

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. _____



Introduced by Reps. NERI JAVIER COLMENARES and CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

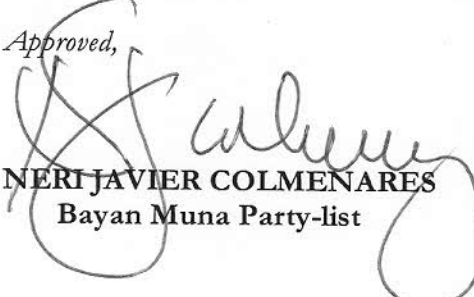
Concerned with the welfare of persons with disabilities, the State affirms and mandates the rehabilitation, self-development and integration of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) into mainstream society through Republic Act No. 7277 or the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities. Through the said law, television stations are encouraged to use subtitles or sign-language interpreters in their news programs. However, at present, only a small number of the major news programs are regularly using subtitles or sign-language insets. On the other hand, a couple of regional stations have been utilizing sign language insets with the help of non-government organizations.

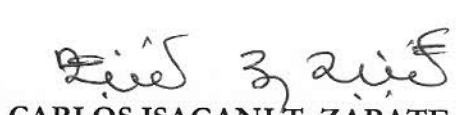
With around a million PWDs, including those who are deaf, there is a long-standing yet unheeded call to use subtitles or sign language in television programs. Without these aids, deaf individuals are deprived of timely and relevant information that broadcast news provides.

It should also be considered that less than 5% of the reported 120,000 hearing-impaired are literate or have received any form of schooling, according to the Philippine Deaf Resource Center. This is why Filipino sign language is preferred over captions or subtitles.

The proposed bill aims to make broadcast media more accessible to the deaf community. It hopes to pave the way for other sign-language interpreted programs in the future.

Approved,


NERI JAVIER COLMENARES
Bayan Muna Party-list


CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Party-list

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL No. 356

Introduced by Reps. NERI JAVIER COLMENARES and CARLOS ISAGANI T.
ZARATE

**AN ACT REQUIRING THE USE OF FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE INSETS FOR
LOCAL NEWS PROGRAMS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 22 OF
REPUBLIC ACT 7277, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "MAGNA
CARTA FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDs)"**

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 "Filipino Sign Language Insets for News Programs Act of 2013."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the Government's concern and responsibility to make telecommunications and mass media available to persons with disabilities for their rehabilitation, self-development and self-reliance as provided by Republic Act No. 7277 or the "Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities" and the Philippine Constitution which upholds the right to information.

SECTION 3. Section 22 of Republic Act No. 7277, as amended, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta for Person with Disabilities (PWDs)," is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 22 Broadcast Media – ALL FREE-TO-AIR television stations [shall be encouraged] ARE REQUIRED to provide [a sign-language inset] FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE INSETS, AND WHERE POSSIBLE, CLOSED CAPTIONS OR subtitles in at least TWO (2) newscast programs a day and special programs covering events of national significance.

"THE FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION STATIONS MAY LIKEWISE OPT TO PROVIDE FOR FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE INSETS IN OTHER PROGRAMS SUCH AS THOSE PERTAINING TO CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIVELIHOOD AND THOSE CATERING TO CHILDREN."

SECTION 4. Constitutionality. – Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity or constitutionality of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, letters of instructions, resolutions, orders, ordinances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,