

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3053**



Introduced by: Congressman **BIENVENIDO M. ABANTE, JR.**

AN ACT
GRANTING THE METROPOLITAN BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH,
STA. ANA, MANILA, INC. A FRANCHISE FOR RADIO AND
TELEVISION FREQUENCY TO ESTABLISH, CONSTRUCT,
INSTALL, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND
TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Since it was clothed with a legal personality, the Metropolitan Bible Baptist Church of Sta. Ana, Manila, Inc. (MBBC) has consistently, persistently, passionately, and boldly stood by its spiritual, social, and political convictions anchored on fundamental biblical doctrines, principles, and standards which are echoed in Republic Act No. 11897, otherwise known as the “**National Baptist Day Act**” whose enactment it spearheaded, through its Senior Pastor, Dr. Benny M. Abante, Jr. This law recognized Baptists in the Philippines for the more than century-old continuous pursuit of their evangelical mission to contribute to nation-building by establishing Christian Schools and instill academic excellence and build character in individuals, and churches that proclaim, teach and share biblical principles for the betterment of society.

Through the years, the MBBC which is an ever-expanding religious institution, duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on April 9, 1987, with seventy-two (72) local congregations and care stations strategically located in different places across the country, twenty-four (24) foreign congregations and care stations in different countries in different continents, two hundred thirty-five (235) local and foreign missionaries that it is supporting with individual works around the globe, seven (7) independent churches that it organized, and two thousand three hundred twenty-six (2,326)

Pastors and preachers throughout the Philippines and seventy-eight (78) pastors and preachers in foreign countries who are members of the Bible Believers League for

Morality and Democracy International that it continues to lead, has effectively pursued and is committed to pursue its Divine mandate to go to all nations and teach the observance of the commandments, statutes, and judgments of the Lord (*Matthew 28:19-20*), to be witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ unto the uttermost part of the earth (*Acts 1:8*) and to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (*Mark 16:15*).

The MBBE is committed to support and promote the Constitutionally-mandated State policies on the recognition of the vital role of the youth in nation-building and the promotion and protection of their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being" (*Sec. 13, Art. II, Constitution*) as well the mandate of all educational institutions to teach the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthen ethical and spiritual values, and develop moral character and personal discipline (*Secs. 3[1] and [2], Art. XIV, Constitution*).

But pursuing its mandate and supporting and promoting such State policies would be more effective, and more areas could be covered and more souls could be reached with radio and television broadcast stations. The MBBC believes that, consistent with the Preamble of our Constitution wherein we declared that as a sovereign people we are imploring the aid of **Almighty God** in order to build a just and humane society and establish a government that shall embody our ideals and aspirations, and promotes the common good, disseminating the word of God, and biblical principles and standards especially on matters of governance, human and family relations, and discipline which are indispensable for a healthy nation and a joyful people is imperative. Immorality, lack of discipline, corruption, illegal drugs, disrespect to law, authority, and parents, and poverty, among others, continue to engulf our country, wrecking families, destroying relationships, sowing disorder, and slowing down our growth and advancement as a nation. The MBBE believes that the best and long-term solution to these problems and evils of society and government is to teach ourselves and our people about God and godly principles and standards of living and governance.

Broadcasting, whose signals surpass geographical and national boundaries, enjoys the highest patronage among the electronic media forms, with every Filipino home having either a radio or a television, or both appliances. It is a powerful medium for promoting truth, exposing evil, and shaping our country's cultural, social, economic, and political growth and development, as broadcasting has the ability to send information to any destination, even in real-time. The MBBC believes that the maintenance of sufficient and efficient radio and television networks reach as many people as possible with the end in view of actively participating in the growth and development of our nation and our people and of knowing how to live right, thus eradicating, or at least minimizing the spiritual, social, political and economic evils of our society. The MBBC is, therefore, offering her hand to help the government in this respect, hence, its desire to be granted a legislative franchise for radio and television frequency and to establish, construct, install, and operate radio and television broadcasting stations in the Philippines, believing, thus it continues to declare

throughout our land and beyond our shores without fear or favor, that - "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 *Ti.* 3:16); "Righteousness exalteth a nation a nation: But sin is a reproach to any people" (*Pr.* 14:34); "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: But when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn" (*Pr.* 29:2); and "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; And the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance" (*Ps.* 33:12).

For the good of our country and our people, the immediate passage of this Bill is, therefore, earnestly requested.



