EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. 2804

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Attempting to curtail the freedom of speech and expression is an act that violates the very essence of freedom itself. While some sectors and individuals may hold what is considered "alternative" forms of expression as a violation of cultural or moral values, it is imperative that these "alternative" expressions be respected. An idea or art should not be judged based on how it conforms to popular or political thought. For as long as these artistic creation and expressions do not in any substantive way lead to violence or grave danger to the State, all forms of speech and expression should not be prohibited from exhibition. It is only through this type of free and democratic environment that a society can actually come up with a progressive understanding of the arts.

Nonetheless, the State also recognizes the need to come up with a system by which the rights of the artist and the audience are both recognized and respected. That is why the use of a proper classification system must be employed. The Movie and Television Review and Classification Board is a body tasked to do so much monitoring and policing. The board is restricted to classification, not censorship.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this bill is earnestly recommended.

RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ
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AN ACT
AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1986 CREATING THE MOVIE AND TELEVISION REVIEW AND CLASSIFICATION BOARD

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

SECTION 1. The second paragraph, Section 2 of Presidential Decree No. 1986 is amended to read:

No person shall be appointed to be a member of the BOARD, unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines, not less than twenty-one (21) years of age, and of good moral character and of good standing in the community; Provided, that, in the selection of the members of the BOARD due consideration shall be given to such qualification as would produce a multi-sectoral combination of expertise in the various area of motion picture and television; Provided, further, that at least five (5) members of the BOARD shall be members of the Philippine Bar; Provided finally, that at least fifteen (15) members of the BOARD SHALL BE ACTIVELY PRACTICING MOVIE AND TELEVISION INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS TO BE NOMINATED BY LEGITIMATE ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTING THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF SAID INDUSTRY.

SEC. 2. Section 3 of the same Decree is amended to read:

(a) To promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary or proper for the implementation of this Act, and the accomplishment of its purpose and objectives such rules and regulations shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following their publication in newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

(b) TO SUPERVISE, REGULATE AND GRANT, DENY OR CANCEL, PERMITS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION, COPYING, SALE, LEASE, EXHIBITION, AND/OR TELEVISION BROADCAST OF ALL MOTION PICTURES, TELEVISION PROGRAMS, AND RELATED PUBLICITY MATERIALS INTENDED FOR THEATRICAL EXHIBITION AND/OR BROADCAST ON TELEVISION.

(c) To screen, review and examine all motion pictures, TELEVISION PROGRAMS, AND RELATED PUBLICITY MATERIALS INTENDED FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION IN THEATERS AND TELEVISION. WHETHER IMPORTED OR PRODUCED IN THE PHILIPPINES, BEFORE THEY ARE EXPORTED, IMPORTED, COPIED, DISTRIBUTED, SOLD, LEASED, EXHIBITED IN MOVIE HOUSES AND/OR BROADCAST ON TELEVISION. NO MOTION PICTURE, TELEVISION PROGRAM, OR RELATED PUBLICITY MATERIAL INTENDED FOR THEATRICAL EXHIBITION AND/OR TELEVISION BROADCAST SHALL BE DISAPPROVED BY REASON OF ITS TOPIC, THEME OR SUBJECT MATTER, SUBJECT TO SECTION 201, "OFFENSES AGAINST DECENCY AND GOOD CUSTOMS," OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE.

(d) TO CLASSIFY ALL MOTION PICTURES FOR THEATRICAL EXHIBITION SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW, APPLYING, AS A GENERAL STANDARD, CONTEMPORARY FILIPINO CULTURAL VALUES, INTO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:
GENERAL AUDIENCE ("G"), ALL AGES ADMITTED. - For materials that, in the judgement of the Board, contain nothing that would be deemed offensive by parents whose young children were to view the material.

PARENTAL GUIDANCE - 13 ("PG-13") PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED. - For material which, in the judgement of the Board, go beyond a "G" classification in theme, violence, nudity, sensuality, language, or other contents but do not quite fit in the "Strictly for Adults" (R) rating. Parents are strongly cautioned to give special attention to such material before allowing their minor children below 13. may view a "PG-13" film only if accompanied by a parent or an adult.

Strictly for Adult ("R"), Restricted to or Patently for Adults. - For material which, in the judgement of the Board, contain adult material, vulgar or profane language, considerable sex and violence, sexually oriented nudity, tolerant depiction of aberration behavior, drug use, or a combination of all of the above. No one below 18 shall be allowed to watch material with an "R" classification.

Not for public viewing, in the judgement of the Board are contrary to law, public order, public safety, or a legitimate public interest, subject to section 4, subsection (c). "Procedure for enforcement of "X" classification as herein amended.

THE "X" CLASSIFICATION IS TANTAMOUNT TO A BAN ON A FILM'S THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTION BEFORE THE BOARD ISSUES AN "X" RATING.

