

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2476**

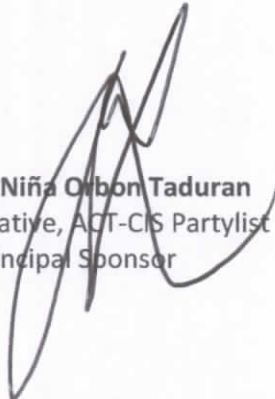


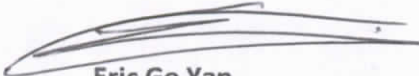
Introduced by **HONORABLE ROWENA NIÑA O. TADURAN**

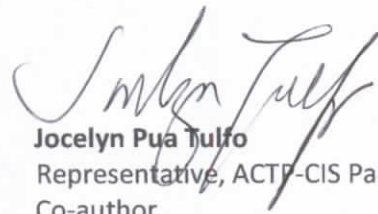
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 18 of our Constitution gives primary importance to labor as a social economic force and mandates the State to protect laborers and promote their welfare. Media Workers, despite being part of the labor force, are, more often than not, left to fend for themselves especially when making danger-filled reportages. Because of their dedication to their chosen field, we are always informed of every occurrence around us, near or far, local or foreign, night or day, be it in a peaceful area or a war-torn location. Thus, the least that we can do to show that we recognize the invaluable contribution of Media Workers to society is to give them their economic due and added protection under the law.

It is in this regard that we endeavor the passage of this bill.


Rowena Niña O. Taduran
Representative, ACT-CIS Partylist
Principal Sponsor


Eric Go Yap
Representative, ACT-CIS Partylist
Co-author


Jocelyn Pua Tulfo
Representative, ACT-CIS Partylist
Co-author

**AN ACT PROVIDING ENHANCED
PROTECTION, SECURITY AND BENEFITS FOR MEDIA WORKERS**

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

SECTION 1. Title. This Act shall be known as the "Media Workers' Welfare Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the declared policy of the State that workers should be entitled to humane conditions of work and living wage. Consonant with this principle, this Act shall have the following objectives:

- (a) To ensure that media workers shall be provided with comprehensive benefits packaged at par with the current benefits enjoyed by those in the labor force both in government and the private sector;
- (b) To motivate and encourage media workers to perform their duties as truthful and responsible informers of the people; and
- (c) To ensure the creation of a safe, protected, and an atmosphere conducive to a productive, free, and fruitful media work.

SECTION 3. Coverage. This Act shall cover all media workers as defined in, but shall not be limited to, the list below:

1. Art Director – determines and develops the visual concept to be utilized for a program; supervises design staff; reviews and approves designs, artwork, and photography, and graphics developed by other production staff members
2. Audioman – responsible for assembling, operating, and maintaining the audio and recording equipment; produces high-quality audio material that will be utilized for a program
3. Blocktimer - one who buys airtime in radio and television to analyze or make commentaries on news events. A blocktimer must not be totally free from or separate in accountability from the mother network and shall be covered by its franchise rules. It must be a matter of policy that a delegated franchise cannot be re-delegated or subcontracted as it will be contrary to law or deemed illegal. Blocktimers should be accompanied by regular network broadcasters.
4. Broadcaster - a general term applied to a radio or television journalist whose main task includes announcing and/or reading and commenting on news reports;
5. Cameraman/Camera Operator – responsible for the physical operation of the camera; assembles, prepares, and sets up equipment prior to the production and ensures high video quality for the target program
6. Columnist – one who writes or air commentaries on matters of general interest;
7. Correspondent - a journalist hired by a newspaper, magazine, television or radio, wire or wireless broadcast enterprise or online services to dispatch news stories or special reports and paid on a per article basis or per day basis;
 - I. Local Correspondent - a journalist hired by a newspaper, magazine, or other publication, television or radio, wire or wireless broadcast enterprise or online service to dispatch news stories or special reports from a specific beat not assigned to a regular reporter such as those in the provinces or some areas where the hiring firm is based and paid on a per article basis;
 - II. Foreign Correspondent - a journalist hired by an international news organization or network to dispatch news stories or special reports;

