



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4654

Introduced by: REPRESENTATIVE ENRICO "RECOM" ECHIVERRI

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Constitution guarantees religious freedom. The IGLESIA NI CRISTO, a global church which has its beginnings in Manila, Philippines, best exemplifies this guarantee.

It was in July 27, 1914 where its founder, Ka Felix Y. Manalo, registered it with the Bureau of Commerce as a corporation sole with himself as the first executive minister. Expansion followed as INC started building congregations in the provinces, throughout the country, and later on, throughout the world.

Having gone international, the membership of the Iglesia ni Cristo comprises at least 110 nationalities. It maintains about 104 ecclesiastical districts in the Philippines and in 110 more countries and territories in the six (6) inhabited continents of the world.

The Iglesia ni Cristo will be celebrating its centennial on July 27, 1914. The Church's major activities include worship service, missionary works, and edification.

Undoubtedly, the Iglesia ni Cristo plays a key role in our society. From its humble beginnings in 1914, the Iglesia ni Cristo has grown to be the largest entirely indigenous Christian church in the Philippines, and the largest independent Christian Church in Asia. In 2010, INC had grown to more than 5,000 congregations in the Philippines and more than 600 abroad. The latest census by the National Statistics Office shows that the Iglesia ni Cristo is the third largest religious denomination in the Philippines, after the Roman Catholic Church and Islam, respectively.

On November 19, 1981, INC has launched the "Lingap sa Mamamayan" (Aid To Humanity) Program. The program aims to provide relief goods, health care, and other services to the needy, especially those who are afflicted by calamities and disasters. It also provides seminars for disaster preparedness, first aid, and family planning. Other humanitarian activities such as blood donation and community clean up drives were also conducted in different parts of the world where the Iglesia Ni Cristo is established.

Regular and special non-working holidays are already observed to commemorate important religious days of the Roman Catholic Church (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Black Saturday, All Saints Day and Christmas Day) and Islam (Eid'l Fitr and Eid'l Adha), the first and second largest religious denominations in the Philippines. INC as the third largest religious denomination in the Philippines also deserves recognition of the celebration of its important religious holiday.

Republic Act No. 9645, AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NATIONAL WORKING HOLIDAY IN RECOGNITION OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO IN THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 26, CHAPTER 7 OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 292, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF 1897, AS AMENDED, was passed and approved on June 12, 2009. However, said bill only makes the celebration of the founding anniversary of the Iglesia ni Cristo a working holiday.

This bill seeks to declare July 27 of every year as IGLESIA NI CRISTO DAY and making it a special national non-working holiday, not only in recognition of INC's contribution in nation-building but also in commendation of the role this largest entirely indigenous Christian church in the Philippines has grown throughout the world, and to allow its million members, in solidarity with the Filipino people, the full celebration of the momentous event.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'E' followed by a long horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.

ENRICO "RECOM" ECHIVERRI

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HOUSE BILL NO. 4654

**AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR AS IGLESIA NI CRISTO DAY
TO COMMEMORATE THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF
IGLESIA NI CRISTO, THEREBY AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT 9645
BY MAKING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR
A SPECIAL NATIONAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY**

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 and cited as the "Iglesia ni Cristo Day".

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the declared policy of the State to uphold religious freedom. The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship shall forever be allowed.

Section 3. Section 3 of Republic Act 9645 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 3. Special National Non-Working Holiday. July 27 of every year is hereby declared a special national non-working holiday in commemoration of the founding anniversary of the Iglesia ni Cristo in the Philippines.

Section 4. Information Dissemination. The Philippine Information Agency (PIA) shall ensure the effective information dissemination of this Act.

Section 5. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Section 6. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect (15) days after its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.



ENRICO "RECOM" ECHIVERRI