



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **11088**



Introduced by Representatives Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Yedda Marie K. Romualdez, Andrew Julian K. Romualdez, and Jude A. Acidre

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE PUBLIC ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL AND MAJOR LOCAL SPORTING EVENTS INVOLVING FILIPINO ATHLETES AND PARA-ATHLETES THROUGH STATE-RUN BROADCAST AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS, PROMOTING MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State recognizes the vital role of sports in fostering national unity, pride, and identity. Filipino athletes and para-athletes who compete in international and local sporting events serve as symbols of discipline, perseverance, and excellence, inspiring millions of Filipinos across the country.

Pursuant to Section 19, Article XIV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the State shall promote physical education and encourage sports programs, league competitions, and amateur sports, including training for international competitions, to foster self-discipline, teamwork, and excellence for developing a healthy and alert citizenry. Complementarily, Section 24, Article II mandates the State to recognize the vital role of communication and information in nation-building. Ensuring accessible platforms for the dissemination of sports content aligns with this constitutional directive by enabling broader public engagement in national events.

Despite widespread public interest, access to coverage of international competitions such as the Olympic Games, Asian Games, Southeast Asian Games, and Asian Beach Games remains limited, as broadcast rights are often held by private entities and made available primarily through subscription-based platforms. This restricts the ability of a significant portion of the Filipino public to readily watch and support national athletes and para-athletes in real time, resulting in limited lawful and accessible viewing opportunities and reducing broader public engagement in national sporting events.

More critically, coverage of major local sporting events remains even more limited and, in many instances, inaccessible. Competitions that serve as training grounds, qualifiers, and talent-identification platforms for future national representatives are rarely televised or livestreamed, resulting in limited public awareness and engagement. This lack of visibility weakens the pipeline of support for emerging athletes and undermines efforts to build a sustained and inclusive sports culture.

At the same time, media consumption patterns in the Philippines have increasingly shifted toward digital and mobile-based platforms, with a substantial number of Filipinos accessing audiovisual content through freely accessible online applications and social media platforms. Leveraging these technologies presents a strategic opportunity for the State to democratize access to sports content and ensure that Filipino representation in sporting events, whether at the elite, grassroots, or developmental level, becomes more visible and accessible to the public.

In anticipation of the Philippines' participation in the upcoming Southeast Asian Games, there is a timely need to ensure that Filipinos are able to follow and support their athletes and para-athletes through accessible and inclusive platforms.

This proposed measure seeks to address these gaps by providing for free public access to sporting events involving Filipino athletes and para-athletes in both international and major local competitions through state-run television and official digital platforms, while respecting existing broadcast rights. It further promotes partnerships with media entities to expand coverage, improve reach, and ensure sustainability.

By making sporting events involving Filipino athletes and para-athletes more accessible to the public, the State affirms its commitment to inclusive recognition, sustained public engagement, and the continued development of Philippine sports. This measure seeks not only to expand access to sports content, but also to strengthen national pride, encourage broader support for Filipino athletes and para-athletes, and foster a culture that values participation, representation, discipline, and excellence.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ



YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ



ANDREW JULIAN K. ROMUALDEZ



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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 “*Free Public Access to Philippine Sports Representation Act*” or the “*Libreng Panonood ng Laban ng Pilipino Act.*”

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:

- a. Promote national pride, unity, and identity through support for Filipino athletes and para-athletes competing in international and major local sporting events;
- b. Ensure equitable and accessible public access to coverage of such events;

- c. Recognize and highlight the participation of all Filipino representatives, regardless of outcome, as a source of national inspiration;
- d. Utilize digital platforms and public broadcasting systems to democratize access to sports content; and,
- e. Support the visibility and development of both athletes and para-athletes as integral contributors to national development.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby defined:

- a. *International Sporting Events* refer to competitions participated in by Filipino athletes, para-athletes, or teams, including but not limited to the Olympic Games, Asian Games, Southeast Asian Games, Asian Beach Games, and other recognized international competitions;
- b. *Major Local Sporting Events* refer to national or regional competitions recognized by the Philippine Sports Commission or relevant National Sports Associations, including those serving as qualifiers, training grounds, or talent identification platforms for international competitions;
- c. *Filipino Athletes* refer to individuals competing for and representing the Philippines in international sporting events, including, but not limited to, those endorsed, accredited, or recognized by the Philippine Olympic Committee, Philippine Paralympic Committee, Philippine Sports Commission, National Sports Associations, or other duly recognized governing sports bodies, as well as those competing in local sporting events: *Provided*, That for purposes of this Act, the term shall likewise include professional athletes, independent competitors, or any Filipino citizen competing in globally or regionally recognized top-tier sports competitions, regardless of formal local institutional accreditation;
- d. *Para-athletes* refer to persons with disabilities, as defined under Republic Act No. 7277, otherwise known as the "*Magna Carta for Disabled Persons*," as amended, who are Filipino citizens, competing for and representing the Philippines in international sporting events, including, but not limited to, those endorsed, accredited, or recognized by the Philippine Olympic Committee, Philippine Paralympic Committee, Philippine Sports Commission, National Sports Associations, or other duly recognized governing sports bodies, as well as those competing in local sporting events: *Provided*, That this

definition shall encompass both institutionally accredited para-athletes and independent self-represented para-competitors performing in local, regional, or international parasports events;

- e. *Free Public Access* refers to the availability of viewing without subscription fees or paywalls, either through free-to-air television or open-access digital platforms;
- f. *Official Digital Platforms* refer to publicly accessible digital and social media platforms maintained or utilized by relevant government agencies and sports governing bodies for livestreaming, broadcasting, and dissemination of sports-related content;
- g. *Media Entities* refer to broadcast networks, television stations, radio stations, digital streaming platforms, online media providers, production companies, content distributors, and other entities engaged in the production, transmission, broadcast, livestreaming, or dissemination of sports-related audiovisual content through traditional or digital media platforms;
- h. *Broadcast Rights Holders* refer to persons, organizations, international or local sports governing bodies, event organizers, media companies, or other entities holding, owning, licensing, sublicensing, controlling, or distributing lawful broadcast, transmission, livestreaming, media, or audiovisual rights over international or major local sporting events through traditional or digital media platforms.

