



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1202



Introduced by Representative
ZIAUR-RAHMAN "ZIA" ALONTO ADIONG

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Media workers play a critical role in upholding democracy and ensuring that information is accessible, timely, and accurate. They serve the public interest often under difficult, hazardous, and even life-threatening conditions. Despite their indispensable function in society, many media workers remain vulnerable to job insecurity, poor compensation, lack of benefits, and threats to their safety and well-being.

This proposed measure, the **Media Workers' Welfare Act**, seeks to promote and improve the social and economic welfare of media workers by institutionalizing fair wages, providing hazard pay and insurance benefits, ensuring access to social security programs, and strengthening the security of tenure. It also mandates media entities to take greater responsibility for the welfare of media workers under their operations, including blocktimers and non-regular employees.

By establishing clear guidelines for compensation, social benefits, safety, and dispute resolution, this bill aims to cultivate a safe, just, and conducive working environment for all media practitioners. It also empowers the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to monitor compliance and lead the creation of a News Media Tripartite Council to institutionalize dialogue between government, employers, and workers in the media sector.

It is important to note that this same measure was **passed on Third Reading by the House of Representatives during the 19th Congress**, affirming the Chamber's longstanding commitment to protect and promote the rights and welfare of Filipino media workers.

In light of continuing threats to press freedom and labor rights, the immediate passage of this bill is urgently sought.


REP. ZIAUR-RAHMAN ALONTO ADIONG
1st District, Lanao del Sur



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**AN ACT
PROVIDING ENHANCED PROTECTION, SECURITY, AND BENEFITS
FOR MEDIA WORKERS**

*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 "Media Workers' Welfare Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy

It is the policy of the State to promote and improve the social and economic well-being of media workers, including their living and working conditions. Towards this end, the State shall provide the necessary support to ensure that media workers are protected, secured, and well compensated.

SEC. 3. Objectives

This Act shall have the following objectives:

- A. Ensure that media workers shall, at minimum, be paid the wages, allowances, and benefits provided by law to workers;
- B. Motivate and encourage media workers to be truthful and responsible sharers of information;
- C. Promote an atmosphere that is conducive to a productive, free, and fruitful media work.

SEC. 4. Coverage

This Act shall apply to all media workers and media entities in the private sector.

SEC. 5. Definition of Terms

As used in this Act:

- A. **Blocktimer** refers to one who buys airtime from radio and television franchise holders;
- B. **Media entities** refer to persons or organizations, including media networks and operators, that actively gather information of potential interest to a segment of the public, turn collected information into a distinct work, or distribute that work to an audience within the Philippines;
- C. **Media workers** refer to those who are legitimately engaged in news media practice, directly or indirectly, whether as a principal occupation or not.

SEC. 6. Minimum Compensation

Media workers shall not receive less than the applicable minimum wage rate prescribed by the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board, and shall be entitled to overtime pay and night shift premiums, as well as other forms of compensation provided by the Presidential Decree No. 442, as amended, otherwise known as the "Labor Code of the Philippines," and other related laws and issuances.

SEC. 7. Social Security and Welfare Benefits

Media workers shall be covered by the Social Security System, the Home Development Mutual 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 media worker and the employer, when applicable, in accordance with existing rules and regulations. Media workers shall also be entitled to retirement benefits as provided under Republic Act No. 11199, otherwise known as the "Social Security Act of 2018."

SEC. 8. Hazard Pay

Media workers required to physically report for work in dangerous areas such as strife-torn or embattled areas, distressed or isolated stations, disease-infested areas, or in 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.

SEC. 9. Mandatory Additional Insurance Benefits

Employers shall provide additional insurance coverage to media workers as follows:

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

SEC. 0. Security of Tenure

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 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. 11. Settlement of Disputes

All labor-related disputes shall be elevated to the DOLE regional office which has jurisdiction over the workplace

SEC. 12. Liability of Media Entities

Media entities shall be responsible for all contents released under their name. Owners of media entities or franchise holders shall be liable for claims arising from gross negligence, malicious acts, and violation of laws in connection with the work of blocktimers and media workers, regardless of the nature of engagement, except when the owners of the media entities or franchise holders are able to prove that due diligence was exercised or that the fault is attributable solely to the concerned blocktimer or media worker. Any agreement to the contrary shall be void

SEC. 13. Compliance

The DOLE shall monitor compliance with the provisions of this Act

SEC. 14. 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. 15. 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, provide a platform where media workers and employers can agree upon mutually beneficial policies that will promote the interests of the media industry, and serve as an avenue to express their aspirations, discuss their programs, or settle conflicts

SEC. 16. Implementing Rules and Regulations

Within ninety (90) days from the approval 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. 17. Separability Clause

If any part, section, or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect

SEC. 18. Repealing Clause

All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 19. Effectivity

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

Approved,