Submitted by the Committee on Legislative Franchises on September 1, 2021

Re: House Bill No. 10125

Recommend its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 7016 and 8505

Sponsors: Representatives Franz E. Alvarez, Manuel “Chiquiting” T. Sagarbarria, and Eric L. Olivarez,

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee on Legislative Franchises to which were referred House Bill No. 7016, authored by Rep. Manuel “Chiquiting” Sagarbarria entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8110 ENTITLED “AN ACT GRANTING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES” FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT”; and

House Bill No. 8505, authored by Rep. Eric L. Olivarez entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES (NCCP) TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, MAINTAIN, AND OPERATE RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES UNDER REPUBLIC ACT (RA) 8110 FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS”

has considered the same and recommends that the attached House Bill No. 10125 entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES (NCCP) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES”

Respectfully submitted:

FRANZ E. ALVAREZ
Chairperson
Committee on Legislative Franchises

THE HONORABLE SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY
AN ACT
GRANTING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN THE PHILIPPINES (NCCP) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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

SECTION 1. Nature and Scope of Franchise. – Subject to the provisions of the Constitution and applicable laws, rules and regulations, there is hereby granted to the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), hereunder referred to as the Grantee, its successors or assignees, a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate, and maintain for commercial purposes and in the public interest, radio and television broadcasting stations in the Philippines, where frequencies and channels are still available for radio and television broadcasting, including digital television system, through microwave, satellite or whatever means, as well as the use of any new technology in radio and television systems, with the corresponding technological auxiliaries or facilities, special broadcast and other program and distribution services and relay stations.

SEC. 2. Manner of Operation of Stations or Facilities. – The stations or facilities of the Grantee shall be constructed and operated in a manner as will, at most, result only in the minimum interference on the wavelengths or frequencies of existing stations or other stations which may be established by law, without in any way diminishing its own privilege to use its assigned wavelengths or frequencies and the quality of transmission or reception thereon as should maximize rendition of the Grantee’s services and availability thereof.

SEC. 3. Prior Approval of the National Telecommunications Commission. – The Grantee shall secure from the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) the appropriate permits and licenses for the construction and operation of its stations or facilities and shall not use any frequency in the radio
spectrum without authorization from the NTC. The NTC, however, shall not
unreasonably withhold or delay the grant of any such authority.

In case of any violation of the provisions of this franchise, the NTC shall have
the authority to revoke or suspend, after due process, the permits or licenses it issued
pursuant to the franchise. The NTC may recommend to Congress the revocation of
the franchise for any violation of the provisions of this franchise.

**SEC. 4. Responsibility to the Public.**—The Grantee shall provide, free of
charge, adequate public service time which is reasonable and sufficient to enable the
government, through the broadcasting stations or facilities of the Grantee, to reach the
pertinent populations or portions thereof, on important public issues and relay
important public announcements and warnings concerning public emergencies and
calamities, as necessity, urgency, or law may require; provide at all times sound and
balanced programming; promote public participation; assist in the functions of public
information and education; conform to the ethics of honest enterprise; promote
audience sensibility and empowerment including closed captioning; and not use its
stations or facilities for the broadcasting of obscene or indecent language, speech, act,
or scene, the dissemination of deliberately false information or willful
misrepresentation, to the detriment of public interest, or to incite, encourage, or assist
in subversive or treasonable acts.

Public service time referred herein shall be equivalent to a maximum aggregate
of ten percent (10%) of paid commercials or advertisements which shall be allocated
based on need to the Executive and Legislative branches, the Judiciary, Constitutional
Commissions, and international humanitarian organizations duly recognized by
statutes: *Provided, That the NTC shall increase the public service time in case of
extreme emergency or calamity. The NTC shall issue rules and regulations for this
purpose, the effectivity of which shall commence upon applicability with other similarly
situated broadcast network franchise holders.*

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8370, otherwise known as the “Children’s
Television Act of 1997”, the Grantee shall allot a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of
the daily total air time of each broadcasting network or station to child-friendly shows
within its regular programming.

**SEC. 5. Right of the Government.**—The radio spectrum is a finite resource
that is part of the national patrimony, and the use thereof is a privilege conferred upon
the Grantee by the State that may be withdrawn any time after due process.

A special right is hereby reserved to the President of the Philippines, in times
of war, rebellion, public peril, calamity, emergency, disaster, or disturbance of peace
and order, to temporarily take over and operate the stations or facilities of the Grantee;
to temporarily suspend the operation of any station or facility in the interest of public
safety, security, and public welfare; or to authorize the temporary use and operation
thereof by any agency of the government, upon due compensation to the Grantee, for
the use of said stations or facilities during the period when these shall be so operated.

