

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

H. B. No. 431

Introduced by HONORABLE JUAN EDGARDO "SONNY" M. ANGARA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Some members of the local and national media continue to callously lambast the Muslim religious culture of describing criminals and suspects with terms such as "Muslim Criminals", "Muslim Terrorists", "Muslim Drug Pushers", "Muslim Sea Pirates", "Muslim Bandits" or "Muslim Holduppers".

The use of words "Muslim" and "Islamic" in association with suspected or convicted criminals and unlawful acts are offensively biased against Muslims. This practice is highly prejudicial and extremely injurious to the Islamic religious culture, Muslim individuals and their collective image, and the Muslim's social well being as respectable citizens of the country.

Outlawing this culturally and religiously biased practice would definitely contribute and result in increased positive social space and understanding between and among Muslims and Non-Muslims, and help drive the path towards a just, culturally-sensitive, fair, and lasting peace and development in our country.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



JUAN EDGARDO "SONNY" M. ANGARA
Representative
Lone District, Province of Aurora

Introduced by Honorable JUAN EDGARDO “SONNY” M. ANGARA

AN ACT
PROHIBITING THE USE OF THE WORDS “MUSLIM” AND “CHRISTIAN” IN MASS
MEDIA TO DESCRIBE ANY PERSON SUSPECTED OF OR CONVICTED FOR
HAVING COMMITTED CRIMINAL OR UNLAWFUL ACTS, AND PROVIDING
PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF

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

SECTION 1. *Prohibited Act.* It is hereby declare unlawful for any person to use in mass media, the words “Muslim” and/or “Christian” or any other word that would denote religious, regional or ethnic affiliation to describe any person suspected of or convicted for having committed criminal or unlawful acts.

SEC. 2. *Penalties.* The penalty of arresto mayor or a fine ranging from One thousand pesos (P1,000.00) to Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the courts, shall be imposed upon any person found guilty of violating Section 1 hereof.

The editor-in-chief, in the case of print media, and the news editor in the case of broadcast media and other forms of mass media, shall be imposed a fine not lower than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00).

The juridical entity violating this Act shall be imposed a fine not lower than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) for every violation.

For the second and succeeding offenses, the penalties shall be doubled.

SEC. 3. *Implementing Rules.* The Philippine Information Agency, in coordination with the concerned sectors and entities, shall promulgate the rules and regulations to implement this Act within three months after its effectivity.

SEC. 4. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* If any part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts or provisions thereof not affected thereby shall remain valid and effective.

SEC. 6. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in at least two national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,