

The Philippines is a nation whose identity is woven from the diverse traditions, knowledge, and creativity of its people. Among the communities that have preserved this cultural heritage are the Yakan people of Mindanao, whose intricate weaving traditions represent generations of indigenous knowledge, artistry, identity, and resilience.

In Zamboanga City alone, thousands of Yakan weavers and artisans are engaged in the practice and livelihood of traditional weaving. Their work has become an important part of the city's cultural character and contributes significantly to local economic activity, tourism, livelihood generation, and community development. Across Mindanao and other parts of the country, there are likewise numerous Yakan master weavers and practitioners who continue to keep this tradition alive.

Yet, despite their invaluable contributions, many of these cultural bearers remain without a specialized national recognition that acknowledges both their artistic excellence and their role in transmitting Yakan cultural knowledge from one generation to the next.

Republic Act No. 7355, or the Manlilikha ng Bayan Act, already recognizes weaving as one of the traditional arts deserving of State recognition and support. However, the distinctive nature of Yakan weaving calls for a more focused mechanism that recognizes the particular cultural context, community knowledge, and intergenerational transmission of this tradition.

This measure therefore seeks to establish the Yakan Master Weaver National Recognition as a specialized national honor and cultural-preservation mechanism under the framework of Republic Act No. 7355.

The proposed recognition shall not replace or compete with the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA). A Yakan master weaver who meets the national GAMABA criteria shall remain fully eligible for nomination and recognition under GAMABA. The proposed recognition instead provides a specialized mechanism through which the State can recognize and support Yakan master weavers within their own cultural context.

More importantly, this measure seeks not only to honor individual weavers but also to ensure the survival and transmission of Yakan weaving traditions. It provides for community-based apprenticeships, support for young weavers, documentation and preservation of traditional

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE KATRINA REIKO CHUA - TAI

Republic of the Philippines

House of Representatives

Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress

Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 11100



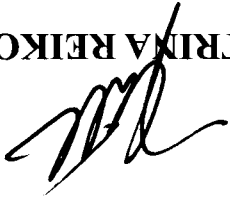
knowledge, and protection against the unauthorized appropriation or exploitation of Yakan cultural expressions.

Yakan master weavers are more than artisans. They are cultural bearers of the Filipino nation. Through every thread, pattern, and design, they preserve the stories and identity of their ancestors while creating livelihoods and opportunities for their communities. Their craft contributes to the cultural vitality and economic development of Zamboanga City, Mindanao, and the Philippines as a whole.

They do not merely weave cloth; they weave culture, identity, livelihood, progress, and development for the nation.

Through this bill, the State can give due recognition to the thousands of Yakan weavers and master practitioners who continue to carry this living heritage forward. It is an affirmation that the development of our country must also include the protection and empowerment of the communities whose traditions enrich our national identity.

In recognition of their invaluable contribution as cultural bearers of the Philippines and as partners in community and national development, the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.



KATRINA REIKO CHUA-TAI



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

Twentieth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 11160

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE KATRINA REIKO CHUA-TAI

1 AN ACT
2 ESTABLISHING THE "YAKAN MASTER WEAVER" NATIONAL RECOGNITION
3 AND STRENGTHEN THE PRESERVATION AND TRANSMISSION OF YAKAN
4 WEAVING TRADITIONS BY AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7355, OTHERWISE
5 KNOWN AS THE "MANLIKHA NG BAYAN ACT"
6
7 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in*
8 *Congress assembled:*
9

10 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Yakan Master Weaver
11 National Recognition Act."

12 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to recognize, protect, preserve,
13 and promote the traditional arts and cultural heritage of the Yakan people of Mindanao.

14 The State recognizes Yakan weaving as a living cultural tradition and Yakan master
15 weavers as bearers of traditional knowledge, skills, designs, techniques, and cultural practices
16 transmitted across generations.

17 SEC. 3. *Yakan Master Weaver National Recognition.* – Republic Act No. 7355 is hereby
18 amended by inserting a new section to read:

19 "SEC. 5-A. Yakan Master Weaver National Recognition. — There is hereby
20 established a specialized national recognition known as the Yakan Master Weaver, to be
21 conferred upon exceptional Yakan weavers who demonstrate outstanding mastery, artistic

1	excellence, cultural knowledge, community recognition, and commitment to passing
2	Yakan weaving traditions to future generations.
3	The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), in consultation with
4	Yakan cultural communities, traditional knowledge holders, and relevant government
5	agencies, shall administer the recognition.
6	The recognition shall support the preservation, documentation, cultural
7	transmission, and sustainable development of Yakan weaving in Mindanao.”
8	SEC. 4. <i>Relationship with GAMABA.</i> – The Yakan Master Weaver recognition shall not
9	replace or compete with the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA).
10	A Yakan master weaver who meets the national GAMABA criteria shall remain fully
11	eligible for nomination and recognition under GAMABA. Likewise, a Yakan master weaver
12	recognized under GAMABA may receive the Yakan Master Weaver recognition.
13	The Yakan Master Weaver recognition is instead a specialized national honor and cultural-
14	preservation mechanism focused on sustaining Yakan weaving within its own cultural context,
15	particularly through community-based transmission, apprenticeship, documentation, and
16	protection of traditional knowledge.
17	SEC. 5. <i>Qualifications and Selection.</i> – A Yakan Master Weaver shall:
18	(a) demonstrate exceptional mastery of traditional Yakan weaving;
19	(b) possess substantial knowledge of Yakan designs, techniques, materials, symbolism,
20	and cultural practices;
21	(c) be recognized by the Yakan community as a master practitioner;
22	(d) demonstrate commitment to transmitting weaving knowledge to younger
23	generations; and
24	(e) possess good character and integrity.

1 The NCCA shall establish a Yakan Master Weaver Selection Panel, with at least one-half
2 (1/2) of its members, whenever qualified persons are available, consisting of Yakan master
3 weavers, traditional knowledge holders, or representatives of Yakan communities.

4 SEC. 6. *Benefits and Cultural Transmission.* — Recognized Yakan Master Weavers shall
5 receive an official national award and such monetary, livelihood, training, and cultural-support
6 benefits as may be provided by law and subject to available appropriations.

7 The NCCA shall establish a Yakan Weaving Apprenticeship and Cultural Transmission
8 Program that shall support:

9 (a) apprenticeships between master weavers and younger Yakan community members;
10 (b) stipends, tools, and materials for qualified apprentices;
11 (c) community-based weaving workshops and learning programs; and
12 (d) documentation and preservation of Yakan weaving traditions.

13 SEC. 7. *Protection of Traditional Knowledge.* — Nothing in this Act shall transfer
14 ownership of Yakan traditional knowledge, designs, patterns, symbols, techniques, or cultural
15 expressions to the State or any private entity.

16 The NCCA shall coordinate with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the
17 Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines, and relevant agencies to protect Yakan traditional
18 knowledge and cultural expressions from unauthorized appropriation, exploitation, or
19 commercialization.

20 SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall
21 be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

22 SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within ninety (90) days from the
23 effectivity of this Act, the NCCA shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations in
24 consultation with Yakan cultural communities and relevant government agencies.

25 SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional
26 or invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

1 SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, rules, regulations, and issuances inconsistent with
2 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.
3 SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
4 the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
5 *Approved,*