

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 860



Introduced by Representative Ferdinand L. Hernandez

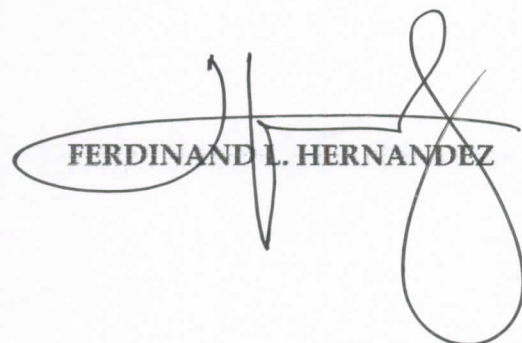
AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE VENUE OF THE CRIMINAL AND CIVIL ACTION IN LIBEL CASES AGAINST A COMMUNITY OR LOCAL JOURNALIST, PUBLICATION, OR BROADCAST STATION

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Under existing laws, the complainant or offended party, if he is a public officer, may file a libel case in Manila, if his office is in Manila, against a journalist in Aparri or in Jolo. This allows for harassment suits against journalists who are financially handicapped to answer cases filed far away from their places of work.

This bill seeks to reduce the amount of harassment libel cases by requiring both the criminal and civil actions against community or local journalists, publications, or broadcast stations to be filed where such journalists, publications, or broadcast stations are.

Considering the rationale stated above, the approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.


FERDINAND L. HERNANDEZ

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BROADCAST STATION**

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

Section 1. – The criminal or civil action in cases of libel against a community or local journalist, publication, or broadcast station shall be filed in the Regional Trial Court of the province or city where the principal office or place of business of the community or local journalist, publication, or broadcast station is located: *Provided*, That the civil action shall be filed in the same court where the criminal case is filed.

The term “community or local journalist, publication, or broadcast station” refers to a journalist or news medium that operates within a limited area of circulation or broadcast in a city, province, or region, as defined under existing laws.

Section 2. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 3. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,