

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1457

INTRODUCED BY: REP. JORGE "BOLET" BANAL, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Former Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr., born on 27 November 1932, is a modern day hero who exhibited idealism and patriotism. He declared that the Filipino is worth dying for, and his indomitable spirit inspired our people in the fight for democracy.

Ninoy Aquino was an accomplished journalist, having been a staff member of the Philippine Collegian and the youngest war correspondent covering the Korean war for The Manila Times. An avid reader, he showed penchant for reading starting from his early years in school and even through his incarceration and exile. In his letter to former Senator Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo in 1973, he quoted Thomas a Kempis' Imitation of Christ, Jose Rizal's *El Filibusterismo*, and St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians, marveling at how a *"little book ... had a profound impact on Rizal"* and revealing that *"Father Florentino's immortal words were to sustain (Ninoy) through those dark nights of (his) soul in Laur."*¹ Ninoy believed, as did most of our heroes and public figures, that reading is an indisputable source of empowerment, widening one's knowledge, imagination, and compassion and allowing one to dream big even while recognizing certain inherent weaknesses.

It is therefore fitting to commemorate the birth anniversary of Ninoy Aquino by declaring November 27 of every year as "ARAW NG PAGBASA." ARAW NG PAGBASA aims to promote reading and literacy, motivate our people to learn from the lives and works of eminent Filipinos, uphold our own heritage and values, and generate awareness about other cultures and philosophies. It also seeks to make reading a shared physical experience, thereby increasing its relevance amidst the proliferation of online activities specifically among the youth.

As an annual reading and awareness program, ARAW NG PAGBASA is also aligned with the objectives of the Philippine Book Development Month, which is celebrated on the month of November of each year pursuant to Proclamation No. 1436 (2008). Educational activities throughout the country can be integrated to learn from Ninoy Aquino and other illustrious Filipinos in our daily struggle to develop as a nation.

¹ <http://ninoyaquino.50webs.com>.

ARAW NG PAGBASA aspires to be a simple yet meaningful reminder and declaration of hope for our people.

Thus, the approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

JORGE "BOLET" B. BANAL, JR.

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AN ACT DECLARING EVERY 27TH DAY OF NOVEMBER AS "ARAW
NG PAGBASAS," A REGULAR WORKING HOLIDAY

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

Section 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as "The Araw ng Pagbasa Act of 2010."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes and supports endeavors that promote reading and literacy, motivate awareness, and uphold our Filipino heritage and culture, including educational activities focusing on the life of former Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr., whose role in our country's history was influenced by great writings of different individuals.

The State likewise recognizes the importance of promoting reading as a shared activity among the youth, families, educators, and the private sector, thereby emphasizing personal interaction and facilitating the exchange of ideas throughout the country.

Sec. 3. National Holiday. – November 27 of every year is hereby declared as "Araw ng Pagbasa," which shall be a regular working holiday, to be celebrated in all public elementary and secondary schools in the country.

Sec. 4. Implementing Agency. – The Department of Education, in consultation with the National Book Development Board and other government agencies and units concerned, shall plan and implement the activities for the observance of "Araw ng Pagbasa."

Sec. 5. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) upon its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,