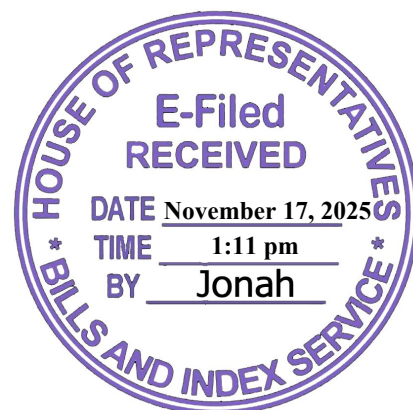


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6042



Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is home to diverse indigenous and traditional writing systems that embody living knowledge, identity, and artistry across communities. These scripts are part of our intangible cultural heritage, yet many face the risks of disuse, loss of bearers, and inadequate documentation.

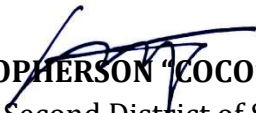
This measure operationalizes the State's cultural policy to safeguard and popularize heritage by: (1) recognizing indigenous and traditional writing systems as cultural treasures; (2) directing education and public programming to raise awareness and use; (3) mandating documentation, archiving, digitization, and PRCP inscription; and (4) assigning clear agency roles—NCCA as lead for policy and coordination, with KWF for language and orthography, and DepEd/CHED/TESDA for curriculum and teacher training—implemented with community participation and respect for cultural protocols, consistent with the National Cultural Heritage Act framework.

"The State shall foster the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of a Filipino national culture based on the principle of unity in diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual expression." — IRR of RA 10066 (2012)

Republic Act No. 10066 affirms protection, conservation, and promotion of cultural heritage and empowers cultural agencies to act within delineated mandates, while its IRR calls for integrating cultural education nationwide and maintaining the Philippine Registry of Cultural Property to inventory heritage assets, including intangible heritage such as scripts, their knowledge, and associated materials (RA 10066 (2010); IRR of RA 10066 (2012)). Republic Act No. 11961 further strengthens cultural mapping and heritage education, supporting local documentation and community-led safeguarding efforts (RA 11961 (2023)).

By institutionalizing promotion, protection, preservation, and conservation of Philippine indigenous and traditional writing systems under the existing cultural heritage architecture, this bill advances cultural continuity, inclusivity, and national pride, while enabling communities and learners to engage with these scripts responsibly and creatively.

In view of the foregoing, **ug sa ngalan sa SERBISYONG TINUORAY**, the undersigned respectfully requests the immediate passage of this measure.


CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte

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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 6042

Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP

AN ACT
PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL WRITING
SYSTEMS AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND
CONSERVATION

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. — This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems Act”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is the policy of the State to preserve, enrich, and ensure the dynamic evolution of Filipino culture, recognizing unity in diversity and the free flowering of artistic and intellectual expression. To this end, the State shall promote, protect, preserve, and conserve Philippine indigenous and traditional writing systems as part of the nation’s intangible cultural heritage and cultural treasures, consistent with Republic Act No. 10066, otherwise known as the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009” and its implementing rules and regulations.

SECTION 3. Definitions. — For purposes of this Act:

- (a) Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems refer to historically rooted scripts and orthographic traditions developed and/or maintained by Philippine communities and cultural groups, including their associated knowledge, skills, and materials, recognized as intangible cultural heritage under RA 10066.

(b) Cultural Agencies refer to the national cultural agencies and their delineated responsibilities under RA 10066 and its IRR.

(c) Philippine Registry of Cultural Property (PRCP) refers to the inventory of all cultural properties of the Philippines maintained under RA 10066.

SECTION 4. Scope and Principles. — The promotion and safeguarding of indigenous and traditional writing systems shall:

(a) Respect community ownership, custodianship, and the right to participate in decisions affecting their scripts and associated knowledge;

(b) Encourage use, transmission, and innovation by communities and bearers, without imposing mandatory replacement of existing official scripts in government communications or education;

(c) Align with cultural agency mandates and existing protections under RA 10066, including the power to prevent acts that endanger cultural properties.

SECTION 5. Promotion Measures. — To generate awareness and appreciation, the following are hereby institutionalized:

(a) Education Integration. DepEd, CHED, and TESDA shall integrate, where pedagogically appropriate, content on indigenous and traditional writing systems into curricula, electives, or specialized courses, with regional contextualization and sensitivity to the local scripts of host communities, consistent with Rule XI of the IRR of RA 10066.

