

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3111



Introduced by Representative CHING BERNOS

AN ACT

PROMOTING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEO-ETHNIC PHILIPPINE TEXTILE AND HANDLOOM WEAVING INDUSTRY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The art of handloom weaving is an enduring symbol of Filipino identity, deeply rooted in the cultural heritage and daily lives of many indigenous and rural communities. It is more than just a craft—it is a powerful expression of our people's history, spirituality, and creativity, with each textile telling the story of its origin.

In Northern Luzon, handloom weaving thrives among various ethnolinguistic groups, each with its own distinct weaving tradition. In Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur, the iconic inabel is known for its durability and intricate patterns, traditionally woven by Ilocos women and used for blankets, clothing, and ceremonial wear. In the Cordillera region, the Kalinga, Ifugao, and Apayao peoples produce vibrant, geometrically patterned textiles that are deeply symbolic—representing bravery, fertility, and ancestral lineage. Their traditional garments, such as the *wanes* (loincloth) and *tapis* (wraparound skirts), are still worn during rituals and community events. In the Province of Abra, handloom weaving of abel remains an integral part of local identity, particularly in Barangay Bulbulala in La Paz, where a community of loom weavers has passed the tradition down through generations. The patterns used by Abreño weavers are known for their elegant symmetry and cultural significance.

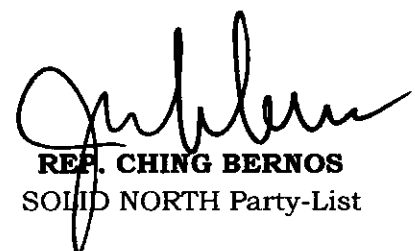
Across these communities, weaving serves both cultural and economic purposes. Traditionally a means of artistic expression and spiritual storytelling, handloom weaving has also become a vital source of livelihood, particularly for rural women. According to the British Council's report, *"Crafting Futures: Sustaining Handloom Weaving in the Philippines,"* there are over 450 weaving groups nationwide—many of them contributing to sustainable local economies and women-led enterprises.

However, despite the resilience of this tradition, the handloom weaving industry continues to face multiple challenges. The effects of globalization, the aging of weavers, and limited transmission of skills to younger generations threaten its continuity. Additional barriers include: inconsistent access to quality raw materials, limited market access and promotion, inadequate infrastructure support, and lack of institutional protection and development programs. If left unaddressed, these challenges may lead to the gradual disappearance of this invaluable cultural practice.

This proposed measure therefore seeks to preserve, support, and institutionalize the Philippine handloom weaving industry. It aims to recognize weaving as intangible cultural heritage; provide sustained government support for skills transmission, production, innovation, and marketing; empower weavers—especially women—with access to livelihood, training, infrastructure, and social protection; and, promote community-based tourism and creative industries as vehicles for cultural and economic sustainability.

By strengthening the handloom weaving industry, we not only protect the cultural fabric of Northern Luzon and the wider Philippines, but also weave a future of dignity, creativity, and opportunity for the next generations of Filipino artisans.

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



REP. CHING BERNOS
SOLID NORTH Party-List

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

1 SECTION. 1. **Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the “*Philippine Neo-*
2 *Ethnic Textile Development Act.*”

3 SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State
4 to instill patriotism and nationalism among the Filipino people, with emphasis on
5 the youth, by fostering an abiding sense of loyalty to the Republic and deep
6 appreciation of the nation’s unique cultural heritage. The State recognizes the
7 essential role of the education system in inculcating the values of responsible
8 citizenship, national identity, and cultural pride, and shall endeavor to promote the
9 preservation, development, and propagation of Philippine traditions as part of the
10 formation of civic virtues.

11 Pursuant to this policy, the State shall undertake appropriate measures to
12 preserve, promote, and support indigenous artistic expressions—including, but not
13 limited to, handloom weaving and the production of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles—
14 as integral components of the national cultural patrimony. These textiles, which
15 reinterpret traditional designs for contemporary use while preserving their cultural

1 roots, shall be recognized as vital expressions of Filipino identity and as tools for
2 cultural continuity.

3 In furtherance thereof, the preferential use of locally manufactured goods—
4 particularly those utilizing indigenous materials, traditional knowledge systems,
5 neo-ethnic design innovations, and local technologies—shall be encouraged in both
6 public and private spheres. These efforts shall aim not only to safeguard cultural
7 heritage, but also to support rural livelihoods, strengthen culture-based industries,
8 and contribute to inclusive national development.

