

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**  
*First Regular Session*



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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20 FEB 26 P 1 :41

**SENATE**  
S.B. No. 1374

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

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**AN ACT**  
**AMENDING SECTION 1 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7966 TO EXTEND THE TERM**  
**OF THE FRANCHISE OF ABS-CBN CORPORATION UNTIL 31 DECEMBER 2020**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 7966, the franchise of ABS-CBN Corporation is set to expire on 4 May 2020.

On February 24, 2020, just seven session days before the Lenten break of Congress, the Senate Committee on Public Services conducted a public hearing on several broadcast franchise bills referred to the Committee. Among the resolutions tackled were the Simple Resolution filed by Senator Grace Poe and Joint Resolution filed by the Minority Leader Senator Franklin Drilon regarding the franchise of ABS-CBN.

Congress is time-pressed to act on the pending franchise bills of ABS-CBN before its existing franchise expires, putting the livelihood of over 11,000 workers in uncertainty especially with the pronouncement of former Chief Justice Reynato Puno citing the Supreme Court in G.R. 144109 that a holder of a franchise shall cease to operate once its franchise expires.

By amending RA 7966 and extending the franchise of ABS-CBN to the end of the year, all possible legal consequences that may arise while Congress is still deliberating on whether or not to grant ABS-CBN a fresh franchise after May 4, 2020 will be addressed and no longer be at issue.

Further, the extension of almost 10 months will be enough for Congress to resolve ABS-CBN's pending franchise applications.

In view of the foregoing, urgent consideration of this proposal is earnestly sought.

  
**RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.**  
**Senator**

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

1 Section 1. Section 1 of Republic Act No. 7966 is hereby amended to read as  
2 follows:

3 "Section 1. *Nature and Scope of Franchise.* – Subject to the  
4 provisions of the Constitution and applicable laws, rules and  
5 regulations, [~~the ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation, referred to~~  
6 ~~as the grantee, its successors or assigns, is hereby granted a~~  
7 ~~franchise]~~ **THE FRANCHISE GRANTED UNDER REPUBLIC**  
8 **ACT NO. 7966 TO ABS-CBN BROADCASTING**  
9 **CORPORATION, HEREUNDER REFERRED TO AS THE**  
10 **GRANTEE, ITS SUCCESSORS OR ASSIGNEES** to construct,  
11 operate and maintain, for commercial purposes and in the public  
12 interest, television and radio broadcasting stations in and  
13 throughout the Philippines, through microwave, satellite or  
14 whatever means including the use of any new technologies in  
15 television and radio systems, with the corresponding  
16 technological auxiliaries or facilities, special broadcast and other

1 broadcast distribution services and relay stations[-], **IS HEREBY**  
2 **EXTENDED TO 31 DECEMBER 2020.**

3  
4 *Sec. 2. Separability Clause.* If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or  
5 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall  
6 remain valid and subsisting.

7  
8 *Sec. 3. Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees or issuances,  
9 executive orders, letter of instructions, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary  
10 to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or  
11 amended accordingly.

12  
13 *Sec. 4. Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
14 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

15  
*Approved.*