

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2180**



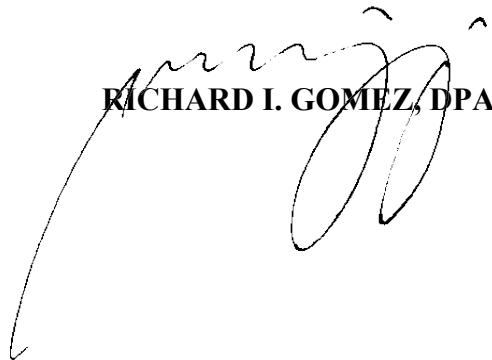
Introduced by Representative Richard I. Gomez, DPA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to renew the franchise granted to Wave Network, Inc. under Republic Act No. 8408 entitled “AN ACT GRANTING WAVE NETWORK, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS ANYWHERE IN THE PHILIPPINES WHERE FREQUENCIES AND/OR CHANNELS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING,” which was approved on November 23, 1997.

Wave Network, Inc. is a broadcasting network that currently serves the Eastern Visayas region. It has radio and television stations in Samar and Leyte Provinces—with transmission sites and studios located in the municipalities of Salcedo, Borongan, Dolores, and Catarman, and the cities of Catbalogan, Baybay, Ormoc and Tacloban. The network plays a crucial role in the timely dissemination of information on current events, traffic, weather reports, community service announcements and local news to the listening public. As a broadcasting entity, it has endeavored to deliver quality news and entertainment programs in the local dialect, knowing that radio remains to be the reliable and cost-effective medium that engages audiences of all demographic profiles.

In pursuit of extending Wave Network, Inc.’s commitment to public service, the immediate renewal of its franchise is sought to ensure that wholesome entertainment and balanced news reporting is made accessible to Filipinos in Region 8 and beyond.


RICHARD I. GOMEZ, DPA

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AN ACT
RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE
GRANTED TO WAVE NETWORK, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8408,
ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING WAVE NETWORK, INC. A FRANCHISE TO
CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND
TELEVISION STATIONS ANYWHERE IN THE PHILIPPINES WHERE
FREQUENCIES AND/OR CHANNELS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR RADIO AND
TELEVISION BROADCASTING"

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

SECTION 1. *Nature and Scope of Franchise.* – Subject to the provisions of the Constitution and applicable laws, rules and regulations, the franchise granted to Wave Network, Inc., hereunder referred to as the grantee, its successors or assignees, under Republic Act No. 8408, to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain for commercial purposes and in the public interest, radio and television broadcasting stations in the Philippines where frequencies and/or channels are still available, including digital television systems through microwave, satellite or whatever means, as well as the use of any new technology in television and radio systems such as Multichannel Multi- point Distribution Systems (MMDS), Local Multi-point Distribution Systems (LMDS), Microwave Cable Television (MCTV), Multi-point Video Distribution System (MVDS), Direct To Home Satellite System (DTH-S), Wireless Multi-media Network System (WMNS), Digital Television Broadcast (DTB), Next Generation Television Broadcast (NEXTGENTV), Interactive Television (ITV), with corresponding technological auxiliaries and facilities, special broadcast and other program and distribution services and relay stations in the Philippines, including synthetic and artificial intelligence, and other technology that may hereafter or in the

future be developed, is hereby renewed for another twenty-five (25) years from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 2. *Manner of Operation of Stations or Facilities.* – The stations or facilities of the grantee shall be constructed and operated in a manner as will, at most, result only in the minimum interference on the wavelengths or frequencies of existing stations or other stations which may be established by law, without in any way diminishing its own privilege to use its assigned wavelengths or frequencies and the quality of transmission or reception thereon as should maximize rendition of the grantee's services and/or the availability thereof.

SEC. 3. *Prior Approval of the National Telecommunications Commission.* – The grantee shall secure from the National Telecommunications Commissions (NTC) the appropriate permits and licenses for the construction and operation of its stations or facilities and shall not use any frequency in the radio/television spectrum without authorization from the NTC. The NTC, however, shall not unreasonably withhold or delay the grant of any such authority.

The grantee shall not dispose or lease its facilities except to entities with radio or television broadcasting franchise: Provided, That the grantee shall inform and secure written authorization to proceed from the NTC and report the transaction to the NTC within sixty (60) days after its completion: Provided, further, That the NTC shall determine the corresponding sanction for any violation of this provision.

In case of violation/s of any of the provisions of this franchise, the NTC shall have the authority to revoke or suspend, after due process, the permits, or licenses issued by the NTC pursuant to the franchise. NTC may recommend to Congress the revocation of the franchise if there are any violation/s of the provisions of the franchise.

SEC. 4. *Responsibility to the Public.* – The grantee shall provide, free of charge, adequate public service time which is reasonable and sufficient to enable the government, through the broadcasting stations or facilities of the grantee, to reach the pertinent populations or portions thereof, on important public issues and relay important public announcements and warnings concerning public emergencies and calamities, as necessity, urgency or law may require; provide at all times sound and balanced programming; promote public participation; assist in the functions of public information and education; conform to the ethics of honest enterprise; promote audience sensibility and empowerment including closed captioning; and not use its stations or facilities for the broadcasting of obscene or indecent language, speech, act or scene; or for the dissemination of deliberately false information or willful misrepresentation, to the detriment of public interest; or to incite, encourage, or assist in subversive or treasonable acts.

Public service time referred herein shall be equivalent to a maximum aggregate of ten (10%) of the paid commercials or advertisements which shall be allocated based on need to the Executive and Legislative branches, the Judiciary, Constitutional Commissions, and international humanitarian organizations duly recognized by statutes: Provided, That the NTC shall increase the public service time in case of extreme emergency or calamity. The NTC shall issue rules and regulations for this purpose, the effectivity of which shall commence upon applicability with other similarly situated broadcast network franchise holders.

