

SENATE

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P.S. Res. No. 538

Introduced by Senator **SONNY ANGARA**

RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES TO NOMINATE WHANG-OD OGGAY FOR THE GAWAD SA MANLILIKHA NG BAYAN (GAMABA) OR THE NATIONAL LIVING TREASURES AWARD FOR FOSTERING AND PRESERVING THE TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS TATTOO ART OF KALINGA

WHEREAS, Whang-Od Oggay, of Buscalan, Kalinga, is the only surviving Kalinga traditional tattoo artist with the distinguished title of *mambabatok* or a master tattooist of *batek* or the folk skin inscriptions of Kalinga;

WHEREAS, Whang-Od is renowned for her *batek* that she started practicing since her childhood years where she tattooed countless warriors and headhunters of her tribe that has now garnered both local and international recognition and reverence¹;

WHEREAS, the indigenous tattoo art of *batek* is distinctively known for its symmetric and intricate designs that detail valor and bravery of ancient tribal warriors, and is customarily applied through a hand-tapped pricking method using intrinsic instruments such as Carabao horns and fruit thorns²;

WHEREAS, the *batek* survived centuries of foreign influences, hence the traditional Filipino tattoo art must not disappear and turn extinct due to mere negligence to preserve a significant feature of Philippine culture and identity;

WHEREAS, the continuity of the *batek* is anchored on the well-being of Whang-Od being the last living *mambabatok*, which therefore necessitates immediate action to preserve the folk art considering Whang-Od's advanced age;

WHEREAS, Section 15, Article XIV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution directs the State to "conserve, promote, and popularize the nation's historical and cultural heritage and resources, as well as artistic creations", while Section 17, Article XIV mandates the same to "recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions";

WHEREAS, Republic Act 7355 provides the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA) or the National Living Treasures Award through the recognition of Filipinos, particularly traditional folk artists, for their contribution to the national heritage by granting awards and monetary;

¹ Legacy Immortalized: Legendary Tattoo Artist Whang-Od Nominated as PH's National Living Treasure in Manila FAME. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). <http://www.dti.gov.ph/media/latest-news/11336-whang-od-nominated-as-ph-s-national-living-treasure>

² Batek: Traditional Tattoos and Identities in Contemporary Kalinga, North Luzon Philippines. Salvador-Amores, A. HUMANITIES Diliman Vol. 3, No. 1 (2002).

WHEREAS, these awards, grants, and recognitions are proper not only to honor Whang-Od and similar individuals who contribute and enrich the Filipino cultural identity and history, but also to preserve and to further promote traditional folk arts for the benefit of future generations;

WHEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES to nominate Whang-Od Oggay for the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA) or the National Living Treasures Award for her exceptional embodiment of the Filipino's rich heritage;

RESOLVED, FURTHER, that copies of this resolution be sent to the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Adopted,



SONNY ANGARA