Section 4. Public Access Coverage. – The State shall promote and facilitate free public access to sporting events involving Filipino athletes and para-athletes in international sporting events, as well as major local sporting events, through:

- a. State-run television networks, including but not limited to People's Television Network and Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation; and/or,
- a. Official digital livestreaming through the official digital platforms of the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, Philippine Paralympic Committee, and other publicly accessible digital and social media platforms maintained by relevant government agencies.

Consistent with existing broadcast rights agreements, intellectual property laws, and applicable rules and regulations, such access shall, at a minimum,

endeavor to include events or matches where Filipino athletes or para-athletes are participating.

Section 5. *Coverage Safeguards.* –

- a. Coverage under this Act shall be subject to existing broadcast rights agreements and applicable intellectual property laws;
- b. Where full live coverage is not feasible due to international contractual limitations or signal blackouts beyond the control of local networks, concerned agencies and network partners shall endeavor to make delayed broadcasts, highlights, or partial coverage available through free public platforms; and,
- c. Efforts shall be made to provide inclusive and proportional coverage of para-athletes and parasports competitions, ensuring their visibility alongside other national representatives.

Section 6. *Role of Government Agencies.* – The Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) shall serve as the lead implementing agency, in coordination with the Philippine Olympic Committee, the Philippine Paralympic Committee, and other relevant stakeholders, including media entities and broadcast rights holders.

The implementing agencies shall:

- a. Facilitate access to coverage of international and major local sporting events involving Filipino athletes and para-athletes;
- b. Maintain and manage official digital platforms for livestreaming and content dissemination;
- c. Coordinate with broadcast rights holders and media entities to maximize free public access; and,
- d. Ensure accessibility of content to the general public, including those in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas.

Section 7. *Public-Private Partnerships for Sports Coverage.* – The State, through the Philippine Sports Commission, shall actively pursue partnerships with media entities and broadcast rights holders to:

- a. Expand free public access to sporting events involving Filipino athletes and para-athletes;
- b. Facilitate cost-sharing arrangements for production and dissemination of content;

- c. Promote wider reach and engagement across diverse audiences; and,
- d. Support the sustainable and continuous coverage of both international and major local sporting events.

Section 8. *Incentives for Voluntary Compliance.* – Media entities and broadcast rights holders that provide free public access or share coverage for events involving Filipino athletes and para-athletes may be granted the following incentives and privileges:

- a. Official Institutional Recognition. – Official recognition as National Sports Development Partners;
- b. Priority Initiative Consideration. – Priority consideration in future government-supported sports coverage initiatives;
- c. Historical Content and Archival Access. – Access to government-owned historical archives, pre-produced athlete feature content, documentaries, and official highlight reels generated post-event for public information and national sports development purposes, subject to existing laws, rules, regulations, broadcast rights agreements, and intellectual property rights, including Republic Act No. 8293, otherwise known as the “*Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines*,” as amended, Republic Act No. 3846, otherwise known as the “*Radio Control Law*,” as amended, Republic Act No. 7306, otherwise known as the “*People’s Television Network, Inc. Charter*,” as amended, and other applicable rules and regulations issued by the National Telecommunications Commission and other concerned agencies;
- d. Live Media Pool and Press Access. – Subject to availability, accreditation protocols, and applicable broadcast rights restrictions, priority physical and technical access to state-managed media pools, raw signal feeds, and official post-match athlete press conferences: *Provided*, That such access does not violate or conflict with the exclusive broadcast rights protocols established by international sports governing bodies or primary global rights holders; and,
- e. Prominent On-Air Attribution. – Prominent, continuous on-air acknowledgment, including lower-third graphic attributions, digital watermarks, and verbal credits on state-run broadcasting networks recognizing the compliant private network as an "Official National Sports Development Partner" during all shared sports broadcasts.

Section 9. *Protection of Broadcast and Press Freedom.* – Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize the State to compel any Media Entity or Broadcast Rights Holder to surrender, transfer, waive, or forfeit its lawful broadcast rights, franchises, contractual rights, editorial discretion, or intellectual property rights, nor to impair the freedom of speech or of the press guaranteed under the Constitution.

The implementation of this Act shall be consistent with existing laws, jurisprudence, and regulations governing broadcast media, telecommunications, intellectual property, and contractual obligations, and shall primarily encourage voluntary cooperation, partnerships, and public-interest arrangements to expand free public access to sporting events involving Filipino athletes and para-athletes.

Section 10. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the implementing agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Philippine Sports Commission, in coordination with relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations.

Section 12. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 13. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, issuances, decrees, rules, and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified, or repealed accordingly.

Section 14. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,