



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4155



INTRODUCED BY REP. HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN

EXPLANATORY NOTE

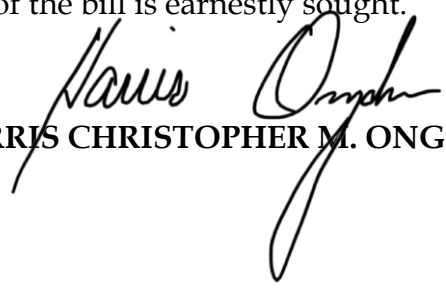
Baybayin is one of the pre colonial writing systems used by the Filipinos. Records show that as early as the 16th Century, baybayin was already used as a writing system and evidence can be seen to show that these writings were done using pigments or engraved via sharp bamboo sticks.

Pedro Chirino, in "Relacios de las Islas Filipinas," explain that when they arrived in the Philippines, he observed that the Filipinos were already able to establish their own writing system, as well as, being able to group themselves into small communities that he referred to as barangays. The written accounts of Pedro Chirino even show some examples of how baybayin is written.

The measure seeks to declare Baybayin as the National Writing Script of the country. It also outlines provisions to promote baybayin as the National Writing System of the Philippines.

In the 18th Congress, this bill was filed by Representatives Nieto and Villafuerte. The measure was approved by the House of Representatives on third reading, and transmitted to the Senate.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of the bill is earnestly sought.


HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN



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HOUSE BILL NO. **4155**

Introduced by Representative
HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN

AN ACT
PROMOTING THE PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS / TRADITIONAL WRITING
SYSTEMS, THE USE OF BAYBAYIN AS A TOOL FOR CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FOR ITS PROTECTION,
PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “Philippine Indigenous / Traditional Writing Systems Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to inculcate, propagate and preserve the cultural heritage and treasures of the Philippines for the evolution and development of patriotism among the citizenry by giving utmost priority to the conservation and promotion of arts, letters and culture. Towards this end, there is a need to promote, protect, preserve and conserve “Baybayin, and the other Philippine Indigenous / Traditional Writing Systems (Writing Systems),” using it as a tool for cultural and economic development to create a consciousness, respect and pride for the legacies of Filipino cultural history, heritage and our authentic identity.

SECTION 3. Declaration of “Baybayin” as Philippine Indigenous / Traditional Writing Systems (National Writing Script). - To generate greater awareness on the

plight of “Baybayin” and foster wider appreciation on its importance and beauty, “Baybayin” is hereby declared the National Writing System of the Philippines. As used in this Act, “Baybayin” shall refer to all existing and discovered ancient and traditional scripts of the Philippine indigenous peoples such as Baibayin in Tagalog (Doctrina, 1593 & San Buenaventure, 1613) Pintados in Panay/Negros (1572), Sambal in Zambales (1601), Kumintang in Batangas (1843), Guhit n Bicol (1835), Surat binisaya (1637), Kulitan Sulat Kapampangan (1699), Kurditan in Ilocano (1620), Surat Mangyan Buhid and Surat Mangyan Hanunuoo in Mindoro (1792), and Surat or Suyat Palawan and Tagbanua in Palawan, Jawi Maguindanao and Jawi Tausug (The Surigao Declaration, 2018).

SECTION 4. Funding. — An initial budget of One Hundred Twenty Million Pesos (P120,000,000.00) is hereby allocated for this Act. The funds necessary to carry out the provision of this Act shall be included in the General Appreciation Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 5. Promotion of Philippine Indigenous / Traditional and “Baybayin” as the National Writing System of the Philippines. — “Baybayin” as the National writing system representing Philippine traditions and national identity shall be promoted. Philippine Indigenous / Traditional and “Baybayin” as a representation of the Philippine traditions and national identity shall be promoted through the following:

a. By mandating the Department of Education (DepEd), and Commission on Higher Education (CHED), to include the Writing Systems in relevant subjects of the basic education curriculum and to create an elective or specialized course in higher education and technical vocational programs for the same;

b. By creating and supporting activities that promote the awareness of the Writing Systems during Buwan ng Wika and other similar occasions and events;

c. By conducting seminars, conferences, conventions, symposia, and other relevant activities on the study of the Writing Systems, taking consideration of the writing system that is indigenous to a particular region; and

d. By ensuring the proper record-keeping of relevant documents and preservation of oral evidence on the Writing Systems.

e. By mandating the local government units LGUs to include the appropriate “Baybayin” script in their signage for street names, public facilities, public buildings, and other necessary signage for other public service establishments such as hospitals, fire and police stations, community centers and government halls;

f. By directing the appropriate government agency to disseminate knowledge and information about “Baybayin” script by distributing reading materials in all levels of public and private educational institutions and government and private agencies and offices to instil awareness of the declaration of “Baybayin” as the national writing system and to conduct staff trainings for the proper handling of these important documents.

SECTION 6. Protection, Preservation and Conservation of Indigenous / Traditional Scripts of the Philippines. — The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCAA) shall be the lead agency in promulgating policy guidelines in the promotion of the Writing Systems. The NCAA is hereby mandated to protect, preserve, and conserve the Writing Systems as a National Cultural Treasure. NCAA shall coordinate with DepEd, and CHED, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other relevant agencies for the proper implementation of the same.

SECTION 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within sixty (60) days after the approval of this Act, the NCAA, in coordination with DILG, DepEd, CHED, and TESDA, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 8. Separability Clause. — If any part, section, or provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other part, section and provision not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. 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, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.