

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1509, June 11, 1978]

CREATING THE NATIONAL COMMISSION CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the national government recognizes its responsibility to provide the handicapped with the fullest measure of protection and assistance to help develop their abilities in all fields of endeavor and to promote their integration into the mainstream of society, as well as its primary duty for the prevention of physical and mental disabilities;

WHEREAS, the national government is also cognizant of the limitations of the existing system for delivery of services to the handicapped in this country and of the pressing need for the creation and development of new facilities to extend the range of rehabilitation services, as well as the expansion of existing ones to meet actual needs;

WHEREAS, there is an increasing awareness by the citizenry of the national problem of disability and of their joint responsibility with the government to be involved in the national effort to seek solutions to the problems;

WHEREAS, the national leadership notes, with great concern, that in the pursuit of this responsibility, there has been a proliferation of activities and programs for the welfare of the handicapped by government agencies and private organizations and that for lack of central direction and coordination, there is widespread overlapping and duplication of efforts, thereby resulting in the wastage of scarce resources and professional services and impairing the achievement of definite goals;

WHEREAS, the above conditions and the lack of organized and comprehensive, information on the nature and extent of the national problem of disability, render it imperative for the national leadership to create a central authority that will direct, coordinate and integrate the planning, management and implementation of all activities, national and local, public and private, pertaining to the welfare of the handicapped, in a manner which will ensure maximum and efficient utilization of human and natural resources for the attainment of this national goal, on the basis of comprehensive data and information.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the power vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby order and decree:

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.*—The Government of the Republic of the Philippines hereby declares its full acceptance and support for the United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution of May 6, 1975, particularly the following portion:

"Believing that the problem of disability is an appreciable component of the economic and social condition of every country and, consequently, that programs to prevent disability and to rehabilitate the disabled are an essential part of comprehensive plans for economic and social development, responsibility for which must be assumed by Governments working, as appropriate, with non-governmental organization."

SEC. 2. *Creation of the National Commission Concerning Disabled Persons.*—There is hereby created a National Commission, hereinafter referred to as the "Commission", which shall be under the supervision and control of the Office of the President of the Philippines.

SEC. 3. *Objectives of the Commission.*—The Commission shall have the following objectives:

- a. To prepare and adopt an integrated and comprehensive long-term National Rehabilitation Plan, which will insure the protection of the rights of the handicapped, provide services for their needs and at the same time insure adequate safeguards for the prevention of disability—taking into consideration the National Rehabilitation Plan prepared by an Ad Hoc Committee that may be created for that purpose;
- b. To insure that all programs and services for the welfare of the handicapped are universal and accessible to all segments of society;
- c. To conduct comprehensive and continuing studies on rehabilitation services and on the problems and causes of disability, covering all major areas of concern—social, medical, educational and vocational—and to make corresponding recommendations on the basis of its findings;
- d. To propose new policies and new legislation, or amendments to existing ones, that will insure the attainment of its objectives;
- e. To act as an overall coordinating body, to rationalize the functions and activities of government agencies, private entities and international organizations operating in the Philippines, and the enforcement of laws related to and affecting the handicapped;
- f. To establish, maintain and expand contacts with international public and private organizations concerned with the handicapped, and to keep abreast with international standards and the latest developments in the international rehabilitation community;
- g. To act as a national consultative and advisory body to the President on matters within its competence;
- h. To insure the fullest participation and involvement of handicapped person in the rehabilitation process; and
- i. To educate and reorient the general public in its attitude and thinking in regard to the disabled.

SEC. 4. *Powers and Functions of the Council.*

- a. To monitor and evaluate all projects, programs and activities pertaining to the welfare of the handicapped and to take appropriate steps to insure that they comply with established priorities, standards and guidelines;
- b. To undertake continuing research studies or surveys on various topics pertaining to the rehabilitation of the handicapped;
- c. To conduct public hearings, conferences, or meetings on any issues related to its areas of responsibility, as it deems appropriate;
- d. To maintain continuing educational, training and information programs to promote its objectives;
- e. To maintain such implementing mechanisms as may be necessary to enable it to perform its role as the national coordinating body for all agencies and organizations concerned with the handicapped;
- f. To prepare periodic reports to the President on the status of its activities;