



## INTEGRATED BAR OF THE PHILIPPINES

### MAKATI CITY CHAPTER

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#### STATEMENT ON THE IMPEACHMENT COMPLAINT AGAINST SUPREME COURT ASSOCIATE JUSTICE MARVIC M.V. F. LEONEN

It is truly disheartening and contemptible that at this time of public want amid the challenges of a pandemic, our government institutions are instead being made and called to expend their valuable resources on trifling issues such as the recent filing of a complaint seeking the impeachment of Justice Leonen for alleged culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust.

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines – Makati Chapter (IBP-Makati) conveys its strong support for Justice Leonen and vigorously opposes the filing of the impeachment complaint that does nothing but needlessly deflect state attention from the more urgent and pressing concerns of the country.

The impeachment complaint against a notable and respected member of the Supreme Court on baseless grounds should alarm the Members of the Philippine Bar as judicial independence and respect for established legal procedure are once again threatened. We value and respect the need for the observance of judicial independence, a cornerstone of our democratic system. We ask our brethren in the legal profession to remain vigilant against scornful efforts at undermining the very essence of judicial power.

Our esteemed magistrates, like Justice Leonen who is known for his integrity, independence and respect for the majesty of the Philippine Constitution, must be allowed to decide matters before them free from any threat of reprisal and vindictive action. There is no larger betrayal of public trust than a misuse of constitutionally enshrined safeguards put in place to guarantee the independence of our judiciary to defeat this very purpose. This is made graver by the fact that the alleged grounds for impeachment do not meet the requisites of the recognized Constitutional bases of culpable violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, other high crimes, or betrayal of public trust.

We thus urge the members of the House of Representatives to remain mindful of the duty of all government institutions to respect and observe the independence of our judiciary. The limited resources and time of our legislators are better spent on providing lasting solutions to mitigate the impact of a public health crisis of global proportions. The state of our nation demands that questionable motives do not pass scrutiny.

We ask that the impeachment complaint be dismissed outright.

Makati City, December 18, 2020