EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill absolutely decriminalizes the crime of libel as defined and penalized in Article 355 of the Revised Penal Code.

The rationale for this proposal is to accord greater protection to freedom of speech and expression specifically those done by means of writing and other similar means by taking away the threat or fear of incarceration, restraint of liberty and even fine.

It is likewise submitted that a strong print media could give great service to the Filipino people in providing an effective mechanism of complete and fearless transparency over the excesses of government in the exercise of its powers and prerogatives.

Immediate passage of this bill is thus earnestly sought.

FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

Senate
Office of the Secretary

'13 JUL -1 P1 :43

S. B. No. 127

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by **Senator FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO**

AN ACT
DECRIMINALIZING LIBEL BY MEANS OF WRITING OR SIMILAR
REPEALING ARTICLE 355 OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE

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

1   **SECTION 1.** Article 355 of the Revised Penal Code is hereby completely repealed
2 thereby decriminalizing libel committed by means of writing, printing, lithography,
3 engraving, radio, phonograph, painting, theatrical exhibition, cinematographic exhibition,
4 or any similar means.
5
6   **SEC. 2.** All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions, rules and regulations
7 contrary or inconsistent with the provision of this Act are hereby repealed or modified
8 accordingly.
9
10   **SEC. 3.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication
11 in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) national newspaper of general circulation
12 whichever comes first.
13
14   *Approved,*
15