

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1816



Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The dissemination of accurate, timely, and relevant information is a cornerstone of good governance. It enables transparency, strengthens public trust, and promotes the meaningful participation of citizens in national and local affairs. In a country as geographically fragmented and culturally diverse as the Philippines, bridging the gap between the government and the grassroots remains both a challenge and a necessity.

The barangay, as the most immediate and accessible political unit, plays an important role in addressing this challenge. It is often the first point of contact for citizens seeking services, redress, or clarity about government programs.¹ According to Section 17(b) of Republic Act ("R.A.") No. 7160 (1991), also known as the Local Government Code of 1991, as amended to R.A. No. 8553 (1998), barangays are mandated to provide basic services and facilities, including an "information and reading center," which serves to enhance the intellectual and social development of barangay residents.² These centers are envisioned to offer access to books, newspapers, and other educational materials, and may also serve as venues for literacy programs, community meetings, and public information dissemination. In line with this, it is essential to appoint officers specifically responsible for ensuring that all information disseminated is effectively communicated, verified, and fact-checked.

In response, this measure seeks to institutionalize the position of a Barangay Information Officers ("BIOs") in every barangay. This initiative draws from the existing efforts of the Philippine Information Agency Region 6 ("PIA 6"), which has already pioneered the mobilization and capacity-building of BIOs as a network of trained community-based communicators. In partnership with the Department of the Interior and Local Government ("DILG"), PIA 6 has laid the groundwork for empowering local

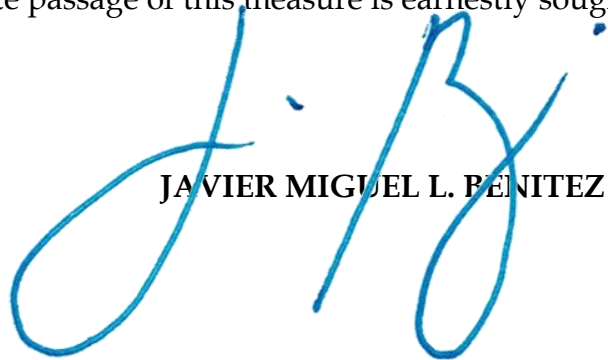
¹ De Lima, L. (2013) in Barangay Human Rights Action Center. <https://www.ombudsman.gov.ph/UNDP4/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/BHRAC-Legal-Bases.pdf>

² Republic Act No. 7160 (1991). Local Government Code of 1991. Amended as Republic Act No. 8553 (1998).

communicators to serve as both the mouthpieces of government programs and the ears of the national government as they relay community feedback and concerns.³ Through this proposed measure, the State aims to formalize and sustain these efforts by mandating the appointment of BIOs in every barangay nationwide.

The BIOs shall serve as the official conduit for government communication at the barangay level. Through establishing this formal position, the State affirms its commitment to participatory governance. It ensures that all citizens, regardless of location or background, will have access to important information that allows them to make informed decisions, access government services, and engage actively in civic life. Furthermore, this measure reinforces the constitutional principles of transparency, accountability, and people-centered development, recognizing communication as a two-way process essential to effective governance.

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



JAVIER MIGUEL L. PENITEZ

³ Barangay Information Officers' Network (BIO-N): A PIA Grassroots Communication effort with the Barangay Information Officers (BIOs) in Western Visayas. Philippine Information Agency VI

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**AN ACT MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF BARANGAY INFORMATION
OFFICER IN EVERY BARANGAY**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title* - This Act shall be known as “*Barangay Information Officer Act of 2025*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - The State shall ensure the designation of personnel responsible for effectively communicating government policies, programs, services, and other initiatives at the local and national levels to barangay constituents. To this end, each barangay shall appoint one (1) Barangay Information Officer (“BIO”), in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (“DILG”) and the Philippine Information Agency (“PIA”), and in accordance with the guidelines to be prescribed in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (“IRR”).

SEC. 3. *Qualifications* - The BIOs shall:

- (a) Be a Filipino citizen, at least eighteen (18) years old, and a resident of the barangay for at least three (3) consecutive years prior to appointment;
- (b) Hold at least a bachelor's degree from a recognized institution of higher learning;
- (c) Have completed at least sixteen (16) hours of relevant training in communication, public information, or media-related fields;
- (d) Have at least two (2) years of relevant experience in community work, public service, media, or information dissemination;
- (e) Demonstrate strong oral and written communication skills, with basic proficiency in digital and media tools; and

(f) Not hold any other elective position in government during their tenure.

SEC. 4. *Duties and Responsibilities* - The BIOs shall have the following duties and responsibilities, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Disseminate official government information materials and announcements;
- (b) Conduct or assist in the conduct of public information campaigns in the barangay;
- (c) Coordinate with the PIA, DILG, and other government agencies for updated content and training;
- (d) Relay feedback, concerns, and suggestions from residents to appropriate authorities; and
- (e) Uphold transparency and ensure that all information disseminated is verified, factual, and free from misinformation.

SEC. 5. *Capacity Building and Training* - The PIA, in collaboration with the DILG and other concerned agencies, shall regularly conduct training, capacity-building, and upskilling activities for the BIOs to enhance their communication competencies and ensure alignment with government messaging and protocols.

SEC. 6. *Institutional Support* - Barangays shall provide adequate and continuous logistical support to the BIOs, which may include access to barangay bulletin boards, sound systems, computer, community radio, and other relevant materials necessary for information dissemination. The Barangay shall conduct an annual performance evaluation of the BIOs, based on guidelines to be issued by the DILG and PIA.

SEC. 7. *Honorarium and Incentives* - Each barangay shall allocate an honorarium or incentive for the BIOs, subject to local budget availability and existing government accounting, budgeting, and auditing regulations.

SEC. 8. *Coordinating with Local Government Units (LGUs) and National Government Agencies (NGAs)* - The PIA in coordination with the DILG, shall serve as the lead agency for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this Act. They shall submit an annual report to Congress detailing the performance, challenges, and policy recommendations concerning the BIOs network.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DILG and the PIA, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Appropriations*. - The amount that may be necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the

concerned agencies. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Separability Clause* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 13. *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,