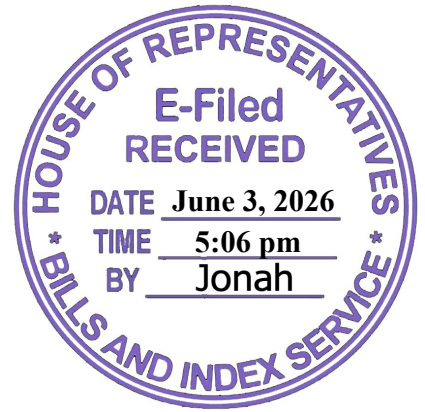


1 Republic of the Philippines
2 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
3 Batasan Hills, Quezon City

4
5
6 **TWENTIETH CONGRESS**
7 First Regular Session
8

9
10 **HOUSE BILL No. 9751**
11



12 -----
13 Introduced by
14 **ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO,**
15 **Gabriela Women's Party Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO,**
16 **and KABATAAN Party-List Rep. RENEE LOUISE M. CO**
17 -----

18
19 **AN ACT**
20 **MANDATING THE OBSERVANCE OF 23 NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR**
21 **AS NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS DAY TO END IMPUNITY,**
22 **AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**
23

24
25 **EXPLANATORY NOTE**
26

27 November 23 is the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against
28 Journalists as proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2013 in
29 commemoration of the assassination of two French journalists in Mali on that same day
30 and year.
31

32 In the Philippines, November 23 is remembered as one of the grimmest incidents
33 where 58 men and women were massacred in Ampatuan town of Maguindanao province
34 in 2009. It is also the worst attack on press freedom in Philippine history because 32 of
35 the victims were media practitioners. Marking it as a National Consciousness Day to
36 End Impunity will remind us that as long as high crimes remain unpunished, the fight
37 against injustice in the country should continue to broaden and persist.
38

39 The Philippines has been tagged this year by international media groups as one
40 of the most dangerous places for journalists being ranked poorly or is placed among the
41 worst worldwide for unsolved journalist murders. Key witnesses end up dead or forever
42 fear for their lives like the ones in the Maguindanao case who were murdered, with one
43 of them even dismembered and mutilated.
44

1 It took a decade for the Philippines to hand a verdict to the perpetrators of the
2 Maguindanao massacre. In 19 December 2019, Quezon City Regional Trial Court
3 Branch 221 convicted masterminds Andal Jr. and Zaldy Ampatuan and 26 accomplices,
4 including police officials, of murder, and sentenced them to *reclusion perpetua* without
5 parole. Meanwhile 15 were convicted as accessories and 56 other people, including
6 Sajid Islam Ampatuan were acquitted.¹

7
8 However, the case was still classified ongoing/unresolved by the United Nations
9 Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). While there are 58
10 victims, only 57 murder convictions were handed down in the landmark verdict,
11 excluding photojournalist Reynaldo "Bebot" Momay, who the court recognised as a
12 victim even if his body was not found.² Moreover, the families of the victims are yet to
13 receive the damages as there are still no resolutions of the appeals on the case.³
14 Furthermore, nearly 80 other suspects are still at large.

15
16 Impunity exists whenever perpetrators of a crime are not prosecuted or are not
17 held accountable because of their power or influence in society. Families of the victims
18 of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and other human rights violations
19 point to state security forces but to no avail.

20
21 The term “impunity” has attained prominence and common usage during the
22 previous administrations. Former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s nine-year term
23 suffered from corruption issues, electoral fraud and worsening poverty of its citizens,
24 thus the discontent of the populace over her leadership, and increasing calls for her
25 ouster. As a response to this growing dissent, the human rights situation under Arroyo
26 turned to worse. Determined to stay in power, the administration institutionalized a
27 campaign to repress forces critical of the administration through military and police
28 force. A systematized human rights violation then took place and the result: 1,206
29 victims of extrajudicial killings and 206 victims of enforced disappearance perpetrated
30 against activists and critics from among workers, peasants, women, indigenous people,
31 students, lawyers, church people, and media practitioners.

32
33 Until now, no commitments were fulfilled to hold accountable high officials for
34 the massive corruption and fraud under the previous administrations, and also for the
35 gross human rights violations that will in turn serve justice to the people especially the

¹ Witchel, Elisabeth. “Ten years for justice in Maguindanao case is too long: We can do better.”
Committee to Protect Journalist, 19 December 2019. <https://cpj.org/2019/12/ten-years-justice-maguindanao-massacre-impunity-journalists/>

² “Joint Statement: Ampatuan massacre to remain ‘unresolved.’” International Federation of
Journalists, 25 September 2020. <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/joint-statement-ampatuan-massacre-to-remain-unresolved.html>

³ Buan, Lian. “Maguindanao massacre appeals slow moving, 15 cops may be freed.” Rappler, 23
November 2021. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/maguindanao-massacre-appeals-slow-moving-cops-may-be-freed/>

1 victims. Further, killings and enforced disappearance in the context of suppression of
2 civil and political rights has already reached 422 cases for extrajudicial killings and 21
3 for enforced disappearances under the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte as
4 of July 2016 to June 2022, according to human rights organization Karapatan.⁴ These
5 killings are on top of the tens of thousands of people killed under the flagship anti-drug
6 policy of the Duterte government. Men, women, pregnant, and children are among the
7 victims of extrajudicial killings under the drug war.

