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Introduced by SEN. VICENTE C. SOTTO III

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**RESOLUTION  
RECOMMENDING THE METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY (MMDA) TO ESTABLISH A FILM FESTIVAL  
EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE INDEPENDENT FILMS DURING THE  
LONG SEMESTRAL BREAK**

**WHEREAS**, Section 14, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution provides that:

*“The State shall foster the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of a Filipino national culture based on the principle of unity in diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual expression”;*

**WHEREAS**, Section 15, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution states that:

*“The State shall conserve, promote, and popularize the nation's historical and cultural heritage and resources, as well as artistic creations”;*

**WHEREAS**, Section 16, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution maintains that:

*All the country's artistic and historic wealth constitutes the cultural treasure of the nation and shall be under the protection of the State which may regulate its disposition.*

**WHEREAS**, the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF) is an annual film festival created to showcase locally produced films as no foreign films are shown in Philippine theaters for the entire duration of the festival, which runs from December 25 (Christmas) through New Year's Day and into first weekend of January in the following year;

**WHEREAS**, by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 1459, an Executive Committee was created to take charge of the MMFF;

**WHEREAS**, Presidential Decree No. 1647 reconstituted the Executive Committee and transferred the management of MMFF to the Office of the Metro Manila Commission, which later on became the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), to take charge of the observance of the annual metropolitan film festival;

**WHEREAS**, on its 42<sup>nd</sup> year, the MMFF introduced significant changes, particularly on the criteria for choosing the final 8 films to be shown in the cinemas – doing away with a 50% allotted to "commercial viability" – to wit:

- story, audience appeal and overall impact (40%)
- cinematic attributes or technical expertise (40%)
- global appeal (10%), and
- Filipino sensibility (10%);

**WHEREAS**, by reason of the new criteria in place, independent films have dominated this year's 'Magic 8';

**WHEREAS**, according to Paciano Cabagnot, whose career in cinema spans more than three decades<sup>1</sup>, in his paper entitled “*Pinoy Indie 101*”, traditionally, the term independent cinema was coined to refer to films produced outside of the big studio (Hollywood) system. On the other hand, indie films were also known as “art films”, alternative cinema, or short films. The former refers to the reason why these films were made, for artistic self-expression.

**WHEREAS**, the dominance of independent films in the 42<sup>nd</sup> MMFF stirred discussions in social media and in the movie industry. While these independent films are considered by some as “*breath of fresh air from the usual funny, fantastical storylines*,” and “*encourage people to think*;” most of the regular MMFF moviegoers are still looking for the kinds of films screened in the previous MMFFs – movies that give them a good laugh<sup>2</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup><http://dlsu.academia.edu/EdwardPacianoCabagnot>

<sup>2</sup> <http://primer.com.ph/blog/2016/11/20/mmff-2016-lineup-announced-indie-films-dominate/>

**WHEREAS,** since Christmas season is for children, and it is likewise the time when MMFF movies are being shown in the cinemas; the absence of the mainstream films in the MMFF entries for 2016 was prejudicial to the regular MMFF moviegoers, particularly the children, who always look forward to these movies to bond, enjoy, be entertained and share a good laugh with their family and friends;

**WHEREAS,** while the 2016 MMFF entries are mostly independent films, the audience turnout has been low prompting a number of theaters to drop some films from its list of movies being screened. MMFF official Liza Diño-Seguerra confirms this development<sup>3</sup>;

**WHEREAS,** other than to ensure the production of quality Filipino films, the MMFF also promotes the welfare of its workers by allotting relevant portions of its proceeds for its beneficiaries – which include the Mowel Fund, Motion Picture Anti-Film Piracy Council, Film Academy of the Philippines, the Film Development Council of the Philippines and the Optical Media Board – with the intention of reforming the local film business;

**WHEREAS,** in selecting mostly independent films in the 2016 MMFF, the mandate of the MMFF to promote the welfare of its workers has been somewhat brushed aside and to the

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<sup>3</sup> <http://cnnphilippines.com/entertainment/2016/12/27/some-mmff-films-no-longer-showing-in-some-cinemas.html>


detriment of the intended beneficiaries due to the low earnings from this year's entries<sup>4</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, the contribution of the independent films in the Philippine movie industry cannot be disregarded as well as the honor they have given the country – considering that some Filipino independent films have been nominated and have received numerous awards in different well-regarded international film festivals;

**WHEREAS**, independent films must likewise be given its well-deserved spotlight – separate from the mainstream films that can take or divide the attention from them – from the public in general;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to recommend that the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) establish a film festival exclusively for the independent films during the long semestral break to give the festival its much-deserved and much-needed time and attention.

*Adopted,*

  
**VICENTE C. SOTTO III**

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<sup>4</sup> Although, as of writing, there is still no official statement from the MMFF relative to the movie proceeds, "ticket sales are down compared to previous years" - <http://www.filipinoscribe.com/2016/12/27/indie-movies-mmff-2016/>.