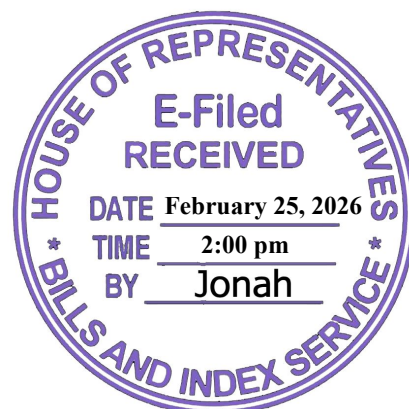


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8082



Introduced by Rep. Cielo Krisel B. Lagman

EXPLANATORY NOTE

When the four-day people power uprising culminated in the ouster of Marcos Sr. on 25 February 1986, hopes were feverishly high for the dawning of an authentic new society. Forty years later today, these hopes have been dashed to near extinction, *dahil ang tunay na bagong lipunan ay ni hindi pa rin nasisilayan*.

But hope springs eternal from a collective faith in the people's capacity to make history and effect change. Government's failure over the decades to genuinely and meaningfully memorialize the historic EDSA uprising has depreciated and almost obliterated the significance of the people's struggle for liberation from an autocratic and oligarchic martial law regime that exacerbated poverty and inequality.

Indeed, we failed to institutionalize the memorialization of the EDSA people power events. Compounding this historical blunder is President Marcos Jr.'s downgrading of February 25 from a special non-working to a special working holiday. Compare this with Rwanda, where the 1994 genocide is commemorated for 100 days every year. Or with Argentina, which held a five-year trial that utilized arenas where the past was re-enacted, serving as basis for legal judgment. Or with East Timor, where the final report of the Timor-Leste Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation documenting human rights violations from 1975-1999 was published in a five-volume compilation.

Memorialization is not only a powerful, tried and tested instrument in inculcating lessons from the past that provides a better understanding of the currently prevailing problematic national situation.

Memorialization also pays tribute to those who deserve to be honored.

It is well to remember that while the EDSA people power uprising has been lauded for being peaceful and nonviolent, the road to EDSA had been indisputably and tragically paved with the blood and sweat of heroes and martyrs and countless victims of gross human rights violations many of

whom remain unnamed and unrecognized. Memorialization gives them due recognition – they who were persecuted, tortured, disappeared, incarcerated or killed for us to navigate and utilize whatever democratic space we gained from the EDSA uprising.

Considering the historical importance of February 25, 1986, a law declaring February 25 of every year as a regular national public nonworking holiday is imperative. The law will (a) perpetuate the commemoration of the Filipinos' triumph against the despotism and profligacy during the darkest era in Philippine history; (b) memorialize the heroism and sufferings of the victims and survivors of the martial law period; (c) promote historical truth and help guarantee non-repetition of violations of human rights; and (d) forego the varying degrees of celebrations decreed by Philippine presidents to the extent of ambivalence and negation.

Declaring February 25 of every year a regular nonworking holiday is actually a pittance. We Filipinos owe ourselves, the shoulders we stand on, and the next generations so much more.

Verily, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly requested.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kisel', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

CIELO KRISEL B. LAGMAN

Republic of the Philippines
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Quezon City

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AN ACT
DECLARING FEBRUARY 25 OF EVERY YEAR AS A REGULAR NATIONAL
PUBLIC NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN COMMEMORATION OF THE
CULMINATION OF THE PEACEFUL EDSA PEOPLE POWER UPRISING,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

SECTION 1. ***Culmination Day of the Peaceful EDSA People Power Uprising.*** – February 25 of every year is hereby declared a regular national public non-working holiday to commemorate, institutionalize and memorialize the culmination of the peaceful four-day EDSA People Power Uprising.

SEC. 2. ***EDSA Commission.*** The EDSA Commission created pursuant to Executive Order No. 82 (s. 1999) is hereby reconstituted to plan and implement appropriate nationwide ceremonies for the observance of February 25 as the culmination day of the peaceful EDSA People Power Uprising.

As reconstituted, the EDSA Commission shall be composed of the following:

- a. The Executive Secretary as Chairperson;
- b. As Members, the:
 - Chairperson of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NCHP);
 - Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights;
 - Chairperson of the Human Rights Violations Victims' Memorial Commission;
 - Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government;
 - Secretary of the Department of Education;
 - Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment;
 - Chairperson of the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA);

SEC. 3. ***Appropriations.*** The amount of at least Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00) annually shall be appropriated in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) and allocated to the EDSA Commission for its operation, together with private donations. Funds accruing to and expenses

made by the EDSA Commission shall be subject to the usual accounting rules and procedures and audit by the Commission on Audit.

Pending inclusion in the GAA of the appropriate funds for the EDSA Commission, its operation shall be funded from the savings of the Office of the President and/or from the contingent fund under the control of the President.

SEC. 4. ***Separability Clause.*** – If any part, section or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 5. ***Repealing Clause.*** All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. ***Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,