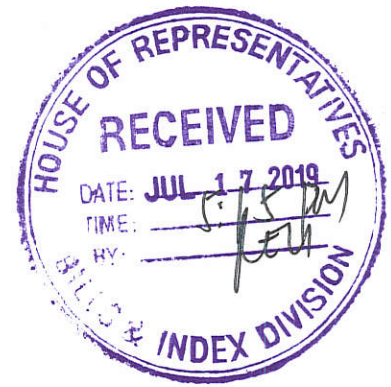




Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Eighteenth Congress  
First Regular Session

2316

HOUSE BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Introduced by HONORABLE YASSER ALONTO BALINDONG**

---

### EXPLANATORY NOTE

In one of his novels, William Shakespeare asked, “What is in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other name, would smell as sweet.” True, but a name stands for the person, and citizenship names one for what his nationality is.

The whole world knows us by the word Filipino, just like we know other citizens by their nationality, like American, Spanish, German, to cite a few.

Therefore, to add derogatory adjectives to a person’s nationality borders on the criminal. With or without malice, labeling suspects of some criminal act injures not only himself, but his entire ancestry.

Thus, the prevailing practice in media of labeling criminal suspects according to their religious or ethnic culture should not be countenanced. Newspaper headlines, radio and TV newscasters often describe suspects as Muslim terrorists, Christian pervert, German pedophile, etc.,


An actual case in point is the national uproar that arose from a dictionary definition of some first world countries of a maid as a “Pinay”, simply because there

are many Filipina OFWs working as such. Why then should we tolerate those who do the same thing to our minorities?

Hence, this bill seeks to correct this bias perpetrated by media thru penalizing and providing penalties not only to the offender, but also to the offenders' higher authorities, such as their editors, chiefs and broadcast managers, as the case may be.

It is noted that similar bills have already been filed at the House of Representatives during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Congress, which however did not result in becoming law.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**YASSER ALONTO BALINDONG**  
Representative  
2<sup>nd</sup> district, Lanao del Sur



Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Eighteenth Congress  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2316

---

Introduced by HONORABLE YASSER ALONTO BALINDONG

---

**AN ACT  
PROHIBITING THE USE OF THE WORDS “MUSLIM” AND  
“CHRISTIAN” IN MASS MEDIA TO DESCRIBE ANY PERSON  
SUSPECTED OF OR CONVICTED FOR HAVING COMMITTED  
CRIMINAL OR UNLAWFUL ACTS,  
AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREOF**

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

**SECTION 1. *Prohibited Act.*** It is hereby declared unlawful for any person to use in mass media, the words “Muslim” and/or “Christian” or any other word that would denote religious, regional or ethnic affiliation to describe any person suspected of or convicted for having committed criminal or unlawful acts.

**SECTION 2. *Penalties.*** The penalty of arresto mayor or a fine ranging from Five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) to Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the courts, shall be imposed upon any person found guilty of violating Section 1 hereof.

The editor-in-chief, in the case of print media, and the news editor in the case of broadcast media and other forms of mass media, shall be imposed a fine not lower than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00).

The juridical entity violating this Act shall be imposed a fine not lower than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) for every violation.

For the second and succeeding offenses, the penalties shall be doubled.

**SECTION 3. *Implementing Rules.*** The Philippine Information Agency, in coordination with the concerned sectors and entities, shall promulgate the rules and regulations to implement this Act within three months after its effectivity.

**SECTION 4. *Repealing Clause.*** All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

*Approved,*