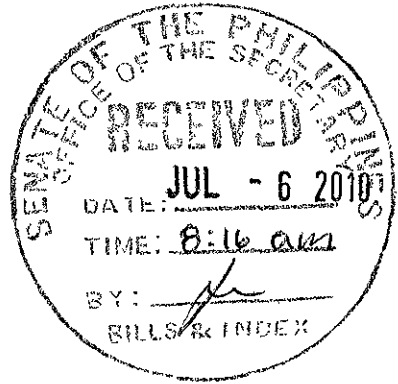


FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



SENATE  
s. No. 160

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Introduced by Senator **JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Fourth Estate is one of the essential pillars of a nation. Without the Fourth Estate, a government is bound to be divorced from reality with the consequence of failure to craft and implement policies for the common good.

Since its famous coinage in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the phrase Fourth Estate has evolved to include not just the journalists in the press or print medium but all the other media of mass communication – radio, television and the Internet.

In the Philippines, journalists are respected for the way they wield their mighty pen. Journalists, employees of media entities sent out to various assignments and freelance journalists do not only channel essential information to the public but dig through facts and relationships in exposés that are vested with public interest.

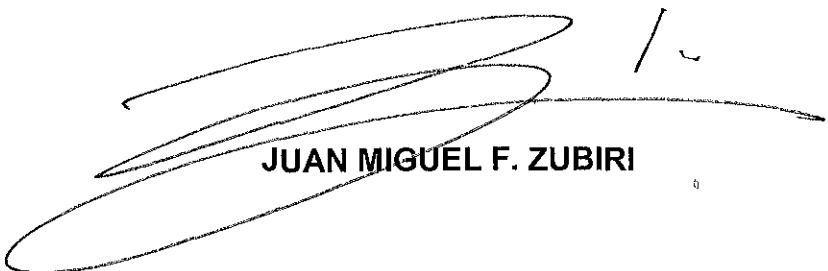
Filipino journalists have also earned the respect of their foreign peers as evidenced by the numerous awards they have won for news, investigative reports and other features. They persist in their efforts in an unending search for real answers. At the cost of life and limb.

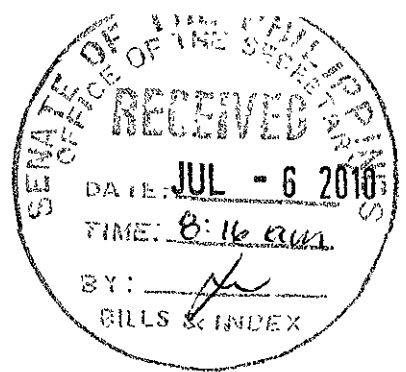
The Task Force Usig created to investigate and prosecute cases of media killings has a long way to go to render justice to the victims. However, victims and their families need immediate succor from government and the management of media entities.

In addition to the killing of radio commentators for the last two months, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines lists 140 journalists, employees of media entities sent out to various assignments and freelance journalists killed since 1986 - of which 104 were killed since 2001 to the present.

The circumstances around the massacre in Maguindanao terrified the nation most for the impunity of its perpetrators. In the light of the killings and threats to journalists, employees of media entities sent out to various assignments and freelance journalists, the State, in recognition of their courage and sacrifice, should endeavor that additional insurance coverage for mass media practitioners shall be provided by their employers.

Thus, immediate passage of this Bill is respectfully sought.

  
**JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**



SENATE

S. No. 160

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Introduced by Senator JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR MANDATORY ADDITIONAL INSURANCE COVERAGE AND**  
**BENEFITS FOR JOURNALISTS, EMPLOYEES OF MEDIA ENTITIES ON FIELD**  
**ASSIGNMENT AND FREELANCE JOURNALISTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

