

**Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City**

**FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session**

**HOUSE BILL No. 4121
(Filed Feb. 2, 2011)**

Introduced by Reps. TEDDY A. CASIÑO and NERI JAVIER COLMENARES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Concerned with the welfare of persons with disabilities, the State affirms and mandates the rehabilitation, self-development and integration of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) into mainstream society through Republic Act No. 7277 or the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities. Through the said law, television stations are encouraged to use subtitles or sign-language interpreters in their newscast programs. However, it can be observed that none of the major Metro Manila news programs are regularly using subtitles or sign-language insets in their reports. Some regional stations are actually utilizing sign language insets with the help of non-government organizations. Unfortunately, their mother stations do not practice the same.

With around a million PWDs, including those who are deaf, there is a long-standing yet unheeded call to use subtitles or sign language on TV. Without these aids, those who are hearing-impaired are deprived of timely and relevant information that broadcast news provides.

It should also be considered that less than 5% of the reported 120,000 hearing-impaired are literate or have received any form of schooling, according to the Philippine Deaf Resource Center. This is why Filipino sign language is preferred over captions.

Through this proposed bill, the broadcast media will be more accessible to the hearing-impaired. It may also pave the way for more captioned or sign-language interpreted programs in the future.

Approved,

TEDDY A. CASIÑO
Bayan Muna Party-list

NERI JAVIER COLMENARES
Bayan Muna Party-list

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AN ACT
REQUIRING THE USE OF SIGN-LANGUAGE INSETS FOR LOCAL NEWS
PROGRAMS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 22 OF REPUBLIC
ACT 7277, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT 9442

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 “Sign-language insets for News Programs Act of 2011.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the Government’s concern and responsibility to make telecommunications and mass media available to persons with disabilities for their rehabilitation, self-development and self-reliance as provided by Republic Act No. 7277 or the “Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities” and the Philippine Constitution which upholds the right to information.

SECTION 3. Section 22 of Republic Act No. 7277 or the “Magna Carta for Person with Disabilities,” as amended by Republic Act No. 9442, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 22 Broadcast Media – ALL LOCAL television stations shall be REQUIRED to provide a sign-language inset, AND IF POSSIBLE, subtitles in at least TWO (2) newscast programs a day and special programs covering events of national significance.”

SECTION 4. *Constitutionality.* – Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity or constitutionality of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, letters of instructions, resolutions,

orders, ordinances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,