

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



Senate
Office of the Secretary

'22 SEP -1 P 6 :19

SENATE

S. No. 1270

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

**AN ACT
PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL WRITING SYSTEMS
AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION, PRESERVATION AND
CONSERVATION**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The existence of the indigenous writing systems has predated the Western colonizers. Historical accounts have indicated that the locals were already literate and proficient in reading and writing indigenous scripts. Among the traditional writing systems that were used in communicating and doing business in the pre-colonial era were the Baybayin (Katagalugan), Kurditan (Ilocos), Zambal (Zambales), Buhid (Mindoro), Kulitan (Pampanga), Tagbanwa (Northern Palawan) and Jawi (Greater Sulu).

The Spanish colonizers have introduced the Roman alphabet as a means to teach Christianity, resulting in the dwindling use of the native scripts. It has eventually led to the dissipated awareness and knowledge of the local scripts from the general population's memory.¹

Indigenous writing systems are national cultural treasures which must be preserved, propagated and protected to ensure that local traditions are continuously appreciated, and passed on to the next generation. In a period of great advancements in technology, the dominance of major world languages and writing systems further

¹ (Norman de los Santos, 2015, *Philippine Indigenous Writings in the Modern World*, http://ical13.ling.sinica.edu.tw/Full_papers_and_ppts/July_21/P4-1.pdf).

endangers our indigenous writing systems. If the government does not take conscious effort towards their preservation, they will eventually be forgotten by our people.

To give us a deeper appreciation of the legacies of the past that remain to shape the present and the future of our nation, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

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

1 Section 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Philippine Indigenous and*
2 *Traditional Writing Systems Act in the New Century.*”

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to inculcate,
4 propagate and preserve the cultural heritage and treasures of the Philippines as a
5 means to foster patriotism and social consciousness among the citizenry. To this
6 end, there is a need to promote, protect, preserve and conserve the Philippine
7 indigenous and traditional writing systems, using these as tools for enhancing cultural
8 development, instilling national pride and identity, and safeguarding Filipino cultural
9 heritage and identity.

10 Sec. 3. *Promotion of Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems.* –
11 To generate greater awareness of indigenous and traditional scripts of the Philippines
12 and engender wider appreciation of their relevance, the promotion of the writing
13 systems is hereby recognized as part of our cultural treasures.

14 The writing systems as expression of Philippine traditions and national identity
15 shall be promoted through the following:

16 a. Mandate the Department of Education (DepEd) and Commission on Higher
17 Education (CHED) to include these writing systems in relevant subjects of basic
18 and higher education and offer an elective or specialised course in higher
19 education on the study of the same;

- 1 b. Creation and support of activities that promote awareness of the writing
2 systems, particularly during the Buwan ng Wika and similar events;
3 c. Conduct seminars, conferences, conventions, symposia, and other relevant
4 activities on the study of the writing systems, taking into consideration of the
5 writing system that is indigenous to a particular region;
6 d. Ensure proper record-keeping of relevant documents and preservation of oral
7 evidence on the writing systems; and
8 e. Other applicable measures may be adopted by the concerned government
9 agencies.

10 *Sec. 4. Protection, Preservation and Conservation of Indigenous or Traditional*
11 *Scripts of the Philippines.* – The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)
12 shall be the lead agency in promulgating policy guidelines in the promotion of the
13 writing systems.

14 NCCA is hereby mandated to protect, preserve, and conserve the writing
15 systems as a national cultural treasure as provided in Republic Act No. 10066,
16 otherwise known as the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009.” The NCCA shall
17 coordinate with the DepEd, CHED, and other relevant government agencies for the
18 proper implementation of this provision.

19 *Sec. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days after the
20 approval of this Act, the NCCA shall, in coordination with the DepEd and CHED,
21 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

22 *Sec. 6. Separability Clause.* – If any part, section or provision of this Act shall
23 be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts, sections and provisions not
24 otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

25 *Sec. 7. Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
26 regulations and other issuances or parts thereof that are inconsistent with the
27 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed and amended accordingly.

28 *Sec. 8. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
29 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,