

House Passes Anti-Infidelity Law

Thursday, 21 December 2006

Last Updated Thursday, 15 February 2007

Congressman Joel Villanueva of Party-list Citizens' Battle Against Corruption celebrates the passing of HB 5729, more popularly known as the "infidelity law."

HB 5729, which substituted several house bills of similar nature including Villanueva's HB2238, which the CIBAC solon filed in 2004, seeking to abolish the gender bias of existing provisions against sexual infidelity, was approved by the House of Representatives on second reading last night.

"It's CIBAC's gift to the women of this country," remarks Villanueva.

The infidelity law in the Philippines has been long ago perceived as bias in favor of the male spouse with heavier penalty and heavier proof of burden imposed on the female spouse.

HB 5729, "an act repealing the law on adultery and concubinage and defining in lieu thereof the crime of marital infidelity," when it finally becomes a law will replace the crimes of adultery and concubinage with a single crime that shall be defined as "marital infidelity," therefore totally correcting the disparity in the treatment of cases of a husband or a wife in committing the crimes of concubinage or adultery respectively.

Villanueva believes this could be a milestone law that will strengthen the institutions and foundations of marriage and family in the Philippines.

Other than the debate on property rights and the prevention of an illegitimate bloodline, HB 5729, when finally a law, will underscore the benefit of revising a "bad law" into a "good law" to benefit not just one group of people but all of the citizenry.

Villanueva's bill also strongly proposed heavier penalty on government officials and employees who commit marital infidelity as compared to ordinary citizens but he is willing to fight for that issue later in another battle. For now, Villanueva lauds the House for passing 5729.

"Men will be more careful. The crime of infidelity will once again be given focus and importance to the benefit of the family. What a good way to end the year," remarks Villanueva.