- 1           **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Journalists Insurance*  
2 *Act of 2010*”.
- 3           **SEC. 2. Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act:
- 4           a) “Media entities” – shall refer to all companies in the print and broadcast media  
5           (newspapers, radio, television and Internet) that are involved in the  
6           dissemination of news and information for public consumption and are duly  
7           accredited by any reputable association of media persons such as, but not  
8           limited to the Philippine Information Agency – Office of the Press Secretary  
9           (PIA-OPS), National Press Club (NPC), National Union of Journalists of the  
10          Philippines (NUJP) and Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP)  
11          duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or any  
12          other government agency.
- 13          b) “Editorial and / or News Department”- shall refer to editors-in-chief, news  
14          editors, columnists, deskmen, reporters, correspondents and photographers  
15          on the part of the print media; and news editors, newscasters, commentators /  
16          announcers, field reporters, field correspondents and cameramen on the part  
17          of the broadcast media.
- 18          c) “Front-line media persons” –shall refer to those directly involved in data-  
19          gathering from the field and news reporting whether in print on television or  
20          on radio, such as but not limited to, print reporters, cameramen, photo-  
21          journalists, radio reporters and television reporters.

1 d) "Journalist" – shall refer to any member of the Editorial and/or News  
2 Department including front-line media persons.

3 e) "Freelance Journalist" – shall refer to a person who pursues journalism as a  
4 profession without a long-term commitment to any one media entity.

5 **SEC. 3. Mandatory Additional Insurance Benefits for Journalists and**  
6 **Employees of Media Entities on Field Assignments.** – In addition to the existing  
7 insurance benefits given to journalists and employees of media entities on field  
8 assignment by the Social Security System (SSS) as provided for under R. A. No. 8282,  
9 and by the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) under Republic Act 8291,  
10 there shall be an additional insurance coverage to be provided by media entities to  
11 journalists and their employees on field assignments and front-line media persons which  
12 shall provide the following minimum benefits:

13 (1) Death Benefits of Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP 200,000.00) for all  
14 mass media practitioners and employees on field assignment who shall  
15 perish in the line of duty;

16 (2) Disability benefits of up to Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP 200,000.00)  
17 for all mass media practitioners who shall suffer total or partial disability,  
18 whether permanent or temporary, arising from any injury sustained in the line  
19 of duty; and

20 (3) Reimbursement of actual medical expenses up to but not to exceed One  
21 Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP 100,000.00) for all mass media practitioners  
22 and employees on field assignment who shall be hospitalized or who shall  
23 require medical attendance for injuries sustained while in the line of duty.

24  
25 The media entity shall pay for the premium of the insurance policy and shall have  
26 the option to get the insurance company to enrol its qualified journalists/employees.

27 **SEC. 4. Coverage.** - This Act shall apply to all permanent, temporary,  
28 contractual and casual journalists employed by all existing media entities in the  
29 Philippines and freelance journalists.

30 **SEC. 5. Insurance for Freelance Journalists.** – The PIA-OPS, NPC, NUJP and  
31 KBP shall offer the opportunity for freelance journalists to secure additional insurance  
32 coverage before working on war zones or dangerous areas.

33 **SEC. 6 Prohibited Acts.** – The following acts shall be prohibited:

34 a) Refusal by a media entity to provide additional insurance coverage referred to  
35 in Section 3 of this Act;

1 b) Refusal by an insurance company to enrol journalists, employees of media  
2 entities on field assignment and freelance journalists on account of the nature  
3 of their work; and

4 c) Non-compliance with the rules and regulations that the GSIS, SSS, IC and  
5 OPS-PIA shall adopt for the implementation of this Act.

6 **SEC. 7. Penal Provision.** - Any person who shall wilfully commit any of the  
7 prohibited acts enumerated under this Act shall upon conviction, be punished by a fine  
8 of not less than Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP 200,000.00) but not more than  
9 Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (PhP 500,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than one  
10 (1) year but not more than six (6) years or both such fine and imprisonment depending  
11 upon the discretion of the court.

12 In the case of associations, partnerships or corporations, the penalty shall be  
13 imposed on the partner, president, chief operating officer, chief executive officer,  
14 directors or officers responsible for the violation, and cancellation of registration with the  
15 SEC.

16 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - The GSIS, SSS, IC and PIA-  
17 OPS, and in consultation with the NPC, NUJP, KBP and other duly registered media  
18 associations; shall promulgate and issue the rules and regulations necessary to  
19 implement the provisions of this Act.

20 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** - If for any reason any provision or section of this  
21 Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, such portions not affected thereby shall  
22 remain in full force and effect.

23 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and  
24 regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified  
25 accordingly.

26 **SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after  
27 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

28 Approved,