

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



'22 JUL -7 P5 :57

SENATE
S.B. No. 228

RECEIVED BY: _____

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR ROBINHOOD PADILLA

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE EQUAL USE OF FILIPINO AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES
IN ALL GOVERNMENT ISSUANCES AND DOCUMENTS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 6, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution provides that "[t]he national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages." It further added that subject to provisions of law and as Congress may deem appropriate, the government shall take steps to initiate and sustain the use of Filipino as a medium of official communication.

While mechanisms are in place to further enrich Filipino as the national language of the Philippines, one of the sentiments of our ordinary people is rooted in the difficulty or lack of understanding of the entirety of the government's acts and operations since most documents, if not all, are published in the English language.

In this regard, this bill proposes the mandatory publication and accessibility of the general public to government documents, including but not limited to: executive issuances, legislative documents, judicial issuances, public advisories, and international treaties, in both English and Filipino language.

As this representation strives to promote the policy of inclusion and equal opportunities for all Filipinos, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

ROBINHOOD PADILLA

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Senate
Office of the Secretary

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

1 **Section 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “Equal Use of Official
2 Languages Act”.

3
4 **Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the mandate of the 1987
5 Constitution that the Filipino and English languages shall be used for purposes of
6 communication and instruction. It is hereby declared as policy of the State to ensure
7 equal status in the use of Filipino and English languages as the official languages in
8 all government issuances and documents in order to provide the people access to a
9 better and inclusive understanding of the acts, operations, and documents of the
10 government.

11
12 **Section 3. *Official Languages.*** – The Filipino and English languages shall
13 be the official languages of the Philippines for all government issuances and
14 documents as hereinafter provided.

15
16 **Section 4. *Executive Issuances.*** – All implementing rules and regulations
17 of acts, executive orders, proclamations, administrative orders, memorandum
18 circulars, and memorandum orders issued by the President shall be made, printed,
19 and published in both official languages.

20
21 **Section 5. *Legislative Documents.*** – All acts, bills, rules of procedures,
22 resolutions, journals, and committee reports shall be written, printed, and published
23 in both official languages.

24
25 **Section 6. *Judicial Issuances and Proceedings.*** – All decisions,
26 resolutions, rules and other issuances of the Supreme Court and lower courts shall be

1 made, printed, and published in both official languages. In any judicial proceeding, a
2 judge may use either or both of the official languages or a part of any proceeding.
3

4 **Section 7. *International Treaties.*** – All international treaties or international
5 agreements shall be authenticated and interpreted in both official languages by the
6 Commission on the Filipino Language before they are transmitted for concurrence by
7 the Senate.
8

9 **Section 8. *Public Advisories.*** – All notices intended to the public shall be
10 issued in both official languages and shall be given equal prominence.
11

12 **Section 9. *Publication of Acts.*** – All acts shall be published in both official
13 languages in equal prominence in newspapers of general circulation and Official
14 Gazette.
15

16 **Section 10. *Original Version.*** – The issuances and documents as herein
17 described shall indicate which official language is used in its original version.
18

19 **Section 11. *Equal Status and Authority.*** – Both versions of the official
20 languages shall be treated in equal status and authority for all intents and purposes.
21

22 **Section 12. *Governing Language in Case of Conflict.*** – In case any
23 conflict, inconsistency, or discrepancy in the interpretation of the meaning of the
24 official languages exists, the language used in the original version shall prevail over
25 the translation.
26

27 **Section 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Office of the
28 President, Senate of the Philippines, House of Representatives, and the Supreme Court
29 shall, in consultation with other concerned agencies and entities, promulgate the
30 necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.
31

32 **Section 14. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to carry out the
33 implementation of this Act shall be charged against the annual General Appropriations
34 Act.
35

36 **Section 15. *Separability Clause.*** – In the event any provision of this Act or
37 the application of such provision is declared invalid, the remainder of this Act or the
38 application of the said provision shall not be affected thereby.
39

40 **Section 16. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive
41 orders, or parts thereof that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
42 repealed or amended accordingly.
43

44 **Section 17. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
45 publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,