

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **726**

Introduced by HONORABLE LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 7356, which created the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and Republic Act No. 10066, also known as the “National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009,” were landmark legislation that sought to preserve our cultural assets. Although both laws recognize cultural wealth as both tangible and intangible, these nevertheless, put greater emphasis on our physical cultural heritage, such as, historical shrines, heritage sites, and monuments.


This bill intends to address gaps in our efforts to preserve the intangible aspects of the Filipino culture, specifically our heritage crafts. The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, identified Traditional Craftsmanship as one of the five intangible heritage domains. Our Filipino culture, being an amalgamation of numerous cultures, is richly endowed with a wide diversity of heritage crafts. Unfortunately, there is not enough resources and programs that preserve, develop, propagate and elevate the value and importance of our wealth of indigenous artisans and crafts.

This bill, to be known as the Filipino Heritage Craft Act aims to recognize and raise the value of our intrinsic and indigenous heritage crafts by establishing an integrated educational program in all levels, from basic, technical/vocational to higher education. This program will progress from introductory at the basic education level, to technical proficiency in production, to artistic mastery at the higher education level. Hopefully in the future, one can pursue a Bachelor's in Fine Arts, with a major in Capiz Shell Artistry or T'boli Textile Artistry.

Other salient provisions in this bill include the qualification and awarding of honorary degrees to traditionally-trained indigenous master artisans. These Filipino individuals, with

priceless knowledge and skills on specific crafts, who practice and produce beautiful products as part of their lifestyles, are a treasure of cultural resources for all Filipinos.

Furthermore, this bill calls for the cooperation and syndication among various agencies, including the Department of Tourism, Department of Education, Department of Trade and Industry, with private sector business groups, civil society groups and indigenous peoples groups, in creating an overarching machinery to zealously promote the products that result from the Filipino Heritage Craft Act.



LUCY TORRES GOMEZ
Representative
Fourth District, Leyte

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HOUSE BILL NO. **726**

Introduced by HONORABLE LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR AN INTEGRATED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM TO DEVELOP, PRESERVE AND PROMOTE THE INTRINSIC AND INDIGENOUS HERITAGE CRAFTS OF THE PHILIPPINES AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Filipino Heritage Craft Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – Sections 14,15,16 and 17, Article XIV, of the Philippine Constitution declare that the State shall “foster the preservation, enrichment and dynamic evolution of a Filipino culture,” while respecting cultural diversity and espousing artistic and intellectual freedom. Furthermore, the Constitution mandates the conservation, development, promotion and propagation of the nation's historical and cultural heritage and artistic creations. Moreover, this mandate provides for the “protection of the State” to our country's historical, artistic and heritage wealth.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms should be understood to mean:

CHED – Commission on Higher Education

CSO – Civil Society Organizations

DEPED – Department of Education

DOT – Department of Tourism

DTI – Department of Trade and Industry

Filipino Heritage Craft Educational Program – A multi-level, integrated educational program aimed at recognizing, institutionalizing, preserving, developing, and propagating the practice of intrinsic and indigenous Filipino heritage crafts.

NCCA – National Commission for Culture and the Arts

NCIP – National Commission on Indigenous Peoples

SLT– School of Living Traditions

TESDA – Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

SEC. 4. *Objective.* – This Act shall institutionalize the:

- (a) identification and recognition,
- (b) research, development, and documentation,
- (c) instruction and propagation, and
- (d) multi-level qualification of intrinsic and indigenous Filipino cultural skills.

SEC. 5. *Creation of the Filipino Heritage Craft Educational Program* – To implement the policies and objective declared in this Act, an educational program, to be referred to as, “Filipino Heritage Craft Educational Program,” shall be established. This program shall encompass all levels of education, including basic, higher and technical/vocational. Furthermore, the program shall offer multi-level and integrated courses, that build on from introductory level, to technical level and to artistic mastery level.

SEC. 6-A. *Formation of the Working Group to Develop the Filipino Heritage Craft Educational Program* – A working group shall be formed to develop the Filipino Heritage Craft Educational Program, henceforth referred to as “the Working Group.” This group shall be composed of the:

- (a) DEPED Secretary, or representative assigned by the secretary,
- (b) DTI Secretary, or representative assigned by the secretary,
- (c) DOT Secretary, or representative assigned by the secretary,
- (d) CHED Chairperson, or a representative assigned by the chairperson,
- (e) TESDA Director-General, or representative assigned by the director-general,
- (f) NCCA Chairperson, or representative assigned by the chairperson,
- (g) NCIP Chairperson, or representative assigned by the chairperson,
- (h) Representatives from civil society organizations,

- (i) Representatives from indigenous peoples' organizations,
- (j) Representatives from business organizations engaged in heritage crafts, and
- (k) Representatives from NCCA's School of Living Traditions Program and other relevant institutions.

SEC. 6-B. *Tasks of the Working Group to Develop the Filipino Heritage Craft Educational Program* – The Working Group shall be tasked to accomplish the following:

- (a) Determine and establish criteria and mechanics in identifying intrinsic and indigenous heritage skills that qualify as valuable to the Filipino culture;
- (b) Conduct primary and other research and document the history, traditional procedures, and other relevant information on significant Filipino heritage skills.
- (c) Identify valuable resource persons, who are trained in specific arts through traditional methods, practice the heritage craft as a way of life, and exhibit extraordinary abilities in a specific craft. These resource persons will henceforth be referred to as “Master Indigenous Artisans.”
- (d) Identify valuable resource persons, who are trained in specific arts through traditional methods and practice the heritage craft as a way of life. These resource persons will henceforth be referred to as “Indigenous Artisans.”
- (e) For each qualified Filipino heritage craft, the Working Group shall develop multi-level, integrated curricula, instruction methodologies and procedures for basic, higher and technical/vocational levels.
- (f) Develop an implementation plan in launching the Filipino Heritage Craft Program in all levels of education.
- (d) Identify synergies between the DTI, DOT, TESDA, CSOs and business organizations in the promotion of products from Filipino heritage crafts.

SEC. 7. *Awarding of Filipino Heritage Master Indigenous Artisan and Indigenous Artisan Honorary Degrees* – As an additional task, the Working Group shall determine criteria and mechanics in assessing artisans, who are traditionally trained and practicing, in qualified heritage crafts, as: (a) Master Indigenous Artisan, and (b) Indigenous Artisan.

Artisans, who qualify as Master Indigenous Artisans, shall receive an honorary degree called Master Indigenous Artisan. On the other hand, artisans who qualify as Indigenous Artisans, shall receive an honorary degree called Indigenous Artisan.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any section or part of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, issuances or any part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication either in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jy-Inf' or similar, written in a cursive style.