



Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1201



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Introduced by Representative  
**ZIAUR-RAHMAN "ZIA" ALONTO ADIONG**

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is home to a rich tapestry of cultures, traditions, and languages. Among the most profound yet underappreciated legacies of our ancestors are the indigenous and traditional writing systems of the Filipino people, scripts that served as vital instruments of communication, record-keeping, and identity long before colonization disrupted their use and transmission.

This proposed measure, the "**Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems Act,**" seeks to preserve, promote, and protect these ancient writing systems such as Baybayin, Kulitan, Surat Mangyan, Tagbanwa, and others across the archipelago. These scripts are not merely remnants of the past; they are living symbols of our diverse heritage and important expressions of Filipino creativity, language, and cultural resilience.

The bill institutionalizes government support through concrete measures: the inclusion of these writing systems in the curriculum of basic and higher education; the conduct of awareness activities during cultural events such as *Buwan ng Wika*; academic seminars and symposia; and proper documentation and preservation efforts. The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) shall take the lead in implementing these cultural safeguards with support from the Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF), and relevant local government units.

Through these collaborative efforts, we take a crucial step in empowering indigenous communities, revitalizing cultural pride among the youth, and ensuring that these unique expressions of Filipino identity are not lost to time but are instead passed on to future generations.

It must be emphasized that this same measure was **passed on Third Reading by the House of Representatives during the 19th Congress**, reflecting broad support across sectors for the preservation of our national cultural heritage.

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

**REP. ZIAUR-RAHMAN ALONTO ADIONG**  
1st District, Lanao del Sur



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**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:*

**SECTION 1. Title.** – This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Indigenous and Traditional Writing Systems Act."

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

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

As expressions of Philippine tradition and symbols of the national identity, the country's indigenous writing systems shall be promoted through the following 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) Conduct of activities to be spearheaded by the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, and local governments that promote awareness of the writing systems, particularly during Buwan ng Wika and similar occasions and

events;

(c) 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;

(d) Ensure proper record-keeping of relevant documents and preservation of oral evidence on the writing systems; and

(e) 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, and other relevant government agencies for the proper implementation of this provision.

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

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

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

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

Approved,