

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 5456



Introduced by BAYAN MUNA Representative CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE

AN ACT
RECOGNIZING THE OBSERVANCE OF JULY 25 OF EVERY YEAR
AS THE NATIONAL CAMPUS PRESS FREEDOM DAY, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The campus press has long been known for its historic role and contribution to press freedom in the country. The 25th of July is a momentous day for the campus press. The College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), an alliance of tertiary student publications nationwide - the largest and oldest organization of its kind in the Asia Pacific Region, was founded on July 25, 1931. The date also coincides with the birthday of Ernesto Rodriguez Jr., founder of the CEGP and former editor in chief of *The National* (the campus publication of the National University).

The Guild, a patriotic and democratic organization, is the center for the advancement of campus press freedom in the Philippines. It aims to uphold and defend the interest and welfare of student journalists, its student-publishers, and the Filipino people.

Campus journalists who have served with CEGP continue to pursue the organization's advocacies even after their years in college. Alumni, such as government officials, public servants, civil society leaders and activists, media practitioners, business and industry leaders, and personalities grace the CEGP history's list of student leaders.

As part of the alternative press or the so-called "mosquito press" during the dark days of martial law, campus media helped expose the real state of the country during the dictatorship. Today, the campus press continues to defend the interest and welfare of the Filipino people by tackling both national and sectoral issues – providing a free and adequate venue for the discussion of student concerns.

It is in this light that this legislation aims to declare the 25th of July of every year as the "National Campus Press Freedom Day."

Approved on third reading during the 15th and 16th Congress, immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

Approved,


Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Party-list

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.*—This act shall be known as the “National Campus Press Freedom Day Act.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*—It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote, protect and safeguard the constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of expression, speech, and of the press. As part of media, the campus press is an important institution in society that promotes and protects the freedom of the press and the freedom of expression. As a testament to its remarkable contribution in the continued advancement of these freedoms, the State shall, as a matter of policy, promote the observance of July 25 of every year as “National Campus Press Freedom Day” in all educational institutions.

SECTION 3. *Observance of the National Campus Press Freedom Day.*—The 25th of July of every year is hereby declared as “National Campus Press Freedom Day”, to be observed in all educational institutions

SECTION 4. *Roles of Educational Institutions.*—All educational institutions, are mandated to provide their full support and assistance to events and activities to be conducted by students in recognition of the National Campus Press Freedom Day.

SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the other provisions thereof shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,