

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **3954**

Introduced by Representative **MARLYN L. PRIMICIAS-AGABAS**



EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is a nation deeply enriched by its cultural diversity, where traditions, customs, and celebrations blend to create a vibrant national identity. Among these, Chinese New Year stands out as one of the most significant and widely observed events, particularly by the Filipino-Chinese community, which has played an integral role in the country's economic, social, and cultural landscape for centuries. Recognizing their contributions is not only an act of inclusivity, but also an affirmation of the shared history that has shaped our nation.

The Filipino-Chinese community, now a sizable part of the population, has long been a vital contributor to the country's progress. Their businesses have driven economic growth, provided millions of jobs, and fostered vibrant industries. Historically, the Chinese people have been integral to Philippine society since before Spanish colonization, engaging in trade and cultural exchange. Over the years, they have not only contributed to the economy but have also voluntarily assimilated into Filipino society, embracing our values and traditions.

Beyond their economic and cultural impact, the Filipino-Chinese have shown their commitment to the country in the most profound ways. They fought alongside Filipinos in the struggle for independence against Spain in 1896-1898, against the Americans in 1899, and against the Japanese in 1941-1945. Their sacrifices in these battles for freedom underscore the depth of their connection to our nation's history and identity.

In the spirit of national unity and mutual respect, this bill seeks to declare Chinese New Year's Day a Special Non-Working Public Holiday across the entire Philippines. Though this celebration has been a long-standing tradition within the Filipino-Chinese community, its formal recognition by the government would provide all Filipinos an opportunity to learn about, honor, and participate in this meaningful cultural event.

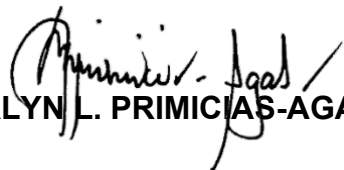
By acknowledging Chinese New Year as a holiday, the government not only celebrates the values of renewal, prosperity, and family central to the celebration, but also recognizes the ongoing importance of the Filipino-Chinese community in shaping

our country. It is a simple yet profound gesture that acknowledges their contributions and strengthens our collective national identity.

Additionally, recognizing Chinese New Year as a public holiday serves as a means to preserve and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Chinese-Filipino community. It provides an opportunity for both Chinese and non-Chinese Filipinos to embrace the multicultural nature of our society and deepen understanding of one another's traditions.

In conclusion, the declaration of Chinese New Year as a Special Non-Working Public Holiday aligns with the principles of inclusivity, cultural recognition, and national unity. It is a step toward fostering a more harmonious and respectful society, where the contributions of every community are acknowledged and celebrated.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly requested.


MARLYN L. PRIMICIAS-AGABAS

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AN ACT
DECLARING THE CHINESE NEW YEAR'S DAY A SPECIAL NON-WORKING
PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN THE PHILIPPINES

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

Section 1. The annual celebration of the Chinese New Year's Day in the Philippines is hereby declared a special non-working holiday in the entire country.

Section 2. The Department of Labor and Employment and the Civil Service Commission, in consultation with the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Inc., shall determine and declare the date of the Chinese New Year's Day every year.

Section 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,