

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL No. 3620



**Introduced by REPRESENTATIVES LANI MERCADO-REVILLA,
BRYAN B. REVILLA AND RAMON "JOLO" B. REVILLA III**

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Indigenous writing systems have existed in the Philippines long before Western colonizers invaded our country. Written accounts have indicated that the locals were already literate and proficient in reading and writing indigenous scripts. Among the traditional writing systems that were used in communicating and doing business in the precolonial era were the Baybayin (Katagalugan), Buhid (Mindoro), Kulitan (Pampanga), Tagbanwa (Northern Palawan) and Jawi (Greater Sulu).

With the arrival of the Spaniards, the Roman/Latin alphabet was introduced as a means to teach Christianity which pushed aside the use of the native scripts. In the latter part of the Spanish occupation, the use of local scripts has further waned that eventually resulted in the dissipation of basic awareness and knowledge about the local scripts from the general population's memory.¹

In the modern times where technological advancements have made leaps and bounds, the dominance of major world languages and writing systems in all aspects of human living further endangered our indigenous writing systems. If the government does not take conscious effort towards their preservation, they will eventually be forgotten by our people.

¹ (Norman de los Santos, 2015, *Philippine Indigenous Writings in the Modern World*, http://ical13.ling.sinica.edu.tw/Full_papers_and_ppts/July_21/P4-1.pdf).

As part of our national cultural heritage, indigenous writing systems must be preserved, propagated and protected to ensure that our local traditions will be embedded in every Filipino's awareness.

In view of this, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.



REP. LANI MERCADO-REVILLA
Representative
2nd District of Cavite



REP. BRYAN B. REVILLA
Representative
AGIMAT Partylist



REP. RAMON "JOLO" REVILLA III
Representative
1st District of Cavite

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL No. 3620

**Introduced by REPRESENTATIVES LANI MERCADO-REVILLA,
BRYAN B. REVILLA AND RAMON JOLO B. REVILLA III**

**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. *Title.* – This Act shall be known henceforth as the “Philippine
Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems Act.”

Sec. 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.

Sec. 3. *Promotion of Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems.* –
To generate greater awareness of indigenous and traditional scripts of the Philippines
and engender 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 the 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 into 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, a may be adopted by the concerned government agencies.

Sec. 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.

Sec. 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.

Sec. 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.

Sec. 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 and amended accordingly.

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

Approved,