(i) The average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find the dominant theme or the work, taken as a whole appeals to prurient interest and satisfies only the market for gratuitous sex and/or violence; or

(ii) The work depicts, in a patently lewd, offensive, or demeaning manner, excretory functions and sexual conduct such as ultimate sexual acts (normal or perverted, actual or simulated), masturbation, and exhibition of the genitals; or the work, taken as a whole and viewed within its context, manner of presentation, intention, and culture, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

VENUES THAT DO NOT FALL UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MTRCB MAY EXHIBIT MOTION PICTURES CLASSIFIED "X", PROVIDED THAT, SUCH VENUES STRICTLY OBSERVE NON-ADMISSION OF MINORS; PROVIDED FURTHER, THAT THESE VENUES SHALL NOT IN ANY WAY BE COMPELLED TO EXHIBIT SUCH "X-RATED FILMS, AND MAY REJECT AN "X" RATED FILM FOR EXHIBITIONS.

(e) To classify all television programs, motion pictures, and related publicity materials intended for broadcast on television, applying, as a general standard, contemporary Filipino cultural values, into any of the following:
(i) GENERAL AUDIENCE ("GP") SUITABLE FOR ALL AGES. MATERIAL FOR TELEVISION WHICH, IN THE JUDGEMENT OF THE BOARD, DO NOT CONTAIN ANYTHING UNSUITABLE FOR CHILDREN AND MINORS, AND MAY BE WATCHED WITHOUT ADULT GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISION;

(ii) PARENTAL GUIDANCE ("PG"). PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED; SOME MATERIAL MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN. MATERIAL FOR TELEVISION WHICH, IN THE JUDGEMENT OF THE BOARD, MAY CONTAIN ADULT MATERIAL BUT MAY BE PERMISSIBLE FOR CHILDREN TO WATCH UNDER THE GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISION OF A PARENT OR RESPONSIBLE ADULT;

(iii) DISAPPROVED FOR TELEVISION ("ID"). MATERIAL FOR TELEVISION WHICH, IN THE JUDGEMENT OF THE BOARD, DO NOT CONFORM TO THE "G" OR "PG" CLASSIFICATION.

Provided, that, television news programs shall be exempted from review and classification; provided, further, that motion pictures classified "PG-13", "R", and "X" for the theatrical exhibition shall be allowed broadcast on television only when made to fit into the "G" or "PG" classification.

(f) To strictly ensure that all motion picture titles, trailers and publicity materials for theatrical exhibition and broadcast on television are made suitable only for a general publicity materials for movies and television that do not fall within said "G" classification shall not be approved for exhibition in moviehouses or for broadcast on television.

In consideration thereof, the following titles shall not be allowed:

(i) Direct representations of, or clear references to, sexual acts, masturbation, excretory functions, and the genitalia;

(ii) Those which, when intentionally mispronounced for promitional purposes, become direct representations of, or clear references to, sexual acts, masturbation, excretory functions, and genitalia;

(iii) Those which, no matter how innocent in a particular Filipino dialect or any in any other language but are, in the Filipino language, direct representations of, or clear references to, sexual acts, masturbation, excretory functions, and the genitalia; and

(iv) Those which are contrary to law, public order, public safety, or any legitimate public interest.

(g) Without prejudice to the institution of appropriate criminal action, to suspend or cancel permits and/or licenses issued by the board and/or impose other administrative penalty / penalties, such as the closure of moviehouses, television networks, or similar establishments which violates the provision of this act and the rules and regulations promulgated by the board.

(h) To cause the prosecution, on behalf of the people of the Philippines, of violators of this act.
(i) To levy, assess and collect, periodically adjust and revise, the rate of fees and charges for the work or review and classification and for the issuance of licenses/permits. The board is authorized to grant in the exercise of its powers and functions and in the performance of its duties and responsibilities.

(j) To deputize representatives from the government, the youth sector, various civic organizations, and associations in the movie industry, whose main duties shall be to help ensure compliance with all laws relative to the distribution, copying, sale, lease, exhibition, and/or television broadcast on all motion pictures, television programs, and related publicity materials intended for the theatrical exhibition and/or broadcast on television. For this purpose, the board may constitute regulatory councils composed of representatives from the above-mentioned sectors as may be appropriate to implement the purposes of this Act. The board may also call on any law enforcement agency for assistance in the implementation and enforcement of its decisions and orders.

(k) To prescribe the internal and operational procedures for the exercise of its powers and functions, the performance of its duties and responsibilities, including the creation and vesting of authority upon subcommittees of the board of the work or review and other related matters.

(l) The exercise of such other powers and functions as may be necessary or incidental to the attainment of the purposes and objectives of this Act, and to perform other related duties and responsibilities as may be directed by the President of the Philippines.

