CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 1480

INTRODUCED BY **HON. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Filipinos are humorous by nature. We have been described as a tribe who despite problems remain happy in disposition and possess the capacity to laugh at themselves.

However, there is a sector that has often bear the brunt or become the receiving end of some of our "sick" jokes - the persons with disabilities.

In a number of our Filipino-produced comedy movies and television shows, the disabilities of the deaf, the crippled, the hairlipped and the amputated became the instruments of the actors to elicit humor and make the viewers draw out fits of laughter, albeit unintentionally. Nevertheless, such portrayals could sting the sensibilities of the persons with disabilities and could create undue discomfort to them.

It has been the declared policy of the State to incorporate the disabled into the mainstream of society as showcased by the enactment of "The Magna Carta for the Disabled" (Republic Act No. 7277). However, if we are really sincere towards this endeavor, then we should stop ridiculing the persons with disabilities for their deficiencies or impairment and start accepting them as normal persons with dignities.

Hence, early passage of this bill is requested.

CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

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AN ACT PENALIZING THE NEGATIVE PORTRAYAL OF A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY IN MOVIES, TELEVISION, STAGE AND OTHER FORMS OF MASS COMMUNICATION

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as "The Media Protection for the Disabled Act of 2004".

SEC. 2. *Definition of Terms.* – The following terms shall be defined as follows:

(1) "Person with Disability" shall refer to one who is suffering from any disability as a result of a mental, physical, sensory or other impairment affecting his performance of an ordinary human activity.

(2) "Mass Communication Media" shall refer to television, movies, stage, or other cinematographic forms of communication and similar means of information dissemination.

SEC. 3. *Unlawful Acts.* - Any person who, in the performance of an act before the television, movies, stage, and other similar forms of mass communication, shall intentionally or maliciously mock, embarrass, humiliate, or otherwise insult a person with disabilities shall be penalized

with imprisonment of not more than six (6) months and/or the payment of a fine not exceeding Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

SEC. 4. *Matters Not Covered by This Act.* – The provisions of existing laws, insofar as they are not in conflict with any provision of this Act, shall apply in matters not otherwise specifically provided for herein.

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or section of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the other sections, and the application of such provisions or sections to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 6. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,