8
9 In fact, there is a clear lack of intention to investigate the extrajudicial killings
10 under Duterte’s bloody drug war. According to the National Bureau of Investigation
11 (NBI) in January 2025, only 52 cases were referred to them. Of this number, only 13
12 were recommended to be prosecuted, seven are still under investigation and 32 were
13 provisionally closed. The families of the victims have already resorted to the
14 International Criminal Court (ICC) in pursuit of justice. However instead of supporting
15 the aggrieved families, President Marcos Jr. refused to cooperate with the ICC
16 investigation “unless permitted by former President Duterte.”⁵ He also continually
17 ignores the call to rejoin the ICC.⁶

18
19 The police continue to refuse or stall investigations, the military persists in
20 making blanket denials and arrest warrants against alleged perpetrators have not been
21 executed. The climate of impunity persists.

22
23 The killings have continued—and, have in fact worsened—under the present
24 administration. As of December 2025, Karapatan documented at least 135 victims of
25 extrajudicial killings and 16 victims of enforced disappearances since the incumbency
26 of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.⁷ Impunity also rears its ugly head in the policy and
27 practice of red-tagging against critics, the opposition, and ordinary citizens committed
28 by government officials and agents as well as the private individuals they enable.

29
30 Thus, there is a need to instill awareness and spur action on the part of the
31 government and for the people to stand up and fight for justice. The people’s clamor
32 and demand for justice should continue to compel the government and the authorities
33 to take action and prosecute those who are blanketed with impunity.

34

⁴ “Rodrigo Duterte and his crass legacy of mass murder and state terror.” Karapatan, 17 April 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.karapatan.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Duterte-Term-Ender-and-Marcos-Jr-6mos.pdf>

⁵ “No PH cooperation with ICC unless PRRD wants it – PBBM.” Presidential Communications Office, 14 November 2024. Retrieved from https://pco.gov.ph/news_releases/no-ph-cooperation-with-icc-unless-prrd-wants-it-pbbm/

⁶ Cabato, L. “Marcos weighing public sentiment on PH return to ICC – Palace.” Inquirer.net, 1 July 2025. Retrieved from <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/283089/marcos-weighing-public-sentiment-on-ph-return-to-icc-palace>

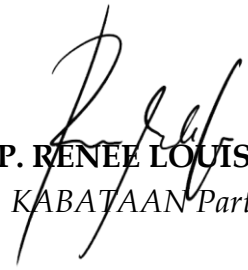
⁷ “2025 Karapatan Year-End Report on the Human Rights Situation in the Philippines.” Karapatan, 27 March 2026. Retrieved from <https://www.karapatan.org/5303/>

1 This Bill was first filed during the 15th Congress by Kabataan Party-List Rep.
2 Raymond Palatino, Bayan Muna Party-List Reps. Teddy Casiño and Neri Colmenares,
3 Gabriela Women's Party Reps. Luz Ilagan and Emmi de Jesus, Anakpawis Party-List
4 Rep. Rafael Mariano and ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. Antonio Tinio. It was refiled
5 by the Makabayan Bloc in the succeeding Congresses.
6

7 Thus, the approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.


REP. ANTONIO L. TINIO
ACT Teachers Party-list


REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Gabriela Women's Party


REP. RENEE LOUISE M. CO
KABATAAN Party-list

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23

24
25 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines*
26 *in Congress assembled:*
27

28 **SECTION 1.** This Act shall be known as the “*National Consciousness Day to End*
29 *Impunity Act.*”
30

31 **SEC. 2.** The State shall ensure that the perpetrators of extrajudicial killings and
32 enforced disappearances shall be punished so that justice shall be served to the victims
33 and their families.
34

35 The State shall intensify its efforts to curb impunity and bring it to an end. The
36 State recognizes that the participation of all sectors concerned shall ensure the success
37 of the fight against impunity. Towards this end, the State shall endeavor to raise
38 awareness of the people regarding this issue.
39

40 **SEC. 3.** In memory of the victims of the Maguindanao massacre and as a symbol of the
41 people’s struggle against impunity, the 23rd of November of every year is hereby
42 declared as National Consciousness Day to End Impunity.
43

1 **SEC. 4.** The implementation of this Act shall be under the Commission of Human
2 Rights (CHR), with the help of the Department of Education and the Department of
3 Interior and Local Government, which shall create programs directed towards educating
4 the people about human rights issues and the need to uphold these rights. In this regard,
5 civil society organizations shall be tapped to assist the CHR in this endeavor.
6

7 **SEC. 5.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official*
8 *Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.
9

10
11 *Approved,*