

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. _____

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Introduced by Reps.
CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
EMMI A. DE JESUS, ANTONIO L. TINIO,
ARIEL CASILAO, ARLENE BROSAS, FRANCE CASTRO and SARAH ELAGO

RESOLUTION
EXPRESSING THE RECOGNITION OF ANDRES BONIFACIO AS THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES AND URGING THE PRESIDENT TO INSTITUTE THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION SIGNIFICANT MEASURES TO DISSEMINATE AND PROPAGATE THE TRUTH ABOUT SUCH FACT IN HISTORY BOOKS, ELEMENTARY, HIGH SCHOOL AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, AND OTHER RELATED MEDIUM OF INFORMATION

WHEREAS, based on original and authentic documents of the Philippine Revolution against Spain, and as attested by historians of note such as Milagros C. Guerrero, Emmanuel N. Encarnacion and Ramon N. Villegas, Andres Bonifacio founded the first national government of the Philippines and served as its President from August 24, 1896 until his tragic death on May 10, 1897;

WHEREAS, on August 24, 1896, at the convention of the *Kataastaasang Kapulungan* or National Assembly of the *Katipunan* at Melchora Aquino's barn in Barrio Banlat, now part of Caloocan, the Assembly passed three major resolutions: First, they declared a nationwide armed revolution against Spain; second, they established a national government; and third, they elected officials who would lead the nation and the army;¹

WHEREAS, assembled at the said convention were the members of the *Kataastaasang Kapulungan* (Supreme Council), as well as the *pangulo* (heads) of the *sangunian* (supra-municipal) and *balangay* chapter-units;²

WHEREAS, aside from Manila, the *Katipunan* then had sizeable chapters in Batangas, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija, and smaller chapters in

¹ Guerrero, Encarnacion and Villegas, *Andres Bonifacio and the 1896 Revolution*, June 16, 2003.

² *Ibid.*

Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan and the Bicol region.³ Estimates of its membership vary from 30,000 to 400,000;

WHEREAS, since the convention, the *Katipunan*, under Bonifacio's leadership, ceased being a secret society and was forced to come out in the open as a revolutionary government with its own laws, bureaucratic structure and elective leadership—a fact borne out by the research of John R.M. Taylor, Gregorio F. Zaide and Teodoro A. Agoncillo;

WHEREAS, as John R.M. Taylor, American military historian and custodian of the Philippine Insurgent Records, interpreted the documents that he saw: "*The Katipunan came out from the cover of secret designs, threw off the cloak of any other purpose, and stood openly for the independence of the Philippines. Bonifacio turned his lodges into battalions, his grandmasters into captains, and the supreme council of the Katipunan into the insurgent government of the Philippines*";

WHEREAS, the August 1896 transformation of the *Katipunan* into a revolutionary government and the ensuing election of Bonifacio to the presidency were also confirmed by Pio Valenzuela in his testimony before Spanish authorities upon his surrender on September 2, 1896;⁴

WHEREAS, in at least three letters and an appointment paper, addressed to Emilio Jacinto and written by Bonifacio on printed letterheads dated from March 8 to April 24, 1897, Bonifacio's titles and designations were varyingly described as follows: *Pangulo ng Kataastaasang Kapulungan* (President of the Supreme Council); *Ang Kataastaasang Pangulo* (The Supreme President); *Pangulo ng Haring Bayang⁵ Katagalugan* (President of the Sovereign Nation of Katagalugan); *Ang Pangulo ng Haring Bayan* (The President of the Sovereign Nation); *Maytayo ng K.K.Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (Founder of the K.K.Katipunan), *Unang Naggalaw ng Panghihimagsik* (Initiator of the Revolution); and *Kataastaasang Panguluhan, Pamahalaang Panghihimagsik* (Office of the Supreme President, Government of the Revolution) during those times the term Tagala encompasses the whole archipelago and not just Luzon;

WHEREAS, based on the book "Andres Bonifacio and the 1896 Revolution" by Guerrero, Encarnacion and Villegas published on June 16, 2003 the *Kartilya* (Primer) of the Katipunan defines

"*tagalog*", derived from "*taga-ilog*" (from/of the river), as "*all those born in this archipelago; therefore, though visayan, ilocano, pampango, etc. they are all tagalogs.*" In defining "*Tagalog*" as the term for all Filipinos, and "*Katagalugan*" as the country's name in lieu of "*Filipinas*", which had colonial origins, Bonifacio and the Katipunan sought to define a national identity;

³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katipunan>, last accessed on November 25, 2013.

