A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, In 1593, The “Doctrina Cristiana 1593” is the first and earliest book with Baybayin, the Ancient Filipino Script, printed in the Philippines during the Spanish Colonization, written by Fray Juan De Plasencia (Juan Portocarrero 1520-1590) in which the title meant “The teachings of Christianity”;

WHEREAS, the “Doctrina Cristiana 1593” is essentially a catechism, a collection of common prayers, including the Lord’s Prayer and the Hail Mary and was supposed to be used in the propagation of Catholicism in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, the Philippine version was put together by Fray Juan de Placensia, a Franciscan friar who helped found many Philippine towns, including Antipolo, Lucban, Meycauayan, and Tayabas;

WHEREAS, he wrote to King Philip II of Spain that he had already written several religious and scholarly books that could help spread the faith in the island – including the Doctrina Cristiana and other studies of the Tagalog spoken and written language;

WHEREAS, in 1593, the “Doctrina Cristiana” was printed and it is considered one of the major evidence that we have our own writing system before the Spanish came;

WHEREAS, In 1593, King Philip II of Spain had granted a license for the printing of the “Doctrina Cristiana” because of its great value to the evangelization effort, but almost all copies of it vanished until one reappears, presumably the royal copy, in Paris in 1946, where it is purchased by an American dealer who then resells it along with many other books to the American book collector and one time Sears Roebuck chairman, Lessing J. Rosenwald (1891-1979), who then bequeaths his entire collection, which includes the “Doctrina Cristiana 1593”, to the United States Library of Congress upon his death;
WHEREAS, this copy, as far as we know, is the only one of its kind, and it is being housed in the Rare Books Division of the United States Library of Congress;

WHEREAS, the "Doctrina Cristiana 1593" is relatively small in size, not much bigger than a contemporary textbook, and was printed xylographically – like a woodblock with the letters curved out on mulberry paper;

WHEREAS, it is, with the greatest of care and respect, a syllabary, followed by prayers and other articles of faith, presented in Spanish-Tagalog and Baybayin, the pre-Hispanic script;

WHEREAS, an arrangement with the Philippine Government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs, and the United States Government, should be initiated to bring back the "Doctrina Cristiana 1593" to the Philippines so more Filipinos could admire such an important historical artifact of our country. It could be placed in our National Museum in time for the National Quincentennial (500 years) commemoration of the first Catholic mass that happened on March 31, 1521 which was done in Limasawa, and the first baptism in Cebu that took place on April 14, 1521;

WHEREAS, on July 24, 2017, His Excellency, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, called upon the United States Government to return to us an important historical artifact, the "Bells of Balangiga", and was later on successful in recovering it back to our country, signaling a new chapter of Philippine-American relations;

WHEREAS, On February 12, 2019, Dr. Rene Escalante — Chairman of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines — in response to the request letter of the Principality Hereditary Council of the Philippines and Baybayin Buhayin Inc. to President Rodrigo Duterte to recover the "Doctrina Cristiana 1593" from the US Library of Congress, wrote to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary, Teodoro Locsin Jr., that the commission supports the recovery effort of this historical artifact;

WHEREAS, The return of the "Doctrina Cristiana 1593" will be a recognition of our sovereignty as a nation and will symbolize the true friendship between the democratic governments of the Philippines and the United States of America;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, To direct the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, through the Diplomatic Efforts of the Department of Foreign Affairs, to take further steps to preserve and recover from the Government of the United States of America, and preserve the "Doctrina Cristina 1593"

Adopted,

JOHN MARVIN "YUL SERVO" C. NIETO