

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 222



**Introduced by Citizens' Battle Against Corruption (CIBAC) Party List
Representative Cinchona Cruz-Gonzales**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Mail-order bride is a label applied to a woman who publishes her intent to marry someone from another country. This label has been commonly used in relation to Filipino women. Historically, mail-order brides were women who listed themselves in catalogs and were selected by men for marriage.

Mail-order bride services are outlawed in the Philippines under the 1990 Anti-Mail Order Bride Law, and violators could face up to six years in prison. But companies have just moved into cyberspace devoted to matching men with Filipinas.

Filipino women were gravely abused by syndicates or people who conduct business and make women a commodity to be bought either in the internet, website or other written materials. With the advent of the internet, online matchmaking websites have proliferated and largely replaced traditional paper-based classifieds.

This is what they call the new era's professional prostitution or high end pornography through the web. This act downgrades the integrity and status not only of Filipino women but the Filipino citizens as a whole to the detriment of our beloved nation. The 1987 Constitution in Article 2 Section 14 recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men.

The immediate passage of the bill serves the intention of the constitution and preserves the honor of our Beloved Philippine Nation.


Hon. Cinchona Cruz-Gonzales
Representative, CIBAC Party List

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AN ACT
PROTECTING FILIPINO WOMEN AGAINST UNSCRUPULOUS INDIVIDUALS
OPERATING IN THE INTERNET WHO ARE ENGAGED IN MATCH-MAKING
ACTIVITIES AND OTHER VARIOUS SCHEMES, PURPOSELY FOR MARRIAGE
TO FOREIGN NATIONALS, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT
NO. 6955, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ANTI-MAIL ORDER BRIDE LAW

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

SECTION 1. Section 2 and 4 of Republic Act No. 6955 is amended to read as follows:

“**Section 2.** Pursuant thereto, it is hereby declared unlawful:

(a) For a person, natural or juridical, association, club or any other entity to commit, directly or indirectly, any of the following acts:

(1) To establish or carry on a business **INCLUDING THOSE MATCHMAKING WEBSITES WHICH OFFERS MEMBERSHIP WHETHER FOR FREE OR WITH A FEE** which has for its purpose the matching of Filipino women for marriage to foreign nationals (either) on a mail-order basis (or) through personal introduction **BY WAY OF RECRUITMENT OR THROUGH EMAILS OR WEBSITES IN THE INTERNET;**

(2) To advertise, publish, print or distribute, or cause the advertisement, printing or distribution of any brochure, flier or any propaganda material, **INCLUDING THOSE DISTRIBUTED**

AND MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE INTERNET WHICH ARE calculated to promote the prohibited acts in the preceding subparagraph;

(3) To solicit, enlist or in any manner attract or induce any Filipino woman to become a member in any club or association whose objective is to match women for marriage to foreign nationals (either) on mail-order basis (or) through personal introduction **OR THROUGH EMAILS OR WEBSITES IN THE INTERNET WHETHER FOR FREE OR WITH A FEE;**

(4) To use the postal service **AND THE INTERNET** to promote the acts in subparagraph 1 hereof.

THIS ACT ALSO PENALIZES FILIPINO WOMEN WHO VOLUNTARILY ENGAGED THEMSELVES IN MATCHMAKING ACTIVITIES AND THOSE WHO PATRONIZE THE MAIL-ORDER BRIDE BUSINESS AS AN ACCESSORY TO THE OFFENSE CHARGED.

(b) For the manager, **EDITOR IN CHIEF** or officer-in-charge or advertising manager of any newspaper, magazine, television or any newspaper, magazine, television or radio station, of other media **INCLUDING INTERNET WEBSITES AND OTHER SCHEMES MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE WORLDWIDE WEB**, or of an advertising agency, printing company or other similar entities, to knowingly allow or consent to the acts prohibited in the preceding paragraph.”

Section 4. Any person found guilty by the court to have violated any of the acts herein prohibited shall suffer an imprisonment of not less than **TWELVE (12) YEARS AND ONE (1) DAY BUT NOT MORE THAN TO TWENTY (20) YEARS, AND A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50, 000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P100, 000.00)**: Provided, That if the offender is a foreigner, he shall be immediately deported and barred forever from entering the country after serving his sentence and payment of fine.

SECTION 2. A new section is hereby added after Section 4 of R.A. No. 6955 as follows:

Section 5.A IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. - THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA), THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION (DOTC), THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE ROLE OF FILIPINO WOMEN (NCRFW), AND AT LEAST THREE (3) REPRESENTATIVES FROM NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

(NGOS), WHICH ARE ENGAGED IN ASSISTING VICTIMS OF MAIL-ORDER BRIDE OTHER SCHEMES, SHALL BE CHARGED WITH CARRYING OUT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT AND SHALL FORMULATE ITS IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS WITHIN NINETY (90) DAYS AFTER THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT.”

SECTION 3. *Separability Clause.* - If any part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 4. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 5. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,