- 8) Editor – one who edits manuscripts, and news stories for publication in newspapers or magazines, or for airing in television or on radio or for wire, wireless broadcasting and online service and also who manages the editorial staff and news coverage;
- 9) Field reporter - one who gathers news in his/her beat and reports them to the desk or radio announcer;
- 10) Freelance Journalist/Contributor - one who writes for any publication without being regularly employed by such publication, television or radio, wire, wireless broadcasting and online service;
- 11) Journalist – one who manages, edits, gathers and writes news stories or articles for newspapers, magazines, or journals, or for airing in television or on radio, and for wire or wireless broadcasting and online service;
- 12) Photo Journalist – a person hired or commissioned to take pictures for use in a publication;
- 13) Production Assistant – assists whenever and wherever needed in the production; escorts actors and actresses to and from their trailers; assists with crowd control; provides copies of program logistics and/or scripts; collects paperwork; and manages extras.
- 14) Production Manager - oversees the production process of a program; approves the topic proposal, project logistics, and production schedules
- 15) Propsman – provides the props that will be used during the filming of a scene as well as the materials that will be used for the set design
- 16) Publisher – one who manages the production, advertising, circulation of newspapers or magazines or online publications
- 17) Radio Announcer - one who announces or reads news reports on radio;
- 18) Radio Correspondent - one who makes reports on news event from his beat;
- 19) Radio News Editor - one who gives assignments to field reporters or radio correspondents on events considered newsworthy for coverage or airing;
- 20) Reporter - a journalist employed by a newspaper, television or radio station, wire or wireless broadcasting and online service to gather and produce news for publication and broadcasting and paid as a regular employee or under contract;
- 21) Researcher – researches and develops program ideas; gathers and fact-checks required and relevant data on the program subject
- 22) Segment Producer – produces the individual segments that will comprise a television/radio program; usually works for magazine shows or other multi-themed programs.
- 23) Stringer - a reporter working for an international news organization, network or broadcast enterprise, wire, wireless broadcasting and online service
- 24) Video Editor – assembles, cures, and edits recorded raw materials into a one video output; works during the post-production stage of the program
- 25) Video Transcriber – re-edits the television/radio broadcasted program into a new format suitable for online broadcast; publishes the programs in the station's online platform

SECTION 4. Commission on Press Freedom and Media Security. There is hereby created a Commission on Press Freedom and Media Security (CPFMS) that will serve as Media Workers' shield from all forms of attacks and as a development center for journalism. The CPFMS shall be under the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO).

With the creation of the CPFMS, the Presidential Task Force on Media Security (PTFOMS), which was created by Administrative Order No. 1, s. 2016 shall be abolished and its functions and operational guidelines shall be subsumed by the CPFMS.

Any warrant of arrest or search warrant issued against any media worker accused of any offense related to the practice of his/her profession shall be served in coordination with the CPFMS or the local media organization in the place he/she operates.

Any citizen's arrest of a media worker pursuant to the provisions of the new Rules of Court on the nature of the offense involved shall be immediately communicated by the responsible Commanding Officer of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and/or the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) or any of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Task Force and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to the CPFMS or their duly designated officers, or to the local media association, if outside Metro Manila. The arresting/searching element shall, with dispatch, inform the CPFMS or the local media organization of the details thereof, such as, but not limited to, the place and time of the arrest/search, offense charged and place of confinement.

Any reported killing, abduction, or harassment of a journalist, regardless of whether or not the suspects are law enforcers, shall be investigated with dispatch and the result made known to the CPFMS, or local media organization or his/her employer media company.

Within the limits of the Constitution and existing laws, utmost cooperation and courtesy shall be extended by law enforcers to ensure the unhampered exercise by the media of their calling. In this regard, the PNP shall, within three (3) days from receipt of a report of a death threat or bodily harm to a media worker, evaluate the report and if warranted, provide the necessary security detail.

SECTION 5. Composition and Functions of the CPFMS.

(a) **Composition of the Commission on Press Freedom and Media Security** - The body shall be headed by the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) and composed of journalism organizations duly recognized by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) represented by their respective presidents or their representatives. The following organizations shall compose the CPFMS:

1. National Press Club of the Philippines (NPC)
2. Philippine Press Institute (PPI)
3. Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP)
4. Press Photographers of the Philippines (PPP)
5. Manila Overseas Press Club (MOPC)
6. National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP)
7. Publishers Association of the Philippines, Inc. (PAPI)
8. Federation of Provincial Press Clubs (FPPC)
9. Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR)

10. Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC)

(b) Functions of the Council - The Council shall have the following responsibilities:

1. to produce a regularly-updated database or directory of media workers from print, online and broadcast media;
2. to conduct seminars, skills and safety trainings and other related activities;
3. to help craft, lobby and legislate so-called media laws that are in consonance with this act such as, but not limited to, security of tenure, anti-harassment of media workers, adjustment in the compensation and benefits of media workers as the need arises, equal treatment of all media workers in the grant of interviews, observance of full transparency in the coverage of government-sponsored events, etc.

