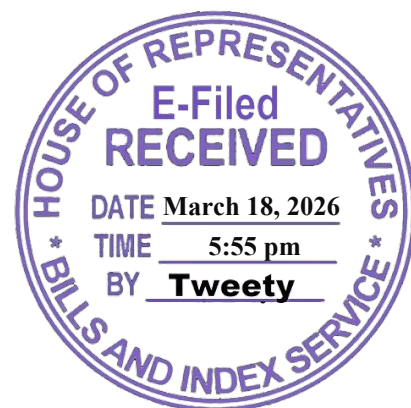


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 231

Submitted by the **Committee on Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples** on March 18, 2026

RE: House Bill No. **8699**

Recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 02297

Sponsors: Representatives Ma. Victoria Co-Pilar and Mauricio G. Domogan

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee on Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples, to which was referred House Bill No. 02297, introduced by Rep. Ma. Victoria Co-Pilar, entitled:

**AN ACT PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL
WRITING SYSTEMS AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION,
PRESERVATION, AND CONSERVATION**

has considered the same and recommends that the attached House Bill No. **8699**, entitled:

**AN ACT PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL
WRITING SYSTEMS AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION,
PRESERVATION, AND CONSERVATION**

be approved in substitution of House Bill No. 02297, with Representatives Ma. Victoria Co-Pilar, Mauricio G. Domogan, Caroline B. Agyao, MD, Edwin L. Cruzado, MD, Dibu S. Tuan, Maximo Y. Dalog, Jr., Dadah Kiram Ismula, Marlo C. Bancoro, Leila M. De Lima, Nelson S. Legacion, Laarni Lavin Roque, Lordan G. Suan, and Kenneth Paolo Tereng as authors thereof.

Respectfully submitted:

MAURICIO G. DOMOGAN

Committee Chairperson
Committee on Indigenous Cultural
Communities and Indigenous Peoples

THE HONORABLE SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8699**
(In substitution of House Bill No. 02297)

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES MA. VICTORIA CO-PILAR, MAURICIO G. DOMOGAN, CAROLINE B. AGYAO, MD, EDWIN L. CRUZADO, MD, DIBU S. TUAN, MAXIMO Y. DALOG, JR., DADAH KIRAM ISMULA, MARLO C. BANCORO, LEILA M. DE LIMA, NELSON S. LEGACION, LAARNI LAVIN ROQUE, LORDAN G. SUAN, AND KENNETH PAOLO TERENG

**AN ACT PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL
WRITING SYSTEMS AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION,
PRESERVATION, AND CONSERVATION**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Philippine
2 Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems Act.”

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the declared policy of the State to foster
4 the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of a Filipino national culture
5 based on the principle of unity in diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual
6 expression. To this end, the State shall promote, protect, preserve, and conserve the
7 Philippine indigenous and traditional writing systems as a means to inculcate
8 patriotism and social consciousness among the citizenry.

9 **SEC. 3. Promotion of Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing**
10 **Systems.** – To generate greater awareness of indigenous and traditional scripts of
11 the Philippines and engender wider appreciation of their significance and beauty, the
12 promotion of the writing systems is hereby recognized as part of our cultural treasures.

13 As expressions of Philippine tradition and symbols of the national identity, the
14 country’s indigenous writing systems shall be promoted through the following
15 measures and activities:

- a) Inclusion of these writing systems in relevant subjects of basic and higher education such as elective or specialized courses in higher education on the study of the same;
- b) Development and publication of reference materials such as dictionaries, grammar guides, textbooks and other scholarly works on Philippine indigenous and traditional writing systems;
- c) Development of digital learning resources, including reference materials, online courses, mobile applications, digital archives, and databases, to promote wider access to and appreciation of these writing systems both locally and internationally, and to ensure their proper documentation and long-term preservation;
- d) Conduct of activities to be spearheaded by the Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and local governments that promote awareness of the writing systems, particularly during Buwan ng Wika and similar occasions and events;
- e) Conduct of seminars, conferences, conventions, symposia, and other relevant activities on Philippine writing systems, taking into consideration the writing system that is indigenous to a particular region; and
- f) Ensure proper record-keeping of relevant documents including, but not limited to, manuscripts, inscriptions, artifacts, and other relevant materials that use or depict these writing systems and preservation of oral evidence on the writing systems, and other applicable measures, as may be adopted by the concerned government agencies.

SEC. 4. *Protection, Preservation and Conservation of Indigenous or Philippine Traditional Scripts.* – The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) shall be the lead agency in promulgating policy guidelines on the promotion of the writing systems.

Accordingly, the NCCA is hereby mandated to protect, preserve, and conserve the writing systems as national cultural treasures in accordance with Republic Act No. 10066, otherwise known as the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009”. The NCCA shall coordinate with the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) for technical assistance on the development of the Philippine languages and writing, and with the DepEd, CHED, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and other relevant government agencies for the proper implementation of this provision.

1 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days after
2 the approval of this Act, the NCCA shall, in coordination with the DepEd, CHED, KWF,
3 and NCIP, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions
4 of this Act.

5 **SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any part, section or provision of this Act shall
6 be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts, sections and provisions not
7 otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

8 **SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
9 regulations and other issuances or parts thereof that are inconsistent with the
10 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

11 **SEC. 8. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
12 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

13 ***Approved,***

FACT SHEET

HOUSE BILL NO. 8699

(In substitution of House Bill No. 02297)

(As approved by the Committee on 19 November 2025)

AN ACT PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL WRITING SYSTEMS AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, AND CONSERVATION

Introduced by:

Representatives Ma. Victoria Co-Pilar, Mauricio G. Domogan, Caroline B. Agyao, MD, Edwin L. Cruzado, MD, Dibu S. Tuan, Maximo Y. Dalog, Jr., Dadah Kiram Ismula, Marlo C. Bancoro, Leila M. De Lima, Nelson S. Legacion, Laarni Lavin Roque, Lordan G. Suan, and Kenneth Paolo Tereng

***Committee Referral: COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES
AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES***

Committee Chairperson: Rep. MAURICIO G. DOMOGAN

OBJECTIVES:

- To promote, protect, preserve, and conserve the indigenous and traditional writing systems of the Philippines by formally recognizing them as cultural treasures; and
- To integrate indigenous and traditional writing systems into national development through education and cultural awareness.

KEY PROVISIONS:

- Inclusion of indigenous scripts in relevant subjects in both basic and higher education, including the offering of specialized courses;
- Active promotion of these scripts during national cultural celebrations such as Buwan ng Wika;
- Documentation and preservation of historical and oral materials relating to the scripts;
- Organization of seminars, symposia, and cultural activities to strengthen regional knowledge and use of traditional writing systems; and
- Designation of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts as the lead agency in crafting policies and coordinating with key government institutions such as the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino, Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, and National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

RELATED LAWS:

- Republic Act (R.A.) No. 8371, or “Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997”
- R.A. No. 10066, or the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009”