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8370, the grantee shall allot a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the daily total airtime of each broadcasting network to child-friendly show/s within its regular programming.

SEC. 5. *Right of the Government.* – The radio spectrum is a finite resource that is part of the national patrimony, and the use thereof is a privilege conferred upon the grantee by the State and may be withdrawn any time after due process.

A special right is hereby reserved to the President of the Philippines, in times of war, rebellion, public peril, calamity, emergency, disaster, or disturbance of peace and order, to temporarily take over and operate the stations or facilities of the grantee; to temporarily suspend the operation of any station or facility in the interest of public safety, security and public welfare; or to authorize the temporary use and operation thereof by any agency of the government, upon due compensation to the grantee, for the use of the station or facilities during the period when these shall be so operated.

SEC. 6. *Term of Franchise.* – This franchise shall be in effect for a period of twenty- five (25) years from the effectivity of this Act, unless sooner revoked or cancelled. This franchise shall be deemed *ipso facto* revoked in the event the grantee fails to operate continuously for two (2) years.

SEC. 7. *Self-regulation by and Undertaking of the Grantee.* – The grantee shall not require any previous censorship of any speech, play, act or scene, or other matter to be broadcast from its stations, but if any such speech, play, act or scene, or other matter should constitute a violation of the law or infringement of a private right, the grantee shall be free from any liability, civil or criminal, for such speech, play, act or scene, or other matter: *Provided*, That the grantee, during any broadcast, shall cut off the airing of speech, play, act or scene, or other matter being broadcast if the tendency thereof is to propose and/or incite treason, rebellion or sedition; or the language used therein or the theme thereof is indecent or immoral: *Provided, further*, That willful failure to do so shall constitute a valid cause for the cancellation of this franchise.

SEC. 8. *Warranty in Favor of the National and Local Governments.* – The grantee shall hold the national, provincial, city, and municipal governments of the Philippines free from all claims, liabilities, demands, or actions arising out of accidents causing injury to persons or damage to properties, during the construction or operation of the stations of the grantee.

SEC. 9. *Commitment to Provide and Promote the Creation of Employment Opportunities.* – The grantee shall create employment opportunities and shall allow on-the-job trainings in their franchise operations: *Provided*, That priority shall be accorded to the residents of the place where their principal office is located: *Provided, further*, that the grantee shall follow the applicable labor standards and allowance entitlement under existing labor laws, rules and regulations and similar issuances: *Provided, finally*, That the employment opportunities or jobs created shall be reflected in the General Information Sheet (GIS) to be submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) annually.

SEC. 10. *Sale, Lease, Transfer, Grant of Usufruct, or Assignment of Franchise.* – The grantee shall not sell, lease, transfer, grant the usufruct of, nor assign this franchise or the rights and privileges acquired thereunder to any person, firm, company, corporation, or other commercial or legal entity, nor merge with any other corporation or entity, nor the controlling interest of the grantee be transferred, simultaneously or contemporaneously, to any person, firm, company, corporation, or entity without the prior approval of the Congress of the Philippines.

Congress shall be informed of any sale, lease, transfer, grant of usufruct, or assignment of franchise or the rights and privileges acquired thereunder, or of the merger or transfer of the controlling interest of the grantee, within sixty (60) days after the completion of the said transaction. Failure to report Congress such change of ownership shall render the franchise *ipso facto* revoked. Any person or entity to which this franchise is sold, transferred, or assigned shall be subject to the same conditions, terms, restrictions, and limitations of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Dispersal of Ownership.* – In accordance with the constitutional provision to encourage public participation in public utilities, the grantee shall offer to Filipino citizens at least thirty percent (30%) or a higher percentage that may hereafter be provided by law of its outstanding capital stock in any securities exchange in the Philippines within five (5) years from the commencement of its operations: *Provided*, That in cases where public offer of shares is not applicable, the grantee shall apply other methods of encouraging public participation by citizens and corporation operating public utilities as allowed by law. Noncompliance therewith shall render the franchise *ipso facto* revoked.

SEC. 12. *Reportorial Requirement.* – The grantee shall submit an annual report to the Congress of the Philippines, through the Committee on Legislative Franchises of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Public Services of the Senate, on its compliance with the

terms and conditions of the franchise and on its operations on or before April 30 of every year during the term of its franchise.

The annual report shall include an update on the roll-out, development, operation and/or expansion of business; audited financial statements; latest GIS officially submitted to the SEC, if applicable; certification of the NTC on the status of its permits and operations; and an update on the dispersal of ownership undertaking, if applicable.

SEC. 13. *Fine.* - Failure of the grantee to submit the requisite annual report to Congress shall be penalized by a fine of Five hundred pesos (P500.00) per working day of noncompliance. The fine shall be collected by the NTC from the delinquent franchise grantee separate from the reportorial penalties imposed by the NTC and the same shall be remitted to the Bureau of the Treasury.

SEC. 14. *Equality Clause.* – Any advantage, favor, privilege, exemption, or immunity granted under existing franchises, or which may hereafter be granted for radio and/or television broadcasting, upon prior review and approval of Congress, shall become part of this franchise and shall be accorded immediately and unconditionally to the herein grantee: *Provided*, That the foregoing shall neither apply to nor affect the provisions of broadcasting franchises concerning territorial coverage, the term, or the type of service authorized by the franchise.

SEC. 15. *Repealability and Non-exclusivity Clause.* – This franchise shall be subject to amendment, alteration, or repeal by the Congress of the Philippines when the public interest so requires and shall not be interpreted as an exclusive grant of the privileges herein provided for.

SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.* – If any of these sections or provisions of this Act is held invalid, all other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, resolutions, instructions, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 18. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,