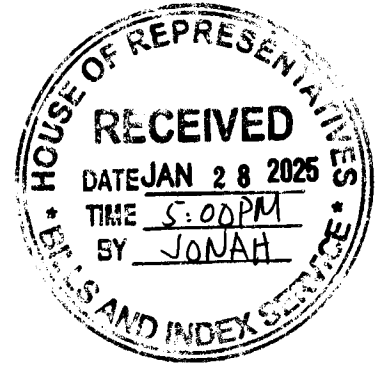


Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**19th CONGRESS**  
Third Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. - 11368**



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INTRODUCED BY **REP. HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN** and  
**REP. DIMZHAR MATBA SALI**

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**AN ACT**  
**AMENDING ARTICLE I SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9997**  
**OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MUSLIM**  
**FILIPINOS ACT OF 2009"**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) was established through Republic Act No. 9997 in 2009 to serve as the primary government agency responsible for preserving and developing the culture, traditions, institutions, and well-being of Muslim Filipinos. The Commission is composed of nine full-time members, all of whom are Muslim Filipinos, with specific representation from the women, youth, and Ulama sectors.

To further enhance the inclusivity and representation within the NCMF, this proposed amendment seeks to include a Commissioner from the Balik-Islam community. The term "Balik-Islam," derived from the Filipino word "balik," meaning "to return," refers to individuals who have embraced Islam, viewing it as their original faith of humanity.

A comprehensive study conducted by the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies in 2023 delved into the motivations behind the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam and the challenges they encounter. The study highlighted that Balik-Islam individuals often face a range of challenges, including:

**Personal Challenges:** Adjusting to new religious practices and integrating Islamic principles into daily life.

**Familial Challenges:** Navigating relationships with family members who may not accept or understand their decision to embrace Islam and **Community-Related Challenges**

By amending Section 5 of RA 9997 to include a Commissioner from the Balik-Islam community, this measure aims to ensure that their unique perspectives and concerns are adequately represented within the NCMF. Such representation is crucial for addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by Balik-Islam individuals, crafting policies that are inclusive and considerate of the diverse experiences within the Muslim Filipino population and promote understanding and acceptance of the Balik-Islam community within the broader society.

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



**REP. HARRIS CHRISTOPHER M. ONGCHUAN**

Representative, 2<sup>nd</sup> District of Northern Samar

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**AN ACT**  
**AMENDING ARTICLE I SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9997**  
**OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MUSLIM**  
**FILIPINOS ACT OF 2009"**

SECTION 1. Article I Section 5 of Republic Act No. 9997 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 5. *Composition of the Commission.* — The Commission shall be composed of nine (9) full-time members who are Muslim Filipinos and shall be headed by a Secretary: *Provided,* That one (1) of the Commissioners shall come from the women sector, one (1) from the youth sector, [~~and~~] another Commissioner shall come from the Ulama sector, **AND ONE (1) FROM THE BALIK-ISLAM** : *Provided, further,* That not more than two (2) Commissioners shall come from the same Muslim Filipino tribe at any given time, to ensure a more equitable representation in the Commission. The President shall appoint the regular members of the Commission. The Commissioners shall be academic degree holders and must speak and write fluently the English and/or Arabic languages.

They shall be individuals who possess the highest, degree of integrity and have the endorsement of their respective tribes or sectors.

XXX"

SEC. 2. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 3. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, and rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 4. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly 'M. J.', written over a horizontal line.