(b) Public Programs. DepEd, CHED, TESDA, LGUs, and cultural agencies shall conduct seminars, symposia, exhibits, and community-led demonstrations, especially during Buwan ng Wika and other cultural observances.

(c) Materials Development. The KWF, in coordination with communities and experts, shall support development of primers, orthography guides, and teacher training resources, with community validation.

(d) Digital Access. The NCCA shall coordinate with relevant agencies to support encoding in digital standards, digitization of extant materials, and open-access repositories with appropriate cultural protocols.

SECTION 6. Protection, Preservation, and Conservation. —

- (a) **Lead Agency.** The NCCA shall lead policy formulation and coordination for the protection, preservation, and conservation of indigenous and traditional writing systems as intangible cultural heritage, in accordance with RA 10066 and its IRR.
- (b) **Cultural Agency Roles.** The KWF shall provide technical assistance on language and orthography; the National Museum and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines shall address tangible artifacts, documents, or historically significant inscriptions under their mandates; and other cultural agencies shall act within their delineated areas under Rule IX of the IRR.
- (c) **PRCP Inscription.** The NCCA shall, in partnership with concerned cultural agencies and communities, facilitate the appropriate inscription of indigenous and traditional writing systems and significant associated objects, documents, and sites in the PRCP.
- (d) **Documentation and Archives.** The NCCA, with cultural agencies and SUCs/HEIs, shall support systematic documentation, preservation of oral histories, digitization, and secure archiving of materials relating to the scripts, subject to culturally appropriate access protocols.
- (e) **Conservation Standards.** Conservation activities shall follow professional standards and ethical guidelines recognized by the cultural agencies, including risk reduction for fragile artifacts and inscriptions.

SECTION 7. Community Participation and Safeguards. — All programs under this Act shall be community-led or community-validated, with mechanisms for prior consultation, culturally appropriate consent, co-authorship or attribution in publications, and equitable benefit-sharing for community knowledge bearers. Outputs intended for public dissemination shall undergo community review for accuracy and cultural sensitivity.

SECTION 8. Coordination and Enforcement. —

- (a) **Interagency Coordination.** The NCCA shall convene a standing Interagency and Community Advisory Panel composed of the NCCA, KWF, cultural agencies, DepEd, CHED, TESDA, LGU representatives, community elders/knowledge bearers, and experts to guide implementation.

- (b) **Protective Actions.** Acts that destroy, damage, or endanger cultural properties associated with writing systems shall be addressed under RA 10066 and its IRR, including the issuance of cease-and-desist orders and other remedies by competent cultural agencies, without prejudice to applicable criminal, civil, or administrative liabilities.

SECTION 9. Record-Keeping and Reporting. — The NCCA shall maintain an updated inventory of programs, collections, repositories, and PRCP inscriptions pertaining to indigenous and traditional writing systems, and submit an annual report to Congress on implementation progress, community partnerships, and recommendations.

SECTION 10. Support for Research and Capacity Building. — The NCCA, KWF, and cultural agencies, in collaboration with SUCs/HEIs and LGUs, shall:

- (a) Support research grants, fellowships, and training for teachers, conservators, and community archivists;
- (b) Develop guidelines for academic and commercial use that ensure attribution, community benefit, and cultural sensitivity;
- (c) Encourage local crafts and enterprises that respectfully feature the scripts, consistent with heritage laws.

SECTION 11. Funding. — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the concerned agencies. Thereafter, such amounts as may be necessary shall be included in their respective budgets in the annual General Appropriations Act. Donations and grants for programs under this Act may be received pursuant to existing laws and shall, where applicable, enjoy incentives authorized under RA 10066.

SECTION 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). — Within ninety (90) days from effectivity, the NCCA shall, in coordination with the KWF, DepEd, CHED, TESDA, the cultural agencies, and with meaningful participation of communities and knowledge bearers, promulgate the IRR to carry out this Act, harmonized with RA 10066 and its IRR.

SECTION 13. Separability Clause. — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 14. Repealing Clause. — All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby

repealed or modified accordingly. Nothing herein shall be construed to diminish protections already available under RA 10066 and its IRR.

SECTION 15. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,