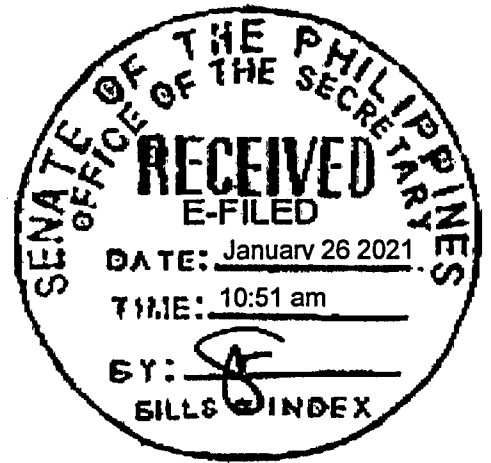


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*Second Regular Session* )

SENATE  
S. No. 2021



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**Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.**

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**AN ACT  
PROVIDING ENHANCED PROTECTION, SECURITY, AND BENEFITS FOR  
MEDIA WORKERS**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Constitution guarantees the freedom of the press. It recognizes the invaluable role of the free press to a vibrant, working democracy and to the overall development of our society.

Journalists and media workers risk their life and limb to perform their duty to inform the public and deliver the meaningful stories that need to be known. At many times, they have proven to be frontliners and first responders to various emergencies like calamities, accidents, and war, to bring the condition of the affected areas and its residents. Especially at this time of the pandemic, their work bears an added risk of contracting the disease, and extra burden brought by strict travel restrictions and health protocols. Moreover, their profession becomes especially crucial to counter the proliferation of fake news and disinformation in this digital age and massive use of social media platforms.

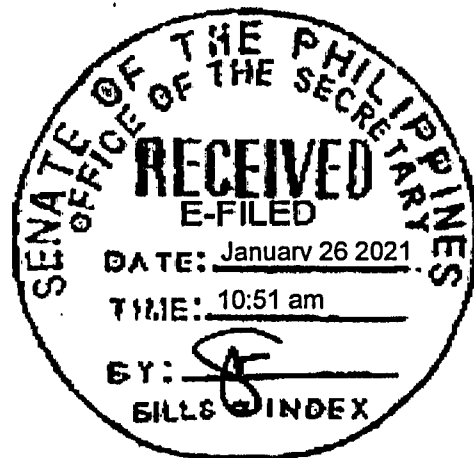
This bill seeks to promote and ensure the welfare of the media workers, such as the field reporters, news writers, cameramen, photographers, among others, through institutionalized social security benefits, insurance coverage, hazard pay, security of tenure and minimum compensation. It aims to respond to the various labor issues reported in the print, broadcast and online media industry, and protect the basic rights of journalists as workers.

The measure also seeks to create the News Media Tripartite Council which will serve as a platform among different stakeholders where media workers and their employers can come together to discuss mutually beneficial policies and resolve their issues.

Passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.**

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
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**AN ACT  
PROVIDING ENHANCED PROTECTION, SECURITY, AND BENEFITS FOR  
MEDIA WORKERS**

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

1           Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Media Workers' Welfare*  
2 *Act.*"

3           Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to  
4 promote and improve the social and economic well-being of media workers, including  
5 their living and working conditions. Towards this end, the State shall provide the  
6 necessary support to ensure that media workers are protected, secured, and well-  
7 compensated.

8           Sec. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act shall have the following objectives:

- 9           a. Ensure that media workers shall, at the minimum, be paid the wages,  
10           allowances and benefits provided by law to workers;  
11           b. Uphold the rights and responsibilities of the media workers in the  
12           dissemination of information and public communication; and  
13           c. Promote an atmosphere that is conducive to a productive, free, and fruitful  
14           media work.

15           Sec. 4. *Coverage.* – This Act shall apply to all media workers and media entities  
16 in the private sector.

17           Sec. 5. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

1 a. *Blocktimer* – refers to one who buys airtime from radio and television  
2 franchise holders;

3 b. *Media Entities* – refer to persons or organizations, including media networks  
4 and operators that actively gather information of potential interest to a  
5 segment of the public, turn collected information into distinct work or  
6 distribute that work to an audience within the Philippines;

7 c. *Media workers* – refer to those who are legitimately engaged in news media  
8 practice, directly or indirectly, whether as a principal occupation or not.

