

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*Second Regular Session* )



23 SEP 26 P 6 :41

**SENATE**  
**S. No. 2452**

RECEIVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

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Introduced by Senator Robinhood Padilla

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**AN ACT**  
**AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9997, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE**  
**"NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MUSLIM FILIPINOS ACT OF 2009", AND FOR**  
**OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

On 18 February 2010, Republic Act No. 9997 (R.A. No. 9997), otherwise known as the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCFM) Act of 2009, was enacted to preserve and develop the culture, tradition, institutions, and well-being of Muslim Filipinos, in conformity with the country's laws and in consonance with national unity and development.

Under Section 8 (q) of R.A. No. 9997, the NCFM is mandated to "administer all programs, projects and activities, formulate the necessary rules and regulations, and coordinate with pertinent offices to ensure the success of the annual Hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

Hajj, one of the five pillars of Islam, is performed at least once in the lifetime of a Muslim who is physically and economically able to sustain the journey. Attended by millions of Muslims from different walks of life all over the world every year, it is a momentous spiritual gathering intended to call forth greater humility and unity among Muslims by virtue of their bond in faith and complete submission to Allah.

The necessity to ensure an efficient, organized, and safe Hajj journey for Muslim Filipinos is urgently called for. This bill proposes opening Hajj travel arrangements to private entities, thereby fostering a competitive market to the

advantage of our traveler pilgrims. As a result, travel service providers will continuously endeavor to improve the quality of Hajj services, offer a wide range of flexible travel packages within the average market price range, and reinforce innovative and enhanced strategies in Hajj operations.

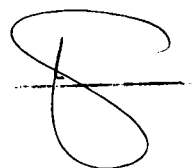
This measure seeks to relieve the NCMF of the intricate operations associated with the annual Hajj by shifting the duty to travel service providers equipped with comprehensive expertise and a workforce of trained travel professionals, ensuring an efficient and successful pilgrimage experience for all Muslim Filipino pilgrims.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



**ROBINHOOD PADILLA**  
*Senator*

**SENATE**  
S. No. 2452

  
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SENATOR

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**AN ACT**  
**AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9997, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE**  
**"NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MUSLIM FILIPINOS ACT OF 2009", AND FOR**  
**OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as "The NCMF Reform Act of  
2 2023".

3 Sec. 2. Section 8 of Republic Act No. 9997 is hereby amended as follows:

4 SEC. 8. *Powers and Functions.* — To accomplish its mandate, the  
5 Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

6 X X X

7 [~~(q) Administer all programs, projects and activities, formulate the~~  
8 ~~necessary rules and regulations, and coordinate with pertinent~~  
9 ~~offices to ensure the success of the annual Hajj (pilgrimage) to~~  
10 ~~Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;~~]

11 [~~(r) Promote the development of a Hajj Assistance Fund that shall~~  
12 ~~be created from contributions of Muslim Filipinos and other donors~~  
13 ~~which shall be used to support the financial needs of deserving~~  
14 ~~Muslim Filipinos intending to participate in the annual Hajj;~~]

15 X X X

1 Sec. 3. Section 11 of Republic Act No. 9997 is hereby amended as follows:

2 SEC. 11. *Bureaus*. — The Bureaus of the Commission shall  
3 consist of the Bureau of Muslim Economic Affairs, Bureau of  
4 Muslim Cultural Affairs, Bureau of Muslim Settlement, Bureau of  
5 External Relations, Bureau of ~~[Pilgrimage and]~~ Endowment,  
6 Bureau of Peace and Conflict Resolution, and the Bureau of Legal  
7 Affairs. Each of these Bureaus shall be headed by a Director who  
8 shall hold the same rank, salary, and privileges of a Staff Bureau  
9 Director.

10 The Bureau Director shall be appointed by the President from  
11 among the names or nominees submitted by the Commission to  
12 the President.

