



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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7178



-Introduced by Representative **GERALDINE B. ROMAN**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force, according to Section 18, Article II of the 1987 Constitution. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare". The right to self-organization, collective bargaining and negotiations, and peaceful concerted activities is also guaranteed by the Constitution. They will also be entitled to job security, humane working conditions, and a living wage.

As members of the labor force, media, and entertainment workers play an important role in our society and economy. They provide news, entertainment, and other essential content to keep us up to date on all of the current events going on around us. Behind the news and entertainment content, media and entertainment workers work day and night to provide the general public with accurate information and coverage.

Equal opportunity can be classified into four types: formal quality of opportunity, substantive equality of opportunity, equality of fair opportunity, level playing field, and meritocracy. As a result, with this measure, people-centered legislation is proposed.

News and Media workers are the main objectives of this measure.

The dedication of media and entertainment workers to public service is undeniable. In recognition of their invaluable contribution to society and the hazardous conditions they face during crises, it is proper to compensate them with just emoluments and additional labor protection under the law.

This proposed measure seeks to improve the protection, security, and incentives for media workers by providing an additional health insurance package, overtime and night differential pay, and other benefits. This bill also requires a written contract signed by the media entity and the employee to ensure maximum protection from unjust compensation and that their labor rights are well protected and their welfare is not neglected.

The passage of this measure is urgently requested.


REP. GERALDINE B. ROMAN
District Representative
Bataan, 1st District



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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR ENHANCED PROTECTION, SECURITY, BENEFITS, AND
INCENTIVES FOR NEWS AND MEDIA WORKERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled.

SECTION. 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the “News and Media Workers Act of 2023.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - This Act shall be known as the "Media Workers' Welfare Act".

SEC. 3. Declaration of the Principle of Equal Opportunity. – The State recognizes that all individuals have the right to equal opportunity to live decently and with dignity. Every individual has the right to participate and be given access to information relating to the decision-making processes that affect their lives and well-being.

The State further declares that workers in the news and media sector are individuals deserving of secured rights of a decent life, dignity, and humane employment. They should be allowed to live a life of normalcy, living in co-existence with other workers who are living a peaceful and productive life, secured, and protected by law.

SEC. 4. – Coverage. – The provisions of this Act shall apply to all workers in the news and media industry, whether on a contractual or regular basis, in the public and private sectors.

SEC. 5. – Minimum Compensation for News and Media Workers. – To ensure that news and media workers shall be properly compensated, entry-level positions shall receive the minimum monthly compensation determined by the National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC).

SEC. 6. – Normal Hours of Work. – The normal hours of work of a worker in the media and news sector, whether in the public or private sector, shall not exceed eight (8) hours per day or forty (40) hours per week. The hours of work shall include, but not be limited to the time in which:

- (a) The worker in the media and news sector concerned is required to be present and on active duty at the prescribed place of work;
- (b) The worker in the media and news sector concerned is permitted to work, whether or not such work is done at the prescribed place of work; and
- (c) The worker in the media and news sector concerned is required to work in places other than the prescribed place of work.

SEC. 7. – Overtime Work. – Where the exigencies of the service so require a worker in the media and news sector, whether in the public or private sector, may be required to render service beyond the regular eight (8) hours per day, inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and non-working holidays. In such cases, the worker in the media and news sector concerned shall be given additional compensation in accordance with existing laws on the matter.

SEC. 8. – Social Security and Welfare Benefits. – News and Media workers shall be covered by the Government Service Insurance System, the Home Development Fund or the Pag-IBIG Fund, and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation upon employment. The payment of monthly contributions shall be jointly shared by the news and media worker and the employer, when applicable, in accordance with existing rules and regulations. News and Media workers shall also be entitled to retirement benefits as provided under RA No. 11199, otherwise known as the “Social Security Act of 2018”

SEC. 9. – Hazard Pay. – News and Media workers are required to physically report for work in dangerous areas such as strife-torn or embattled areas, distressed or isolated stations, disease-infested areas, or areas declared under a state of calamity or emergency for the duration thereof which expose them to great danger, contagion, radiation, volcanic activity or eruption, occupational risks or perils to life as determined by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), shall be compensated with a hazard pay in the minimum amount of Five hundred pesos (P500.00) per day, with no diminution, which shall be computed as follows:

Hazard Pay = P500 x number of days physically reporting for work in dangerous areas

The base amount of the hazard pay of news and media workers may be increased as decided upon by the News Media Tripartite Council created under Section 17 of this Act.

Employers shall also provide media workers covering events in dangerous areas with basic safety gear and equipment such as bulletproof vests and helmets, first-aid kits, fire protection jackets, face shields, medical-grade protective equipment, harnesses, safety shoes, and life vests.

SEC. 10. – Mandatory Additional Insurance Benefits. – Employers shall provide additional insurance coverage to news and media workers as follows:

- a) Death Benefit of Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00) for each media worker who shall perish in the line of duty;
- b) Disability benefit of up to Two hundred pesos (P200,000.00) for each news and media worker who shall suffer a total or partial disability, whether permanent or temporary, arising from any injury sustained in the line of duty; and
- c) Medical insurance benefit for each news and media worker of up to One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00).

SEC. 11. – *Other Compensation Benefits.* – All workers in the media and news sector, in addition to the compensation and benefits already provided by existing laws, shall be entitled to the following compensation and benefits:

- a) Representation Allowance and Travelling Allowance;
- b) Subsistence Allowance;
- c) Longevity Pay;
- d) Clothing Allowance;
- e) Housing Allowance;
- f) On-call Pay; and
- g) Vehicle Loan.

SEC. 12. – *Security of Tenure.* – News and Media workers shall be deemed as regular employees after six (6) months from the start of employment, regardless of the nature of employment. However, the said six (6) months period shall be computed cumulatively if a news and media worker is repeatedly engaged for shorter periods. An employer shall not terminate the services of a media worker except for a just or authorized cause and with the observance of procedural due process.

SEC. 13. – *Right to Join Organizations.* – Workers in the media and news sector shall have the right to autonomy in terms of joining associations, organizations, or unions for purposes not contrary to law, in the protection of their mutual interests, and in the pursuit of seeking redress for grievances through peaceful concerted activities.

SEC. 14. – *Settlement of Disputes.* – All labor-related disputes shall be elevated to the DOLE regional office that has jurisdiction over the workplace.

SEC. 15. – *Compliance.* – The DOLE shall monitor compliance with the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 16. – *Administrative Penalties.* – Violations of the provisions of this Act shall be subject to applicable penalties provided in Presidential Decree No. 442, as amended, and other related laws and issuances.

SEC. 17. – *News Media Tripartite Council.* – The DOLE shall initiate the creation of the News Media Tripartite Council which shall serve as a link among various stakeholders, and provide a platform where news and media workers and employees can agree upon mutually beneficial policies that will promote the interest of the media industry, and serve as an avenue to express their aspirations, discuss their programs or settle conflicts

SEC. 18. – *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Labor and Employment shall, in coordination with media groups, associations, publishers, guilds, and other concerned groups, issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 19. – *Separability Clause.* – If for any reason, any section, clause, or term of this Act is held to be illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 20. – *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 21. Effectivity Clause. -This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

