



18 January 2018

**REPRESENTATIVE SOL ARAGONES**

Chairperson  
Committee on Population and Family Relations  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City

Dear **Chairperson Aragones:**

This refers to the request of your Committee for our Department's official position on House Bill Nos. 1629 and 3705 on the State's recognition of the civil effects of a Church-Decreed Annulment.

With inputs from our Legal Service, may we share with you some possible implications for consideration:

1. A Decree of Annulment, whether issued by the state or a religious group would necessarily affect the status, custody and support of common children and the delivery of their presumptive legitimes, among others. Hence, for clarity, the proposed legislation should elaborate the specific effects of a Church-Decreed Annulment on the children.
2. The grounds and procedures for a civil annulment may be different from those of a church annulment. The ground for annulment before the courts may not be a ground for annulment before the church. Among others, this may result to forum-shopping, where a spouse would seek recourse before the venue which is more likely to grant the annulment.
3. Step-by-step procedures to be undertaken prior to, during and after the dissolution of a Church-Decreed Annulment may be necessary to guide the parties.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emmanuel A. Leyco', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**EMMANUEL A. LEYCO**  
Officer-in-Charge