13 X X X

14 (e) Bureau of ~~[Pilgrimage and]~~ Endowment. — ~~[This Bureau shall~~  
15 ~~be primarily responsible for the administration of the annual~~  
16 ~~Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and the~~  
17 ~~formulation and implementation of programs, projects and~~  
18 ~~activities for the efficient and effective administration and~~  
19 ~~supervision of the conduct of pilgrimage activities: *Provided,* That~~  
20 ~~the supervision accorded the Bureau under this section shall not~~  
21 ~~include control.]~~

22 ~~[Pursuant to the above responsibilities, the Bureau shall~~  
23 ~~formulate the necessary guidelines to ensure the timely~~  
24 ~~processing of the pilgrim's travel documents and the equitable~~  
25 ~~and reasonable collection of fees. Such collection shall be limited~~  
26 ~~to *mutawiff* and passporting and/or processing fees only.~~  
27 ~~Collected fees shall be deposited in a special trust fund which~~  
28 ~~shall be established by the Commission, the expenses from which~~  
29 ~~shall be subject to existing auditing laws, rules and regulations.]~~

30 ~~[The pilgrims shall be accorded free choice of travel agencies and~~  
31 ~~airlines or other means of transportation to and from the site of~~  
32 ~~pilgrimage: *Provided,* That pilgrims comply with the prescribed~~

1 arrival and departure schedule fixed by the Ministry of *Hajj* of the  
2 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: *Provided, further,* That all pilgrims shall  
3 be legitimate holders of roundtrip tickets to and from the  
4 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: *Provided, furthermore,* That the  
5 pilgrims shall be free to choose on where to purchase or acquire  
6 other logistics, materials and supplies for the pilgrimage.]

7 [In no instance shall the pilgrims be forced to purchase such  
8 logistics, materials and supplies from the Commission or its  
9 authorized agents or representatives.]

10 [The Bureau shall also accredit qualified and deserving sheikhs.  
11 It shall also formulate, subject to the approval of the Commission,  
12 the timetable of annual *Hajj* activities which must be posted in all  
13 areas accessible to Muslim Filipinos.]

14 [The] **THIS** Bureau shall [likewise] be responsible for the  
15 administration of *awqaf* properties and institutions, and the  
16 conduct of research and studies for the establishment and  
17 maintenance of *Hajj* towns, Islamic centers and *awqaf* projects.

18 X X X

19 **THE NCMF SHALL NO LONGER PERFORM ANY POWERS**  
20 **AND FUNCTIONS RELATIVE TO THE ADMINISTRATION**  
21 **OF HAJJ EXCEPT TO REGISTER AND ACCREDIT SHEIKHS,**  
22 **WHO ARE PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS OR ENTITIES**  
23 **ENGAGED IN FACILITATING, PROCESSING, AND**  
24 **PROVIDING GUIDANCE FOR THE ANNUAL HAJJ FOR**  
25 **MUSLIM FILIPINOS IN MAKKAH, SAUDI ARABIA.**

26 Sec. 4. Section 15 of Republic Act No. 9997 is hereby amended as follows:

27 SEC. 15. *Hajj Attaché.* — The President shall appoint a Hajj  
28 Attaché from among the three (3) recommendees of the  
29 Commission within fifteen (15) days from the submission of such  
30 recommendees by the Commission. The Hajj Attaché shall  
31 coordinate with the Ministry of Hajj of the Kingdom of Saudi  
32 Arabia on [a#] matters pertaining to the conduct of the annual

1           Hajj **WHERE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT ACTION IS**  
2           **NECESSARY INCLUDING CERTIFICATION AS TO CHANGE**  
3           **OF PILGRIM'S NAME, BUT NOT TO INTERVENE IN THE**  
4           **ADMINISTRATION, CONDUCT, FACILITATION OR**  
5           **PROCESSING OF HAJJ FOR MUSLIM FILIPINOS.** He/She  
6           shall be an academic degree holder and must be able to write  
7           and speak fluently the Arabic language. He/She shall hold office  
8           in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and shall enjoy the same rank,  
9           salary, and privileges as those of Attaché of the national  
10          government.

11          Sec. 5. Section 16 of Republic Act No. 9997 is hereby deleted.

12          Sec. 6. *Separability Clause.* — If any portion or provision of this Act is declared  
13          unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provisions not affected thereby shall  
14          remain in force and effect.

15          Sec. 7. *Repealing Clause.* — Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive  
16          order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent with the provisions of this  
17          Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

18          Sec. 8. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days  
19          following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general  
20          circulation.

          Approved,