



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
House of Representatives
CONSTITUTION HILLS, QUEZON CITY

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **6907**



**AN ACT PROMOTING, PROTECTING, AND SUPPORTING THE PHILIPPINE
HANDLOOM WEAVING SECTOR, STRENGTHENING THE RIGHTS AND
WELFARE OF FILIPINO WEAVERS, SAFEGUARDING TRADITIONAL TEXTILE
DESIGNS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR**

Introduced by Representative SHIRLYN L. BAÑAS-NOGRALES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Traditional handloom weaving is a vital expression of Filipino culture, identity, and heritage. It sustains the livelihoods of thousands of Filipino weavers – especially women and indigenous communities – whose craftsmanship preserves centuries-old knowledge, designs, and cultural narratives.

Today, this heritage stands at a critical juncture. While appreciation for handloom-woven textiles has grown, weaving communities continue to face mounting threats that endanger both their economic survival and the cultural integrity of their work. The proliferation of machine-made replicas, sublimation-printed textiles, and counterfeit designs has flooded markets with cheap substitutes that devalue authentic craftsmanship and erode indigenous intellectual property. These challenges are compounded by structural barriers such as inequitable market access, inadequate policy protection, limited and often costly access to natural fibers, and the absence of formal recognition of weavers as workers, artists, and bearers of cultural tradition.

These concerns were echoed in the Weavers' Manifesto released during the 1st Philippine Handloom Weaving Festival organized by the DOST-PTRI on 22 November 2025. The manifesto consolidates eight critical calls: stopping counterfeit woven replicas; using handwoven textiles in government and school uniforms; prohibiting sublimation printing and printed substitutes marketed as authentic weaves; improving access to cotton and natural fiber yarns; expanding training opportunities for the youth; unifying Philippine weavers; strengthening intellectual property and sector policies; and respecting the rights and welfare of weavers, particularly women.

To address these pressing concerns, this measure establishes clear safeguards – backed by prohibitions and corresponding penalties – against the misuse, misappropriation, and commercial exploitation of traditional weaving designs and knowledge. These penalties are necessary to:

1. Deter bad actors who profit from cultural appropriation without consent or fair compensation;
2. Protect the income, dignity, and livelihoods of traditional weavers facing unfair competition;

3. Preserve the cultural integrity of traditional patterns and motifs from distortion and mass production; and
4. Promote sustainable, respectful, and community-centered stewardship of Filipino cultural heritage.

Weaving is not merely a craft – it is a living tradition that strengthens community identity, cultural continuity, and local economies. Many weaving communities attest that their work has uplifted families, supported education, and empowered women. By strengthening accountability mechanisms and supporting weavers' rights, this Bill ensures that traditional handloom weaving remains a thriving, protected, and honored heritage for generations to come.

In view of the foregoing, the early passage of this Bill is earnestly sought.


SHIRLYN L. BAÑAS-NOGRALES



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*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 Handloom
Weaving Industry Protection and Development Act.*”

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State affirms that traditional handloom weaving is a vital expression of Filipino culture, identity, and heritage, and therefore must be safeguarded and promoted. To this end, the State commits to ensuring decent work, fair compensation, and sustainable livelihood opportunities for Filipino weavers, with particular attention to women and indigenous communities who have long carried this cultural tradition. It shall protect traditional weaving designs and knowledge from misuse, misappropriation, sublimation printing, and machine-made imitations marketed as authentic weaves. The State shall also work to strengthen local textile production by expanding weavers’ access to natural fibers, yarns, training programs, and equitable market opportunities. Finally, it shall support the preservation and transmission of weaving traditions to future generations, recognizing their enduring cultural and economic value to the nation.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a.) Handloom-woven textile – any fabric produced manually using traditional or modern looms operated without automation or mechanization.
- b.) Machine-made woven replica – textile products produced using automated or mechanical weaving devices intended to imitate handloom weaving.
- c.) Printed substitute/sublimation-printed textile – any fabric with printed designs mimicking handwoven patterns.
- d.) Weaver – an individual who engages in handloom weaving, whether traditional or contemporary, and may include members of indigenous cultural communities.
- e.) Traditional weaving designs – patterns, motifs, or textile structures that originate from communities, passed down through generations.
- f.) Weaving community – any organized group engaged in the production, training, or promotion of handloom weaving.

Section 4. Philippine Handloom Weaving Industry Development Program. –

There is hereby established a national program to develop, strengthen, and protect the Philippine handloom weaving industry. The program shall include:

- a.) Provision of access to natural fiber yarns and raw materials;
- b.) Establishment of regional fiber banks and yarn depots;
- c.) Capacity-building and training for weavers, trainers, and the youth;
- d.) Technology upgrading support for handloom equipment;
- e.) Grants for community weaving centers;
- f.) Incentives for local textile production and marketing; and
- g.) Programs promoting weaving as a viable cultural, artistic, and economic sector.

The Department of Science and Technology–Philippine Textile Research Institute (DOST-PTRI) shall serve as the lead implementing agency.

Section 5. Mandatory Use of Handloom-Woven Textiles in Government Uniforms. – All national government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations, local government units, public schools, and state universities and colleges shall use authentic handloom-woven textiles in at least ten percent (10%) of their uniform components, subject to availability and cost-efficiency.