9 **Sec. 6. *Minimum Compensation.*** – Media workers shall not receive less than  
10 the applicable minimum wage rate prescribed by the Regional Tripartite Wages and  
11 Productivity Board, and shall be entitled to overtime pay and night shift premiums, as  
12 well as other forms of compensation provided by Presidential Decree No. 442, as  
13 amended, otherwise known as the “Labor Code of the Philippines” and other related  
14 laws and issuances.

15 **Sec. 7. *Social Security and Welfare Benefits.*** – Media workers shall be covered  
16 by the Social Security System (SSS), the Home Development Mutual Fund or the Pag-  
17 IBIG Fund, and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation upon employment. The  
18 payment of monthly contributions shall be jointly shared by the media worker and the  
19 employer, when applicable, in accordance with existing rules and regulations. Media  
20 workers shall also be entitled to retirement benefits as provided under Republic Act  
21 No. 11199, otherwise known as the “Social Security Act of 2018.”

22 **Sec. 8. *Hazard Pay.*** – Media workers required to physically report to work in  
23 dangerous areas such as strife-torn or embattled areas, distressed or isolated stations,  
24 disease-infested areas or in areas declared under a state of calamity or emergency for  
25 the duration thereof which expose them to great danger, contagion, radiation, volcanic  
26 activity or eruption, occupational risks or perils to life as determined by the  
27 Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall be compensated with a hazard  
28 pay in the minimum amount of Five hundred pesos (P500.00) per day, with no  
29 diminution, which shall be computed as follows:

30 *Hazard pay = P500 x number of days physically reporting for work in dangerous*  
31 *areas*

1           The base amount of the hazard pay of media workers may be increased as  
2 decided upon by the News Media Tripartite Council created under Section 14 of this  
3 Act.

4           Employers shall also provide media workers covering events in dangerous areas  
5 with basic safety gear and equipment such as bulletproof vests and helmets, first-aid  
6 kits, fire protection jackets, face shields, medical grade protective equipment,  
7 harnesses, safety shoes, and life vests.

8           **Sec. 9. *Mandatory Additional Insurance Benefits.*** – Employers shall provide  
9 additional insurance coverage to media workers as follows:

10           a) Death benefit of Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00) for each  
11 media worker who shall perish in the line of duty;

12           b) Disability benefit of up to Two hundred fifty thousand pesos (P250,000.00)  
13 for each media worker who shall suffer total or partial disability whether  
14 permanent or temporary, arising from any injury sustained in the line of  
15 duty; and

16           c) Medical insurance benefit for each media worker of up to One hundred fifty  
17 thousand pesos (P150,000.00)

18           **Sec. 10. *Security of Tenure.*** – Media workers shall be deemed as regular  
19 employees after six (6) months from the start of employment, regardless of the nature  
20 of employment. However, the said six (6) month period shall be computed  
21 cumulatively if a media worker is repeatedly engaged for shorter periods. An employer  
22 shall not terminate the services of a media worker except for a just or authorized  
23 cause, and with the observance of procedural due process.

24           **Sec. 11. *Settlement of Disputes.*** – All labor-related disputes shall be elevated  
25 to the DOLE regional office which has jurisdiction over the workplace.

26           **Sec. 12. *Compliance.*** – The DOLE shall monitor compliance with the provisions  
27 of this Act.

28           **Sec. 13. *Administrative Penalties.*** – Violations of the provisions of this Act shall  
29 be subject to applicable penalties provided in President Decree No. 442, as amended  
30 and other related laws and issuances.

31           **Sec. 14. *News Media Tripartite Council.*** – The DOLE shall initiate the creation  
32 of the News Media Tripartite Council which shall serve as a link among various

1 stakeholders, provide a platform where media workers and employers can agree upon  
2 mutually beneficial policies that will promote the interests of the media industry, and  
3 serve as an avenue to express their aspirations, discuss their programs or settle  
4 conflicts.

5       **Sec. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days from  
6 the approval of this Act, the Secretary of Labor and Employment shall, in coordination  
7 with media groups, associations, guilds and other concerned groups, issue the  
8 necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

9       **Sec. 16. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or  
10 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision or part not otherwise  
11 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

12       **Sec. 17. *Repealing Clause.*** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive  
13 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or  
14 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended  
15 accordingly.

16       **Sec. 18. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
17 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*