



SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

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SENATE
P. S. Res. No. 663

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA

RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO NOMINATE APO WHANG-OD OGGAY OF KALINGA TO THE GAWAD SA MANLILIKHA NG BAYAN (GAMABA) AWARD FOR HER INVALUABLE ROLE IN PERPETUATING THE TRADITIONAL ART OF TATTOOING

WHEREAS, Apo Whang-od, estimated to be born in the 1920s, is the oldest living *mambabatok* (tattoo artist) in the Cordillera province. She continues to do the art of *batok* (tattoo) using a mixed pigment made of soot and water, a small bamboo stick with *siit* (orange thorn needle), and another short stick to tap the thorn into the skin;

WHEREAS, she has dedicated her whole life to her craft as she continues the art form and stands as its living archive in which she holds memory and mastery of Kalinga's tattoo practice and its visual symbolisms that depict the province's rituals - from childbirth, adulthood, marriage and death;

WHEREAS, in the early 16th century, traditional tattooing was widespread in the Philippines, especially in the Cordilleras, where it is best understood within the context of headhunting but actually serves as cultural symbols of intricate rituals brought about by the community;

WHEREAS, until recently, *batok* had been considered a fading art form, and with its slow demise, vestiges of valuable culture and tradition would have vanished and be forgotten were it not for Whang-Od, who became the subject of American tattoo anthropologist and TV host Dr. Lars Krutak in his *Discovery* television series *Tattoo Hunter*, catapulting her into the global spotlight;

WHEREAS, despite Whang-Od's old age dwindling eye sight, her hands are steady and rhythmic while her concentration fierce - a portrait of an artist consumed with her work;

WHEREAS, people from all over the world pay homage to her and get inked with Kalinga's traditional tattoos, thus creating a global living canvas for the Philippine indigenous art form;

WHEREAS, clarion calls for the nomination of Apo Whang-od Oggay have been resonating for the past years, supported by the filing of Senate Resolution 1606 by this representation during the Sixteenth Congress;

WHEREAS, it is timely that Whang-Od be celebrated as a National Living Treasure or *Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan* (GAMABA) through Republic Act 7335 "a Filipino citizen or group of Filipino citizens engaged in any traditional art uniquely Filipino, whose distinctive skills have reached such a high level of technical and artistic excellence;"

WHEREAS, the awarding of the GAMABA will not only recognize Whang-Od's role as a steward of Kalinga's intangible cultural heritage but will also aid her community and her apprentice, in making sure that the art form will be passed from generation to generation;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED to express the sense of the Senate to nominate Apo Whang-od Oggay of Kalinga to the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan Award (GAMABA)

Adopted,


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator