

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2474

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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03 AUG 2016	
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REGISTRATION UNIT BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE	

INTRODUCED BY Hon. Mauyag "Jun" Papandayan, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

One of the most important basic tenet of our criminal justice system is the presumption of innocence.

However, even though a person is presumed innocent until proven guilty, oftentimes Media, whether in the news or in television, have a no-holds-barred policy in immediately labeling suspects according to their nationality or religion. Thus, the nation is bombarded with headlines like "Muslim Bomber", "Muslim Terrorists", "Christian rapist" "Catholic Adulterer", "Islamic" hoodlums, and the like.

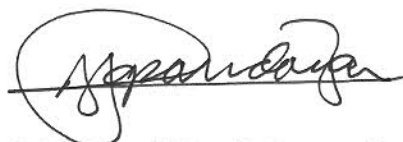
This manner of reporting about persons suspected of having committed various crimes, are offensively biased not only to the person himself, but more injurious to their nationality, culture and collective image. It contributes to the mindset that the Muslim as a whole, is an undesirable, ethnic group of people. In the minds of many, they are already guilty, until proven innocent.

Although our Muslim brothers are a minority among the Filipino majority, they deserve and should be treated with the same respect and privilege as any other Batangueño, Visayan or Tagalog citizen.

When a first world country defined their imported maids as "Pinay", because many Filipina OFWs were working as Maids, we as a nation rose up in protest and uproar. Why then are we doing the same thing to our Muslim countrymen?

This name-calling is becoming a public malady, thanks to the prejudicial use in Media of such "name branding". Only by penalizing such acts and providing penalties therefor to the offenders and to the offenders' higher authorities in media, such as their editors, could the unwholesome, culturally and religiously biased practice be curbed and discarded. Then and only then, could there be positive social and cultural exchanges of goodwill and understanding among our different races and cultures, fanned by the widespread use of information and mass media among all.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mauyag', written over a horizontal line.

Hon. Mauyag "Jun" Papandayan, Jr.



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2474

Introduced by Honorable Mauyag “Jun” Papandayan, Jr.

AN ACT
PROHIBITING THE USE OF THE WORDS “MUSLIM” AND
“CHRISTIAN” IN MASS MEDIA TO DESCRIBE ANY PERSON
SUSPECTED
OF OR CONVICTED FOR HAVING COMMITTED CRIMINAL OR
UNLAWFUL
ACTS, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREOF

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

SECTION 1. *Prohibited Act.* It is hereby declared unlawful for any person to use in mass media, the words “Muslim” and/or “Christian” or any other word that would denote religious, regional or ethnic affiliation to describe any person suspected of or convicted for having committed criminal or unlawful acts.

SECTION 2. *Penalties.* The penalty of arresto mayor or a fine ranging from Five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) to Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the courts, shall be imposed upon any person found guilty of violating Section 1 hereof.

The editor-in-chief, in the case of print media, and the news editor in the case of broadcast media and other forms of mass media, shall be imposed a fine not lower than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00).

The juridical entity violating this Act shall be imposed a fine not lower than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) for every violation.

For the second and succeeding offenses, the penalties shall be doubled.

SECTION 3. *Implementing Rules.* The Philippine Information Agency, in coordination with the concerned sectors and entities, shall promulgate the rules and regulations to implement this Act within three months after its effectivity.

SECTION 4. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

Approved,