SECTION 6. Compensation Table. To ensure that media workers shall be properly compensated comparably with those in the government sector and other industries in the private sector, the following shall be the minimum monthly compensation for media workers:

POSITION	SALARY (ACCORDING TO NO. OF YEARS EXPERIENCE)			
	Three (3) years	Five (5) years	Eight (8) years	Ten (10) years
Art Director	35,000	45,000	50,000	60,000
Audioman	25,000	30,000	35,000	40,000
Blocktimer	20,000	35,000	40,000	45,000
Cameraman	25,000	30,000	35,000	40,000
Columnist/Writer	25,000	30,000	35,000	45,000
Copy Editor	20,000	30,000	35,000	40,000
Field Reporter	40,000	45,000	50,000	60,000
Photojournalist	30,000	40,000	45,000	50,000
Production Assistant	20,000	25,000	30,000	40,000
Production Manager	35,000	45,000	50,000	55,000
Propsman	20,000	25,000	30,000	40,000
Radio News Editor (Writer)	25,000	35,000	40,000	50,000
Researcher	25,000	30,000	45,000	50,000
Segment Producer	35,000	40,000	45,000	55,000
Stringer	20,000	25,000	30,000	40,000
Video Editor	30,000	40,000	45,000	60,000
Video Transcriber	20,000	25,000	30,000	40,000

The preceding rates shall apply to those stationed in the National Capital Region (NCR). The CPFMS shall determine the rates applicable to areas outside NCR, and shall be guided by the prevailing regional wage rates. The rates shall be subject to adjustment every three (3) years.

SECTION 7. Tenure of Office. Stability of employment and security of tenure shall be assured the media workers as provided under existing laws.

SECTION 8. Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics of media workers shall be promulgated by the CPFMS within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 9. Mandatory Additional Insurance Benefits for Media Workers. In addition to the existing insurance benefits given to media workers by the Social Security System (SSS) as provided under Republic Act (R.A.) No. 8282 and the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) under R.A. No. 8291, there shall be an additional insurance coverage to be provided by media companies to media workers which shall provide the following minimum benefits:

1. Death Benefit of Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 200,000.00) for each media worker who shall perish in the line of duty;
2. Disability Benefits of up to Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 200,000.00) for each media worker who shall suffer total or partial disability whether permanent or temporary, arising from any injury sustained in the line of duty; and
3. Reimbursement of actual medical expenses up to but not to exceed One Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 100,000.00) for each media worker who shall be hospitalized or who shall require medical attendance for injuries sustained while in the line of duty.

SECTION 10. Incentives. The CPFMS shall hold activities aimed at upgrading the journalism profession through awards, cash incentives, scholarship grants, exchange programs and others.

To encourage Media Networks, there shall be an additional allowable deduction from their gross income equivalent to Twenty-Five percent (25%) of the total amount paid as benefits to Media Workers.

SECTION 11. Responsibilities of Media Entities. Media Networks shall be responsible, and thus, liable for all contents released under their names. In cases filed against their employees, the owner/s of the Media Networks shall be subsidiarily liable for civil liabilities.

SECTION 12. Penal Provision. Any person who shall wilfully violate any of the provisions enumerated under this Act shall upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not less than Three Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 300,000.00) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 500,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than two (2) years but not more than six (6) years, or both such fine and imprisonment depending upon the discretion of the court.

SECTION 13. Inclusion in the Curriculum. The provisions of this Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, as well as the Code of Ethics for Media Workers shall form part of the core subjects in the school curriculum on journalism.

SECTION 14. Funding. The initial budget of the CPFMS shall be determined in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management and submitted to the PCOO and the Office of the President for approval. Appropriations for the succeeding years shall be incorporated in the budget proposal for the PCOO.

SECTION 15. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The CPFMS in consultation with other media groups, associations, publishers, guilds and concerned groups, shall promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 16. Separability Clause. If for any reason any provision or section of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, such portions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 17. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 18. Effectivity Clause. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.