

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

7 JUL -3 A11 :05

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

S. No. 710

Introduced by Senator Ramon Bong Revilla, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The use of the words "Muslim" and "Islamic" in association with suspected or convicted criminals and unlawful acts are offensively biased against Muslims. This practice is highly prejudicial and extremely injurious to the Islamic religious culture, Muslim individuals and their collective image, and the Muslim's social well being as respectable citizens of the country.

Islam is the religion of a considerable number of our brothers and sisters, mostly living in the southern part of the Philippine archipelago. Some of them have migrated and settled in many areas in Luzon and the Visayas.

Unfortunately, some members of the local and national media continue to callously lambaste the Muslim religious culture by describing criminals and suspects with terms such as "Muslim Criminals", "Muslim Terrorists", "Muslim Drug Pushers", "Muslim Sea Pirates", "Muslim Bandits" or "Muslim Hold-uppers".

Outlawing this culturally and religiously biased practice would definitely contribute and result in increased positive social space and understanding between and among Muslims and Non-Muslims, and help drive the path towards a just, culturally-sensitive, fair, and lasting peace and development in the country.

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


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

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AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF THE WORD "MUSLIM" OR "ISLAMIC" IN PRINT, RADIO, TELEVISION INCLUDING CABLE TELEVISION AND OTHER FORMS OF BROADCAST MEDIA TO REFER TO OR DESCRIBE ANY PERSON SUSPECTED OR CONVICTED OF A CRIME OR UNLAWFUL ACT AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREOF

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

SECTION 1. *Prohibited Act.* – It is hereby declared unlawful for any person to use the word "Muslim" or "Islamic" in print, radio, television, including cable television and/or any form of broadcast media to refer to or describe any person suspected of or convicted of a crime or any unlawful act.

SEC. 2. *Penalties.* – The penalty of *arresto mayor* or a fine ranging from One thousand pesos (Php 1,000.00) to Ten thousand pesos (Php 10,000.00) or both, at the discretion of the court, shall be imposed upon any person found guilty of violating Section 1 hereof.

SEC. 3. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other section or provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid thereby.

SEC. 4. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 5. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,