciary under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC 4. Conditions .- The hazard pay for the judges shall not be subject to tax and nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, in any manner, any benefit granted by existing laws, rules and regulations, local ordinances and other issuances especially favorable to duly appointed judges in the Regional Trial Court.

SEC 5. Application - The Department of Budget and Management in consultation with the Judiciary shall, within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, issue the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

SEC 6. Repealing Clause - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, ordinances, rules and regulation, and other issuances or part thereof which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed and modified accordingly.

SEC 7. Effectivity - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

Lena B. Hilario