SEC. 3. Section 4 of the said Decree is hereby amended to read as follows:

Section 4. Procedure and Decisions for Review and Classification. - The Chairman of the board shall designate the members of the review sub-committees. No board member shall be assigned to sit on a sub-committee to review and classify when said board member has in any way directly participated in the making of said movie or television program.

(a) The sub-committee on first review. - The sub-committee on first review shall be composed of three (3) board members, who shall elect the sub-committee chairman from among themselves. The decision of the sub-committee on first review shall be rendered by a majority vote of the sub-committee members so designated and present within the day of material's review. In no case shall the sub-committee on first review arrive at a decision without giving the director, or the producer and/or representative, a chance to present his case and/or defend his material.

The applicant may file a motion for reclassification and/or reconsideration within five (5) working days from notice of the sub-committee on first review decision, during which time the applicant may, on his own, and without suggestions from the sub-committee, delete scenes, shot, or lines of dialogue in order for his material to be approved, with such voluntary deletion to be noted in the exhibition permit as a safeguard against illegal insertions.
THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW. - THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD SHALL DESIGNATE A SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW WITHIN FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS UPON RECEIPT OF THE MOTION FOR CLASSIFICATION AND/OR RECONSIDERATION, TO BE COMPOSED OF FIVE (5) BOARD MEMBERS, TO CONDUCT A SECOND REVIEW OF THE SUBJECT FILM, PRINT OR MATERIAL. ONE (1) MEMBER FROM THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON FIRST REVIEW MAY BE REQUIRED TO SIT WITH THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW AS AN OBSERVER AND/OR CONSULTANT.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW SHALL BE PRESIDED OVER BY THE CHAIRMAN OR THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, OR BY BOARD MEMBER DULY DESIGNATED BY THE CHAIRMAN. THE DECISION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW SHALL BE RENDERED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE MEMBERS SO DESIGNATED AND PRESENT DURING THE DAY OF THE MATERIAL’S REVIEW. IN NO CASE SHALL THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW ARRIVE AT THE DECISION WITHOUT GIVING THE DIRECTOR, OR THE PRODUCER AND/OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE, A CHANCE TO PRESENT HIS CASE AND/OR DEFEND HIS MATERIAL.

THE DECISION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW SHALL PREVAIL OVER THAT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON FIRST REVIEW.

THE DECISION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW SHALL BE FINAL, UNLESS THE DECISION IS AN "X" CLASSIFICATION.

PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCEMENT FOR "X" CLASSIFICATION. - AN APPLICANT WHO DISAGREES WITH AN "X" CLASSIFICATION FROM THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW SHALL HAVE A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS FROM NOTICE OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SECOND REVIEW DECISION WITHIN WHICH TO FILE A WRITTEN PROTEST OF SUCH CLASSIFICATION WITH THE BOARD. THE BOARD SHALL HAVE A PERIOD OF TEN (10) WORKING DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF SUCH PROTEST WITHIN WHICH TO FILE A PETITION WITH THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT TO ENJOIN THE DISTRIBUTION, COPYING, SALE, LEASE, EXHIBITION, AND/OR TELEVISION BROADCAST OF THE "X" RATED MOTION PICTURE, TELEVISION PROGRAM, AND/OR PUBLICITY MATERIAL PERTAINING THERETO. THE PRAYER FOR A TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER IN SUCH PROCEEDING SHALL BE RESOLVED BY THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT WITHIN FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS FROM THE FILING THEREOF, AFTER VIEWING THE MATERIAL IN CONTROVERSY.

SHOULD NO JUDICIAL PROCEEDING BE FILED BY THE BOARD OR SHOULD NO TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER BE ISSUED WITHIN THE PERIODS ABOVE INDICATED OR SHOULD THE PRAYER FOR TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER BE DENIED OR SHOULD THE SAME LAPSE WITHOUT THE PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION BEING ISSUED BY THE COURT, THE MATERIAL IN CONTROVERSY SHALL SUBJECT TO THE FUTURE ORDERS OF THE COURT, BE REGARDED AS "R" RATED AND ACCEPTED FOR EXHIBITION.

CONTENTS OF REVIEW DECISIONS - DECISIONS OF THE BOARD’S FIRST AND SECOND REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEES SHALL ALL BE IN WRITING, COPIES OF WHICH SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO APPLICANT UPON HIS REQUEST, AND IN NO CASE TO BE DENIED HIM.

A DECISION DISAPPROVING A FILM IN MUST EXPLAIN THE INTENTION, CONTEXT, MANNER OF PRESENTATION, AND CULTURE INVOLVED.

