

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2708



Introduced by

HON. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
and
HON. JUDE A. ACIDRE

AN ACT
PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL WRITING
SYSTEMS, AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND
CONSERVATION

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Culture and language are inextricably linked together, such that writing systems can be used to trace one's roots and connect with one's culture.

In the Philippines, there is an abundance of types of writing systems which have been existing even prior to the colonization of the country. One of the most famous Philippine writing systems is *Baybayin* which is being widely used for leisure and aesthetic purposes. It is noteworthy to remember, however, that *Baybayin* does not encompass the entirety of the Philippines' writing systems and does not therefore showcase the entirety of the Philippine culture. Thus, it is important for the State to promote and preserve not just a singular or the dominant writing system but also other indigenous and traditional writing systems within which our history and culture is incorporated.

And while these writing systems are being revived again, it is becoming vulnerable and in danger of misrepresentation and alteration due to technological advancements. Proper and official recognized standardization, publication, and

documentation must be established in order for the writing systems to sustain its intrinsic characteristics.

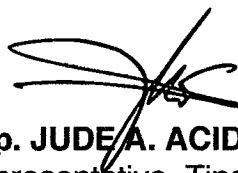
Article XIV, Section 17 of the 1987 Constitution affirms that the State shall recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions and that it shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.

Pursuant to the aforementioned constitutional fiat, this bill seeks to promote, protect, preserve, and conserve the Philippine indigenous and traditional writing systems and use it as tools for enhancing cultural development, instilling national pride and identity, and safeguarding Filipino cultural heritage and identity.

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



Rep. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan



Rep. JUDE A. ACIDRE
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2708

Introduced by

HON. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
and
HON. JUDE A. ACIDRE

AN ACT
PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL WRITING
SYSTEMS, AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND
CONSERVATION

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 henceforth as the “Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems Act.”

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the policy of the State to inculcate, propagate, and preserve the cultural heritage and treasures of the Philippines as a means to foster patriotism and social consciousness among the citizenry. To this end, there is a need to promote, protect, preserve, and conserve the Philippine indigenous and traditional writing systems, using these as tools for enhancing cultural development, instilling national pride and identity, and safeguarding Filipino cultural heritage and identity.

Section 3. *Promotion of Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems.* To generate greater awareness of indigenous and traditional scripts of the Philippines and engender a wider appreciation of their significance and beauty, the promotion of the writing systems is hereby recognized as part of our cultural treasures.

The writing systems as expression of Philippine traditions and national identity shall be promoted through the following:

- a. Mandate the Department of Education (DepEd) and Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to include these writing systems in relevant subjects of basic and higher education and offer an elective or specialized course in higher education on the study of the same;
- b. Creation and support of activities that promote awareness of the writing systems, particularly during *Buwan ng Wika* and similar occasions and events;
- c. Conduct seminars, conferences, conventions, symposia, and other relevant activities on the study of the writing systems, taking in consideration of the writing system that is indigenous to a particular region;
- d. Ensure proper record-keeping of relevant documents and preservation of oral evidence on the writing systems; and,
- e. Other applicable measures, as may be adopted by the concerned government agencies.

Section 4. *Protection, Preservation, and Conservation of Indigenous or Traditional Scripts of the Philippines.* The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) shall be the lead agency in promulgating policy guidelines in the promotion of the writing systems.

Accordingly, the NCCA is hereby mandated to protect, preserve, and conserve the writing systems as a national cultural treasure as provided in Republic Act No. 10066, otherwise known as the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009.” The NCCA shall coordinate with the DepEd, CHED, and other relevant government agencies for the proper implementation of this provision.

Section 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within sixty (60) days after the approval of this Act, the NCCA shall, in coordination with the DepEd and CHED, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Section 6. *Separability Clause.* If any part, section or provision of this Act shall

be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts, sections and provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 7. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

Section 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,