605

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 605

Introduced by REP. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A nation can be defined as comprising a definite geographical location or territory; a set of people and, and a government that maintains its unity. This definition of a nation can be found in old textbooks of political science. One aspect THAT had been overlooked but is vital to the unity of a nation is CULTURE.

Culture has a cohesive effect in the life of a nation. Our Constitution provides that the State shall foster the preservation, enrichment and dynamic evolution of Filipino national CULTURE based on the principle of unity and diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual expression,.

Based on the above premises I introduce this Bill which seeks the creation of the Filipino Academy of Arts, Letters and Philosophy.

Approval of this Bill is earnestly requested.

FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

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AN ACT
CREATING THE FILIPINO ACADEMY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND PHILOSOPHY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by SENATE and HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Title* - This Act may be cited as the "*Filipino Academy of Arts, Letters and Philosophy Act.*"

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy* - The Constitution provides that the State shall foster the preservation, enrichment and dynamic evolution of a Filipino national culture based on the principle of unity and diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual expression. Art, Letters and Philosophy shall enjoy the patronage of the State, and the State shall conserve, promote and popularize the nation's historical, cultural, literary and philosophical heritage and resources, as well as, artistic creations. The State shall encourage and support researchers and studies on Philippine arts, culture and philosophy

Pursuant to these constitutional provisions, it is the policy of the Act to provide meaningful incentives to those who engage in arts, letters, and philosophy; give due recognition to outstanding achievements in the same fields, and organize the country's artists, writers and philosophers into a community, receiving State support but free from government interference in managing its own affairs.

SECTION 3. *Academy of Arts and Letters* - There is hereby created the Filipino Academy of Arts, Letters and Philosophy, hereinafter referred to as the Academy, which shall be composed of outstanding Filipino artists, writers and philosophers and organized and run by them.

SECTION 4. *Powers and Functions* - The Academy shall plan, formulate, and implement programs for the conservation, development, enhancement and propagation of Filipino arts, letters and philosophy. Pursuant thereto, the Academy shall have the power to:

a) Elect and expel members;
b) Receive and allocate State subsidies for individual artists, writers and philosophers; and specific activities and programs;
c) Solicit, receive and accept donations and grants from private and public persons and institutions, both Filipino and foreign, and conduct fund drives to support its programs and activities;
d) Set up prizes, awards and other incentives for artists, writers and philosophers;
e) Recommend recipients of the Annual Republic Cultural Heritage Award, which is hereby revived under this Act;

f) Create from donations and grants, administer a welfare fund for old, disabled, sick or indigent artists, writers and philosophers, according to criteria which the Academy itself may prescribe;

g) Hold, own alienate or encumber any real property necessary to achieve the purposes of the Academy; and

h) Promulgate its own rules to govern its operations and carry out the objectives and provisions of this Act.

SECTION 5. *Governing Board* - The management and control of the Academy shall be vested in a Governing Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, composed of a Chairman and six (6) members who shall initially be appointed by the President of the Philippines for a transitional term of one (1) year, and thereafter elected by the member of the Academy themselves for a regular term of three (3) years.

The Board shall exercise all the powers and functions of the Academy. It shall operate and maintain a Secretariat.

SECTION 6. *Eligibility for Re-election* - The Chairman and members of the Board may be re-elected to their positions without any restrictions. Anyone of them, however, may be removed from office during his/her term for loss of confidence by a vote of two-thirds of all members of the Academy. Unless expressly stated by said members, removal from office does not mean expulsion from the Academy itself.

Any vacancy arising in the Board shall be filled up through a special election. The elected officer shall serve the unexpired term of his/her predecessor, provided that no such election shall be held if the vacancy occurs six (6) months before the end of the three-year term.

SECTION 7. *Membership in the Academy* - The Academy shall be composed initially of:

a) living artists, writers and philosophers who, at the passage of this Act, have been awarded the Republic Cultural Heritage Award or the title "National Artist", and
b) artists, writers and philosophers recommended by their peers and appointed by the President of the Philippines.

Thereafter, members shall be elected by the Board upon recommendation of their peers: *Provided*, That anyone rejected by the Board for reasons other than lack of professional merit and fitness may appeal to the general membership of the Academy and elected member by two-thirds of all members of the Academy may overdue the decision of the Board to elect a member, against whom grave reasons for non-admission have been alleged in writing by his/her peers.

For purposes of this provisions, an artist, writer or philosopher eligible for election to the Academy shall be defined as one who has earned public recognition and high regard of the arts, letters and philosophy community for his/her work in any of the following fields: *literature, painting, sculpture, music, literary criticism, architecture, dance, theater, cinema, journalism, history, cultural criticism and philosophy.*

SECTION 8. *Lifetime Membership* - A member, once elected to the Academy, shall remain member for life, unless he/she voluntarily renounces such membership, or for grave reasons, which the Board shall define in the Rules of the Academy, he/she is expelled by at least two-thirds vote of the entire Academy membership.

SECTION 9. *Tax Exemptions* - a) All donations and grants to the Academy made by public or private person or institution may be claimed as tax deduction by the donor or grantor from any form of income taxation; b) Real property owned by the Academy shall be exempt from any form of real property taxation.

SECTION 10. *Appropriations* - To implement this Act, the amount of FIVE MILLION PESOS (₱5,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated; thereafter, the Academy shall be given an annual grant by the State of not less than Five Million Pesos (₱5,000,000.00) from the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 11. *Separability Clause* - Should any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional for any purpose, none of the other parts or provisions shall be affected.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause* - All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. *Effectivity* - This Act takes effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,