A DECISION SHALL NOT, IN ANY MANNER, IMPLY OR SUGGEST SPECIFIC DELETIONS OR CUTS OF SCENES, SHOTS OR DIALOGUE FOR RECLASSIFICATION OR RECONSIDERATION TO BE ARRIVED AT. THE DIRECTOR
/ PRODUCER / DISTRIBUTOR, GIVEN THE RIGHT TO INQUIRE WHY AND HOW
DECISION HAS BEEN MADE, IS ALLOWED TO RE-EDIT HIS MATERIAL
WITHOUT PRESSURE FROM THE BOARD. IN ORDER FOR HIM TO OBTAIN HIS
PREFERRED CLASSIFICATION, THE VOLUNTARY DELETIONS SHALL BE
NOTED DOWN IN THE EXHIBITION PERMIT TO SAFEGUARD AGAINST ILLEGAL
INSERTIONS.

SEC. 4. Section 8 of the same Decree is hereby amended to read as follows.

Section 8. Posting or Display of Certificate or Label.

(a) FOR MOTION PICTURES - A COPY OF THE EXHIBITION PERMIT SHALL BE
PREOMINENTLY POSTED AT THE TICKET BOOTH OF ALL THEATERS WHERE
THE MOTION PICTURE IS EXHIBITED. IN ADDITION, THE BOARD
CLASSIFICATION OF THE MOTION PICTURE SHALL BE DISPLAYED ON A
THREE (3) FEET-HIGH "STANDEE" IN THE THEATER LOBBY. THE
CLASSIFICATION SHALL LIKESWISE BE ANNOUNCED IN ALL OF THE FILM'S
FIELD ADVERTISEMENTS AS SOON AS SUCH CLASSIFICATION IS OBTAINED.

(b) FOR TELEVISION PROGRAMS - AN ADVISORY TO THE EFFECT THAT THE
PROGRAM REQUIRES PARENTAL GUIDANCE SHALL BE SHOWN
IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE OPENING CREDITS OF THE PARTICULAR
TELEVISION MATERIAL CLASSIFIED AS SUCH. THE PHRASE "PARENTAL
GUIDANCE" SHALL BE SUPERIMPOSED ONSCREEN THROUGHOUT THE
SHOWING OF THE TELEVISION MATERIAL CLASSIFIED AS SUCH.

SEC. 5. Section 9 of the same Decree is hereby amended to read as follows:

Section 9. Admission in Movie Houses or Theaters.

(a) FOR FILMS CLASSIFIED "PG-13" - IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL FOR ANY CHILD
BELOW THIRTEEN YEARS OF AGE TO ENTER, TO MISREPRESENT OR MAKE
USE OF ANY FALSE EVIDENCE ABOUT HIS OR HER AGE, IN ORDER TO GAIN
ADMISSION INTO A MOVIEHOUSE OR THEATER SHOWING A MOTION
CLASSIFIED AS "PG-13" UNACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR AN ADULT. IT
SHALL ALSO BE UNLAWFUL FOR ANY EMPLOYEE OF A MOVIEHOUSE OR
THEATER TO SELL TO, OR RECEIVE FROM, AN UNACCOMPANIED CHILD
BELOW THIRTEEN YEARS OF AGE ANY ADMISSION TICKET TO THE
EXHIBITION OF MOTION PICTURES CLASSIFIED AS "PG-13."

(b) FOR FILMS CLASSIFIED "STRICTLY FOR ADULT ("R") - IT SHALL BE
UNLAWFUL FOR ANY PERSON BELOW EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE TO ENTER,
TO MISREPRESENT OR MAKE USE OF ANY FALSE EVIDENCE ABOUT HIS OR
HER AGE IN ORDER TO GAIN ADMISSION INTO A MOVIEHOUSE OR THEATER
SHOWING A MOTION PICTURE CLASSIFIED BY THE BOARD AS "STRICTLY
FOR ADULT." IT SHALL ALSO BE UNLAWFUL FOR ANY EMPLOYEE OF A
MOVIEHOUSE OR THEATER TO SELL TO, OR RECEIVE FROM ANOTHER
PERSON KNOWN TO THE FORMER TO BE BELOW EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE
ANY ADMISSION TICKET TO THE EXHIBITION OF MOTION PICTURES
CLASSIFIED AS "STRICTLY FOR ADULT." IN CASE OF DOUBT, AS TO THE AGE
OF THE PERSON SEEKING ADMISSION, THE LATTER SHALL BE REQUIRED TO
EXHIBIT A RESIDENCE CERTIFICATE OR OTHER SUCH PROOF OF AGE.

SEC. 6. Penalties - Any person who violates any provision of this act or any regulation
thereunder, shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three
years or a fine of not less than ten thousand pesos (p10, 000.00) or both.
SEC. 7. Repealing Clause - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provision of this act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. Effectivity - This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,