


Fifteenth Congress of the Republic)
of the Philippines)
First Regular Session)

SECRET
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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SENATE
S.B. No. 2505

RECORDED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution under Article III of the Bill of Rights Section 4 provides that “No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances”.

Freedom of the press is guaranteed by a government of free public press for its citizens and their association, extended to members of news gathering organizations, and their published reporting. It also extended to news gathering and processes involved in obtaining information for public distribution.

Freedom of the press implies that all people should have the right to express themselves in writing or in any other way of expression of personal opinion or creativity. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights indicates: “*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers*”.

This bill seeks to amend Republic Act No. 53 “An Act Exempting the Publisher, Editor or Reporter of any Publication from Revealing the Source of Published News or Information Obtained in Confidence” to include broadcast and Internet media in the privilege statute allowing journalist to decline from revealing his or her source except when the court or Congress finds the revelation necessary for national security.

The amendment will give them the same protection: “the journalist cannot be compelled to reveal the source of any news item, news report or information reported or disseminated in the media which was related in confidence to the journalist.”

The bill will not only strengthen the confidence of journalist in broadcast, news agencies and in the Internet sector but will recognize the important role they play, alongside print reporters, and in nation building.

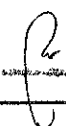
Hence early approval of this bill is highly recommended.


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

Fifteenth Congress of the Republic)
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AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 53, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT TO EXEMPT THE PUBLISHER, EDITOR OR REPORTER OF ANY PUBLICATION FROM REVEALING THE SOURCE OF PUBLISHED NEWS OR INFORMATION OBTAINED IN CONFIDENCE BY, INCLUDING WITHIN ITS COVERAGE, JOURNALISTS FROM BROADCAST, NEWS AGENCIES AND INTERNET PUBLICATIONS

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

SECTION 1. Section 1 of Republic Act No 53, as amended, is hereby further amended as follows

“Section 1. Without prejudice to his liability under the civil and criminal laws, [the publisher, editor, columnist or duly accredited reporter of any newspaper, magazine or periodical of general circulation cannot be compelled to reveal the source of any news report or information appearing in said publication which was related in confidence to such publisher, editor or reporter unless the court as or a House or committee of Congress] **A DULY ACCREDITED JOURNALIST OF ANY PRINT, BROADCAST, INTERNET, OR WIRE SERVICE ORGANIZATION, INCLUDING THE PUBLISHER, STATION OWNER AND/OR MANAGER, BUREAU CHIEF, EDITOR, NEWS EDITOR, WRITER OR REPORTER, CORRESPONDENT, OPINION COLUMNIST OR COMMENTATOR, CARTOONIST, PHOTOGRAPHER, OR OTHER PRACTITIONER INVOLVED IN THE WRITING, EDITING, COMMENTING OF THE NEWS FOR MASS CIRCULATION CANNOT BE COMPELLED TO REVEAL THE SOURCE OF ANY NEWS ITEM, NEWS REPORT OR INFORMATION APPEARING OR BEING REPORTED OR DISSIMINATED IN SAID MEDIA, WHICH WAS RELATED IN CONFIDENCE TO SUCH JOURNALIST OR PRACTITIONER UNLESS THE COURT OR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OR THE SENATE OR ANY OF ITS COMMITTEES finds that such revelation is demanded by the security of the state.”**

SECTION 2. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules or regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified.

SECTION 3. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in at least two newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,