9 SEC. 3. **Definition of Terms.** - For purposes of this Act, the following terms
10 are hereby defined as follows:

- 11 a. *Handloom* - refers to a device used in weaving fabrics by holding the
12 warp threads under tension to facilitate the interweaving of the weft
13 threads;
- 14 b. *Handloom weaving industry* - composed of the interrelated and
15 interconnected component supply chain realizing the production of
16 textiles through the handloom;
- 17 c. *Neo-ethnic Philippines textiles* - refers to textiles made of or containing
18 natural or indigenous materials, sourced and/or produced in the
19 Philippines using updated, relevant, and green scientific and
20 technological approaches and innovations; while integrating and/or
21 retaining traditional patterns, designs, icons, motifs and/or
22 approaches, and thus, contribute to livelihood generation and in
23 sustaining the local handloom weaving and textile heritage.

24 SEC. 4. **Objectives.** — This Act shall have the following objectives:

- 25 a. To recognize and support the handloom weaving industry and neo-
26 ethnic textile production as essential elements of the country's
27 intangible cultural heritage;
- 28 b. To ensure the sustainability and economic viability of traditional
29 weaving communities through training, access to markets, financing,
30 and infrastructure support;
- 31 c. To promote cultural innovation through the integration of traditional
32 and neo-ethnic designs in commercial, ceremonial, and institutional
33 settings;

- d. To create a national registry of recognized weaving communities, patterns, and techniques, in collaboration with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and concerned agencies;
- e. To integrate the appreciation and use of Philippine indigenous and neo-ethnic textiles in education, government functions, and national events; and
- f. To protect indigenous intellectual property and promote ethical collaboration between designers, brands, and cultural communities.

SEC. 5. ***Establishment of the National Neo-Ethnic Textile Development Council.*** - The National Neo-Ethnic Textile Development Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, shall be composed of the following agencies:

- a. Department of Science and Technology;
- b. Department of Trade and Industry;
- c. National Commission for Culture and the Arts;
- d. National Commission on Indigenous Peoples;
- e. Commission on Higher Education;
- f. Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;
- g. Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority;
- h. Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines; and
- i. Three (3) representatives of accredited handloom weaving and textile industry associations;

The heads of offices of the aforementioned agencies, except item (i), may appoint alternates to represent the members of the Council in their meetings.

SEC. 6. ***The National Neo-Ethnic Textile Development Policy.*** - The Council shall formulate one (1) year after it is created, the National Neo-Ethnic Textile Development Policy. This shall include, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Formulation of the Neo-Ethnic Textile Industry Roadmap;
- b. Innovations in weaving design and engineering;
- c. Technical support mechanism for sustainable weaving activities;
- d. Development and promotion of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles;
- e. Development of Philippine Standards for Handloom Woven Textiles;
- f. Intellectual property protection framework for neo-ethnic Philippine textiles;

- 1 g. Development of a database of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles;
- 2 h. Development of textile-related technical and skills and vocational
- 3 programs; and
- 4 i. Education and training.

5 SEC. 7. **Academic Regalia from Neo-Ethnic Philippine Textiles.** – As a
6 means to elevate the dignity and visibility of Philippine culture within formal
7 institutions, the use of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles in the academic regalia of all
8 State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) is
9 hereby prescribed. The SUCs and LUCs shall promote the continuing development
10 of culture-based industries, sustain the livelihoods of local artisan communities, and
11 advance inclusive economic growth by generating employment rooted in cultural
12 heritage.

13 SEC. 8. **Appropriations.** - The amount of Ten Million Pesos (Php
14 10,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury
15 for the initial implementation of this Act. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary
16 for the implementation of this Act shall be appropriated as a distinct and separate
17 item.

18 SEC. 9. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within sixty (60) days from
19 the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Science and Technology and the
20 Department of Trade and Industry shall promulgate implementing rules and
21 regulations of this Act.

22 SEC. 10. **Separability Clause.** - If any provision or part thereof is held invalid
23 or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected
24 shall remain valid and subsisting.

25 SEC. 11. **Repealing Clause.** - Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
26 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation
27 contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed,
28 modified, or amended accordingly.

29 SEC. 12. **Effectivity Clause.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
30 its publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,