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Be it enacted by the Senate and the 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 Metropolitan Bible Baptist Church of Sta. Manila, Inc., herein referred to as the “grantee”, its successors or assigns, is hereby granted a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain, at such places throughout the Philippines as the grantee may select and as the responsible agency or agencies of the government may approve, radio and television broadcasting stations for non-commercial purposes and in the public interest, through microwave, satellite or whatever means including the use of any new technologies in television and radio systems, with the corresponding technological auxiliaries or facilities, special broadcast and other broadcast distribution services and relay stations.

SEC. 2. *Manner of Operation of Stations or Facilities.* — The stations or facilities of the grantee shall be constructed in a manner as will, at most, result only in the minimum interference on the wavelengths or frequencies of the other existing facilities and station or stations that may have been established by law without in any way diminishing its own right to use its selected wavelengths or frequencies and the quality of transmission or reception thereon as should maximize the 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 Commission the appropriate permits and licenses for its station and shall not use any frequency in the television or radio spectrum without having been authorized by the Commission. The Commission, however, shall not unreasonably withhold or delay the grant of any such authority.

SEC. 4. *Right of Government.* — A special right is hereby reserved to the President of the Philippines, in times of rebellion, public peril, calamity, emergency, disaster, or disturbance of peace and order, to temporarily take over and operate the stations of the grantee, to temporarily suspend the operation of any station 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 said stations for the said reasons during the period when they shall be so operated.

SEC. 5. *Responsibility to the Public.* — The grantee shall provide adequate public service time to enable the government, through the said broadcasting stations, to reach the population on important public issues; provide at all times sound and balanced programming; promote public participation such as in community programming; assist in the functions of public information and education; conform to the ethics of honest enterprise; and not use its stations for the broadcasting of obscene and indecent language, speech, act or scene, or for the dissemination of deliberately false information or willful misrepresentation to the detriment of the public interest, or to incite, encourage, or assist in subversive or treasonable acts.

SEC. 6. *Self-regulation by and Undertaking of Grantee.* — The grantee shall ensure that any speech, play, act or scene, or other matter to be broadcast and/or telecast from its stations is in accordance with its faith and conforms to the biblical doctrines, principles, and standards that it believes in provided, that the grantee, during any broadcast and/or telecast, shall cut off from the air the speech, play, act or scene, or other matter being broadcast and/or telecast if such has the tendency to propose and/or incite treason, rebellion or sedition or other forms of violence, disregard of or disobedience to the duly-constituted authorities, or is immoral or indecent as it may determine.

SEC. 7. *Warranty in Favor of National and Local Governments.* — The grantee shall hold the national and local government units of the Philippines harmless from all claims, accounts, demands, or actions arising out of accidents or injuries, whether to property or to persons, caused by the construction or operation of the stations of the grantee.

SEC. 8. *Sale, Lease, Transfer, Usufruct, etc.* — The grantee shall not lease, transfer, grant the usufruct of, sell, nor assign this franchise or the rights and privileges acquired thereunder to any person, firm, company, corporation, or other commercial or legal entity, without written notice to the Congress of the Philippines. Any person

or entity to which this franchise is sold, transferred, or assigned shall be subject to the same conditions, terms, and limitations provided in this Act.

SEC. 9. *Term of Franchise.* — (a) This franchise shall be for a term of twenty-five (25) years from the date the first of its stations shall be placed in operation and the National Telecommunications Communications shall have allotted to the grantee the frequencies and wavelengths to be used thereunder and determined the stations to and from which each frequency and wavelength may be used, and shall have issued to the grantee a license for such use.

(b) The National Telecommunications Commission, on reasonable notice to the grantee, which shall have the right to be heard, may change, cancel, or modify, in whole or in part, any of the allotments of frequencies or wavelengths to be used. It may take such action: (1) whenever in its judgment such frequencies and wavelengths have been used, or there is a danger that they will be used by the grantee to impair electrical communications, stifle competition, or obtain a monopoly in electrical communication, or to otherwise violate the laws or public policy of the Republic of the Philippines; (2) whenever in its judgment the public interests of the Republic of the Philippines require that such frequencies or wavelengths should be used by the Government of the Philippines; and (3) whenever in its judgment, the public interests of the Philippines so require.

SEC. 10. *Acceptance and Compliance.* — Acceptance of this franchise shall be given in writing to Congress within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, after which acceptance, the grantee may now exercise the privileges granted under this Act.

SEC. 11. *General Broadcast Policy Law.* — The grantee shall comply with general broadcast policy laws enacted or that may hereafter be enacted by Congress as well as rules and regulations adopted thereunder.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* — Any provision of decrees, administrative orders, laws, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act is hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* - The provisions of this Act are hereby deemed separable. If any provision thereof is declared invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the other provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette and/or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved.