

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



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SENATE  
S.B. No. 967

RECEIVED BY:

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Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

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**AN ACT REQUIRING THE USE OF FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE INSETS FOR LOCAL NEWS PROGRAMS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 22 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "MAGNA CARTA FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWD)"**

**Explanatory Note**

The May 2016 elections brought out a record number of about 40 million voters with an 81.62% voter turnout. It was also the first time in decades that a presidential debate was organized as Filipinos stayed glued to their TV screens and openly debated national issues in the streets and online.

There is momentum behind keeping abreast of current affairs and continue discussions on concerns that plague society. In these discussions, it is critical that we hear voices from all sectors, including our Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).

As such, we must ensure that they have access to as many mediums as possible, from print and online to television and broadcast media.

This measure asserts that all free-to-air television stations should provide Filipino Sign Language (FSL) insets, closed caption, or subtitles to newscasts and special programs covering events of national significance.

Free-to-air television is also encouraged to provide FSL insets to programs with cultural and livelihood themes.


Let us build an inclusive society where everyone is empowered by information and emboldened to take part in a national conversation.

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

Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

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REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "MAGNA CARTA FOR  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDs)"**

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

1       **SECTION 1.** This Act shall be known as *"The Filipino Sign Language in Broadcast*  
2 *Media Act"*

3       **SEC. 2. Filipino Sign Language in Broadcast Media.** - Section 22 of Republic Act No.  
4 7277, as amended, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities  
5 (PWDs)", is hereby further amended to read as follows:

6               **SEC. 22. Broadcast Media.** - ALL FREE-TO-AIR television stations [shall be  
7 encouraged] ARE REQUIRED to provide [a] FILIPINO sign language insets, and  
8 WHERE POSSIBLE, CLOSED CAPTIONS or subtitles in at least [one (1)] TWO (2)  
9 newscast programs a day and special programs covering events of national  
10 significance.

11               THE FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION MAY LIKEWISE OPT TO PROVIDE FOR  
12 FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE INSETS IN OTHER PROGRAMS SUCH AS THOSE  
13 PERTAINING TO CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIVELIHOOD AND THOSE CATERING TO  
14 CHILDREN.

15       **SEC. 3. Penalties.** - Any franchise holder or operator of television stations and  
16 producers of television programs, who shall violate the provisions of this Act shall be  
17 punished by a fine not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P 50, 000.00), but not more than One  
18 Hundred Thousand Pesos (P 100, 000.00), or by imprisonment of not less than six (6)  
19 months, but not more than one (1) year, or both at the discretion of the court.

20               In case the offender is a corporation, partnership or association, or any other  
21 juridical person, the president, manager, administrator, or person-in-charge of the

1 management of the business shall be liable therefor. In addition, the license or permit to  
2 operate its business shall be cancelled.

3         **SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.***- Within sixty (60) days from the  
4 effectivity of this Act, the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) and the Movie  
5 and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB), in consultation with other  
6 concerned agencies and entities, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for  
7 the effective implementation of this Act.

8         **SEC. 5. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules or regulations, other  
9 issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended  
10 accordingly.

11         **SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, other  
12 parts or provisions thereof not affected thereby shall remain and continue to be in full force  
13 and effect.

14         **SEC. 7. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete  
15 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

16         *Approved.*