

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
2nd Regular Session

House Bill No. **9963**



**Introduced by Representatives EDVIC G. YAP, ERWIN T. TULFO and
JOCELYN P. TULFO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Freedom of expression and freedom of the press are among the fundamental rights highlighted in the 1987 Constitution—emphasizing that information is the key driver of vibrant societies and human progress. Despite such guarantee, the country remains to be among the world’s “most dangerous” places for journalists, ranking 132nd out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders (RSF). In fact, since 1986, 199 media workers were killed in the country according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP).

Freedom of the press is among the key determinants of a country’s democracy. Being the eighth (8th) worst country when it comes to prosecuting killers of journalists according to the 2023 Global Impunity Index, there is a need to impose stringent penalties to the acts of killing journalists not only to encourage deterrence to the offenders but as well as to put high regard on the freedom of the press.

It is in this regard that this proposed bill seeks to amend Article 248 of the Revised Penal Code in order to include the killing of the members of broadcast and print media as a qualifying circumstance that will constitute murder, thereby strengthening the country’s protection to journalists.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this proposed measure is earnestly sought.



HON. EDVIC G. YAP



HON. ERWIN T. TULFO



HON. JOCELYN P. TULFO

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AN ACT
QUALIFYING THE KILLING OF MEMBERS OF BROADCAST AND PRINT
MEDIA IN THE LAWFUL EXERCISE OF THEIR FUNCTIONS AS SUCH, AS A
CRIME OF MURDER PUNISHABLE UNDER ARTICLE 248 OF THE REVISED
PENAL CODE, AS AMENDED

*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Republic of the
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. Article 248 of the Revised Penal Code as amended by Republic Act No. 7659 is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"ART. 248. Murder. - Any person who, not falling within the provisions of Article 246 shall kill another, shall be guilty of murder and shall be punished by *reclusion perpetua* to death, if committed with any of the following attendant circumstances:

- 1) With treachery, taking advantage of superior strength, with the aid of armed men, or employing means to weaken the defense or of means or persons to insure or afford impunity;
- 2) In consideration of a price, reward or promise;
- 3) By means of inundation, fire poison, explosion, shipwreck, standing of a vessel, derailment or assault upon a street car or locomotive, fall of an airship by means of motor vehicle, or with the use of any other means involving great waste and ruin;
- 4) On occasion of any of the calamities enumerated in the preceding paragraphs or, any other public calamity;
- 5) With evident premeditation;

- 6) With cruelty, by deliberately and inhumanly augmenting the suffering of the Victim, or outraging or scoffing at his person or corpse.
- 7) When the person killed is a member of the broadcast and print media, on occasion of the lawful exercise of his/her duties or functions as such member"

SEC. 2. *Repealing Clause* - All laws decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof, inconsistent the provisions of this Act are hereby modified or repealed accordingly.

SEC. 3. *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect after the lapse of fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever is earlier.

Approved,