REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7891

AN ACT DIVIDING THE PROVINCE OF ISABELA INTO TWO PROVINCES NAMELY: ISABELA DEL NORTE AND ISABELA DEL SUR

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

SECTION 1.   The municipalities of Cabagan, Delfin Albano, Divilican, Ilagan, Maconacon, Palanan, San Pablo, Sta. Maria, Sto. Tomas, Tumauini, Aurora, Benito Soliven, Burgos, Gamu, Mallig, Naguilian, Quezon, Quirino, Roxas, San Manuel, and San Mariano are hereby segregated and constituted into a separate province to be known as Isabela del Norte (1st and 2nd Congressional Districts). While the municipalities of Alicia, Angadanan, Cabatuan, Cauayan, Luna, Reina Mercedes, San Guillermo, San Mateo, Cordon, Dinapigue, Echague, Jones, Ramon, San Agustin, and San Isidro will now be called Isabela del Sur (3rd and 4th Congressional Districts).

SEC. 2. *Law Applicable to the Province*. – Except as otherwise herein provided, all provisions of law now or hereafter applicable to regularly organized provinces shall be applicable to the provinces of Isabela del Norte and Isabela del Sur.

SEC. 3. *Provincial Capital*. – The provincial capital of Isabela del Norte shall be the Municipality of Ilagan while Isabela del Sur will be the Municipality of Cauayan. The former (Isabela del Norte) already has an existing capitol building while Isabela del Sur's capitol shall be established within a government lot thereat.

SEC. 4. *Plebiscite*. – The creation of the provinces of Isabela del Norte and Isabela del Sur as provided in this Act shall be subject to the approval of the majority of the votes cast by the

voters of the affected areas in a plebiscite to be conducted by the Commission on Elections within one hundred twenty (120) days from the day of the effectivity of this Act as provided in Section 10 of the Local Government Code of 1991.

SEC. 5. *Elective Provincial Officials.* – Should the majority of the voters favor the division as shown in the plebiscite abovementioned, a set of provincial officials of the new province (Isabela del Norte) shall be elected in a special election to be held within sixty (60) days after the plebiscite.

In the same manner, elective positions vacated by the provincial officials of the other province (Isabela del Sur), if there will be any, shall be elected also in a special election to be held simultaneously within the period provided for in the next preceding paragraph: *Provided*, *however*, That, notwithstanding the residency requirements, the incumbent elective officials of the present province shall continue to hold office until their successors shall have been duly elected and qualified.

For purposes of synchronization, those who have been duly elected in the special election shall serve only the unexpired term from the last regular election.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish the rights of the elective public officials to qualify and run in the next succeeding elections.

SEC. 6. The expenses for the plebiscite to be conducted herein and the subsequent special election shall be defrayed by the Province of Isabela.

SEC. 7. *Appointive Provincial Officials.* – All qualified appointive officials and employees in the career service of the province shall continue in office in accordance with civil service laws, rules and regulations.

All aforesaid officials and employees shall have the option to choose the province they want to serve regardless of their residence.

SEC. 8. *Assets and Liabilities*. – Upon the effectivity of this Act, the obligations, funds, assets and other properties of the present Province of Isabela shall be divided proportionately between the Province of Isabela del Norte and the Province of Isabela del Sur by the President of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Commission on Audit.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in Filipino and English in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved, February 20, 1995.