

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

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SENATE

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Senate Bill No. 524

INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 4 of Article II of the 1987 Constitution states 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 grievance."

Although Congress is enjoined from enacting laws which may violate the above cited policy, it is not prohibited to legislate laws which will implement and put into reality the very intent and spirit of the law.

The Freedom forum, an international media organization, listed the Philippines as the No. 1 country in Asia as far as the record of the number of journalists killed in the line of duty since 1980. Coercive means, threats, and even killings are utilized in order to curtail the exercise of this freedom.

In view of the foregoing, protection should therefore be given to this sector of society.


JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA
Senator

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AN ACT

IMPOSING AN ADDITIONAL PENALTY ON ALL PERSONS WHO SHALL THEREAFTER COERCE, INFLICT INJURY OR KILL ANY BONAFIDE MEMBER OF THE MEDIA IN THE COURSE OF OR IN THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS OR HER DUTIES

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

SECTION 1. The penalty of ten (10) years imprisonment, in addition to the penalties prescribed under the Revised Penal Code, shall be imposed upon any person who shall threaten, coerce, intimidate, inflict injury or kill any bonafide member of the media in the course of or in the performance of his or her duties.

SEC 2. A bonafide member of the media contemplated in this law shall include print and broadcast journalists such as publishers, editors, reporters and photojournalists who are actively and directly involved in news and information gathering as well as dissemination of the same.

SEC 3. This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,