The percentage may increase upon recommendation of DOST-PTRI and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

Section 6. Prohibition on Counterfeit and Printed Substitutes. – The following acts are hereby prohibited:

- a.) Mislabeling printed or machine-made textiles as “handwoven” or “authentic” Philippine weave;
- b.) Using traditional weaving designs for sublimation printing or printed replicas without Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of the indigenous cultural community concerned; or
- c.) Importation, distribution, or commercial sale of textiles falsely marketed as handloom-woven.

Section 7. Intellectual Property and Cultural Protection. – The Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL), in coordination with NCCA, NCIP, and DOST-PTRI, shall:

- a.) Establish a Traditional Weaving Design Registry;
- b.) Facilitate collective trademarks, geographical indications, and community copyrights for weaving groups;
- c.) Ensure protection from unauthorized reproduction, printing, or imitation;
- d.) Provide legal assistance to weavers in asserting their IP rights.

Section 8. Recognition and Rights of Weavers. – Weavers shall be recognized as:

- a.) Workers entitled to just compensation, occupational health and safety standards, and social protection;
- b.) Artists and cultural bearers entitled to moral rights, authorship, and recognition; and
- c.) Cultural community members whose identities and traditions must be respected.

Government agencies shall support women weavers and indigenous weaving communities as priority beneficiaries.

Section 9. National Weavers Council. – A National Weavers Council is hereby created to unify weaving groups nationwide. It shall be composed of:

- a.) DOST-PTRI (Chair)
- b.) National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)
- c.) Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
- d.) Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)
- e.) National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)
- f.) Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA)
- g.) Representatives of weavers from Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, and Bangsamoro

The Council shall coordinate all policy-making, sectoral planning, and development strategies for the industry.

Section 10. Education, Training, and Youth Engagement. – The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), DepEd, CHED, and DOST-PTRI shall develop:

- a.) Weaving skills curricula;
- b.) Apprenticeship and certification programs;
- c.) Youth scholarships for textile science, weaving arts, and cultural preservation;
- d.) Community-based learning hubs for weaving.

Section 11. Funding. – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged to the current appropriations of the concerned agencies. Thereafter, such amounts as may be needed shall be included in the annual national budget.

Section 12. Penalties. – Any person, corporation, partnership, organization, or entity that violates any provision of this Act shall be subject to the following penalties, without prejudice to civil, administrative, or criminal liability under existing laws:

- a.) Any person who knowingly markets, sells, distributes, or labels machine-made, printed, or mass-produced textiles as “handloom-woven,” “authentic weave,” or any term implying traditional craftsmanship shall be liable to:
 - (1.) A fine of ₱50,000.00 to ₱250,000.00 for each violation;
 - (2.) Confiscation of misrepresented goods; and
 - (3.) Suspension or revocation of business permits for repeated offenses.

These acts shall also constitute unfair or deceptive sales practices under the Consumer Act of the Philippines (R.A. 7394).

- b.) The reproduction, sublimation printing, digital replication, commercialization, or imitation of traditional weaving designs without the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of the concerned indigenous cultural community shall be penalized as follows:
 - (1.) A fine of ₱100,000.00 to ₱500,000.00;
 - (2.) Payment of damages to the affected community, including cultural damages as recognized under R.A. 8371 (IPRA);

- (3.) Immediate cease-and-desist order on the infringing activity; and
- (4.) Forfeiture of equipment, materials, or products used in the violation.

If the act constitutes infringement under the Intellectual Property Code (R.A. 8293), appropriate criminal and civil actions may likewise be instituted.

- c.) Any person or entity that imports, distributes, or sells printed or machine-made textiles falsely represented as handloom-woven shall be liable to:
 - (1.) A fine of ₱200,000.00 to ₱1,000,000.00;
 - (2.) Confiscation and destruction of counterfeit or misrepresented goods; and
 - (3.) Suspension or cancellation of importation and business licenses.

Customs enforcement shall be coordinated with the Bureau of Customs under R.A. 10863 (CMTA).

- d.) Corporate Liability. – When the offender is a corporation, partnership, or association, the penalty shall be imposed upon its responsible officers, including the president, general manager, managing partner, or officers who authorized, directed, or tolerated the unlawful act.
- e.) Liability of Public Officials. – Any public officer or employee who knowingly tolerates, facilitates, or fails to act on violations involving counterfeit or misrepresented weaving products shall be subject to:
 - (1.) Administrative sanctions under civil service rules;
 - (2.) Possible criminal liability under the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (R.A. 3019), where applicable.
- f.) Civil and Administrative Remedies. - The imposition of penalties under this Act shall not preclude:
 - (1.) Weavers, weaving communities, or cooperatives from filing separate civil actions for damages, cultural compensation, or injunction;
 - (2.) Administrative cases before IPOPHL, NCIP, DTI, or LGUs as appropriate.

SECTION 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, DOST-PTRI, in coordination with NCCA, DTI, DOLE, NCIP, and stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules and regulation for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 14. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall not be affected.

SECTION 15. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 16. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,