⁴ Guerrero, Encarnacion and Villegas, *Andres Bonifacio*.

⁵ In reference to Bonifacio's adaptation of the Western concept of republic—from *res publica*, literally public thing or common wealth—to the Filipino concept of "sovereign people". Thus, the government headed by Bonifacio prior to 22 March 1897 was democratic in nature and national in scope. (Guerrero, Encarnacion and Villegas, *Andres Bonifacio*.)

WHEREAS, Jose P. Bantug, a prewar scholar, referred to Bonifacio as the *Kataastaasang Pangulo* and *Heneral Blg. 1*. A similar conclusion was reached by Jose P. Santos, son of Epifanio de los Santos, (in 1933) and Zaide (in 1939), who both recognized Bonifacio's presidency;

WHEREAS, Dr. Floro Quibuyen a renowned Filipino historian based in Sydney, Australia in his most recent lecture series stated that Bonifacio being the first president of the revolutionary government and he should be recognized as such. According to Quibuyen, this has been settled among scholars and the only thing needed is for the Philippine government to recognize Bonifacio as such;

WHEREAS, Bonifacio's presidency was further acknowledged in contemporary Spanish publications. For instance, in the February 8, 1897 issue of the *La Ilustracion Española y America*, an article on the Philippine Revolution appeared, accompanied by a portrait of Bonifacio in a black suit and white tie, with the caption "*Andres Bonifacio/Titulado (Presidente) de la Republica Tagala*";

WHEREAS, the article, written by reporter G. Reparaz, further described Bonifacio as Head of the Native Government, the other key officials of which were the following: Teodoro Plata as Secretary of War, Emilio Jacinto as Secretary of State, Aguedo del Rosario as Secretary of the Interior, Briccio Pantas as Secretary of Justice and Enrique Pacheco as Secretary of Finance;

WHEREAS, evidently then, even before the Tejeros Convention on March 22, 1897, the Katagalugan government, headed by Bonifacio, had long commanded the loyalty of a significant portion of the population, holding territories where it exercised the functions of a state, and having armed forces that fought for and defended its existence. It, moreover, had a foreign affairs component (e.g., negotiations being conducted by revolutionaries with the Japanese for political, military and financial support for the uprising), which attempted to gain international recognition for the new nation. The governments that succeeded Bonifacio's essentially republican Katagalugan government could therefore only proceed from it.⁶

WHEREAS, the National Commission For Culture and the Arts shall craft and institute pertinent policies under its mandate for the effective implementation of this resolution. The Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education shall likewise make the necessary course of action to ensure that education on the life and heroism of Bonifacio be integrated in the elementary, secondary and the tertiary curriculum, including the updating of history books as well as the dissemination of other pertinent information.

NOW, THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED, that it is hereby Resolved by the House of Representatives, to recognize Andres Bonifacio as the First President of the Philippines;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President institute through the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education and the National Commission for the Culture and the Arts significant measures to disseminate and propagate the truth about such


⁶ Guerrero, Encarnacion and Villegas, *Andres Bonifacio*.

fact in history books, elementary, high school and tertiary education, and other related medium of information

Adopted,


CARLOS ISAGANI ZARATE
Bayan Muna Party-list

EMMI A. DE JESUS
Gabriela Women's Party


ANTONIO L. TINIO
ACT Teachers Party-list


ARIEL CASILAO
Anakpawis Party-list


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