SEC. 6. Term of Franchise. –This franchise shall be in effect for a period of
twenty-five (25) years from the effectivity of this Act, unless sooner revoked or
cancelled. This franchise shall be deemed ipso facto revoked in the event the Grantee
fails to operate continuously for two (2) years.

SEC. 7. Self-regulation by and Undertaking of Grantee. –The Grantee shall
not require any previous censorship of any speech, play, act or scene, or other matter
to be broadcast from its stations, but if any such speech, play, act or scene, or other
matter should constitute a violation of the law or infringement of a private right, the
Grantee shall be free from any liability, civil or criminal, for such speech, play, act or
scene, or other matter: Provided, That the Grantee, during any broadcast, shall cut off
the airing of speech, play, act or scene, or other matter being broadcast if the tendency
thereof is to propose or incite treason, rebellion, or sedition; or the language used
therein or the theme thereof is indecent or immoral: Provided, further, That willful
failure to do so shall constitute a valid cause for the cancellation of this franchise.

SEC. 8. Warranty in Favor of the National and Local Governments. –The
Grantee shall hold the national, provincial, city, and municipal governments of the
Philippines free from all claims, liabilities, demands, or actions arising out of accidents
causing injury to persons or damage to properties, during the construction or operation
of the stations of the Grantee.

SEC. 9. Commitment to Provide and Promote the Creation of Employment
Opportunities. – The Grantee shall create employment opportunities and accept on-
the-job trainees in the franchise operations: Provided, That priority shall be accorded
to the residents of the place where the principal office of the Grantee is located:
Provided, further, That the Grantee shall comply with the applicable labor standards
and allowance entitlement under existing labor laws, rules and regulations and similar
issuances.

The employment opportunities or jobs created shall be reflected in the General
Information Sheet (GIS) to be submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission
(SEC) annually.

SEC. 10. Sale, Lease, Transfer, Grant of Usufruct, or Assignment of
Franchise. – The Grantee shall not sell, lease, transfer, grant the usufruct of, nor
assign this franchise or the rights and privileges acquired thereunder to any person,
firm, company, corporation, or other commercial or legal entity, nor merge with any
other corporation or entity, nor shall the controlling interest of the Grantee be
transferred, simultaneously or contemporaneously, to any person, firm, company,
corporation, or entity without the prior approval of Congress. The Grantee shall inform
Congress, through the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and
Office of the Senate President, of any sale, lease, transfer, grant of usufruct, or
assignment of franchise or the rights and privileges acquired thereunder, or of the
merger or transfer of the controlling interest of the Grantee, within sixty (60) days after
the completion of the said transaction. Failure to report to Congress such change of
ownership shall render the franchise ipso facto revoked. Any person or entity to which
this franchise is sold, transferred, or assigned shall be subject to the same conditions,
terms, restrictions, and limitations of this Act.
SEC. 11. Reportorial Requirement. – The Grantee shall submit an annual report on its compliance with the terms and conditions of the franchise and on its operations to the Congress of the Philippines, through the Committee on Legislative Franchises of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Public Services of the Senate, on or before April 30 of every year during the term of its franchise.

The annual report shall include an update on the commencement of activities, development, operation, and expansion of business; audited financial statements; latest GIS officially submitted to the SEC, if applicable; certification of the NTC on the status of its permits and operations; and an update on the dispersal of ownership undertaking, if applicable.

The reportorial compliance certificate issued by Congress shall be required before any application for permit or certificate is accepted by the NTC.

SEC. 12. Fine. – Failure of the Grantee to submit the requisite annual report to Congress shall be penalized by a fine of Five hundred pesos (P500.00) per working day of noncompliance to the NTC. The fine shall be collected separately from the reportorial penalties imposed by the NTC, and it shall be remitted to the Bureau of the Treasury.

SEC. 13. Equality Clause. – Any advantage, favor, privilege, exemption, or immunity granted under existing franchises, or which may hereafter be granted for radio and television broadcasting, upon prior review and approval of Congress, shall become part of this franchise and shall be accorded immediately and unconditionally to the herein Grantee: Provided, That the foregoing shall neither apply to nor affect the provisions of broadcasting franchises concerning territorial coverage, the term, or the type of service authorized by the franchise.

SEC. 14. Repealability and Nonexclusivity Clause. – This franchise shall be subject to amendment, alteration, or repeal by Congress when the public interest so requires and shall not be interpreted as an exclusive grant of the privileges herein provided for.

SEC. 15. Separability Clause. – If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is held invalid, all other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SEC. 16. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, orders, resolutions, instructions, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 17. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,