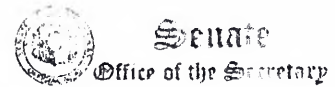



16
NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



'22 JUL 25 A10 :35

SENATE
S. No. 805

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

AN ACT
DECLARING THE FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY OF EVERY YEAR AS NATIONAL HIJAB DAY AND PROMOTING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MUSLIM TRADITION OF WEARING A HIJAB

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Hijab is a veil that covers the head and chest, which is particularly worn by a Muslim female beyond the age of puberty in the presence of adult males outside of their immediate family. It may also refer to any head, face, or body covering worn by Muslim women that conforms to a certain standard of modesty.

In the previous years, there had been positive developments affirming the Muslim women's right to wear hijab. In February, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) approved the inclusion of hijab in the uniform of female Muslim Coast Guard personnel. It was hoped that the policy will also encourage more Muslim women to join the Coast Guard workforce¹.

In a 2013 advisory on the wearing of headscarves, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) also upheld the right of Muslim women to wear hijab and that government agencies tasked to implement the provisions of Magna Carta of Women (particularly on Recognition and Preservation of Cultural Identity and Integrity) should ensure that their "exercise of religious belief is not breached by any state

¹ "PCG approves inclusion of 'HIJAB' in the uniform of female Muslim personnel." February 2022.
<https://coastguard.gov.ph/index.php/downloads/11-news/4469-pcg-approves-inclusion-of-hijab-in-the-uniform-of-female-muslim-personnel>

actor or private individual²." Similarly, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) stated in a memorandum circular that the wearing of hijab (headscarves) among Muslim women shall be allowed in government offices.

Unfortunately, despite such encouraging progress promoting religious tolerance and normalizing the wearing of hijab, cases of discrimination, bullying and bigotry against hijabi (Muslim women wearing hijab) were still reported. Also, many wrongly and unjustly associate wearing of such with terrorism and criminality.

This measure seeks to join in the annual celebration of World Hijab Day every February 1. The occasion encourages women from all backgrounds to experience wearing the hijab to foster cultural understanding and international solidarity. This legislation also aims to protect and deepen the understanding amongst non-Muslims about the value of wearing a hijab as an act of modesty and dignity of Muslim women, to promote appreciation for diversity in expression of oneself and one's faith and religion, and to promote acceptance of other lifestyles amongst the citizenry.

This bill was already approved by the House of Representatives on Third and Final Reading in the Eighteenth Congress.

The passage of this bill is recommended.



JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

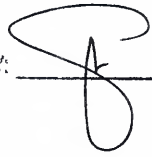
² Human Rights Advisory CHR-A2013-002 <http://chr.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/HRA-CHR-A2013-002-On-the-Wearing-of-Headscarves.pdf>

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



'22 JUL 25 A10 :35

SENATE
S. No. 805

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

**AN ACT
DECLARING THE FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY OF EVERY YEAR AS NATIONAL
HIJAB DAY AND PROMOTING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MUSLIM
TRADITION OF WEARING A HIJAB**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*National Hijab Day*”.

2 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the role of women in
3 nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality of women and men
4 before the law. The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship,
5 without discrimination and/or preference, shall always be respected.

6 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the term “*hijab*” shall refer
7 to a veil that covers the head and chest, which is particularly worn by a Muslim
8 female beyond the age of puberty in the presence of adult males outside of their
9 immediate family. It may further refer to any head, face, or body covering worn by
10 Muslim women that conforms to a certain standard of modesty.

11 The term “*hijabi*” refers to a Muslim woman wearing the hijab.

12 Sec. 4. *Objectives.* – It is the objective of this Act to:

- 13 (a) encourage Muslim and non-Muslim women to wear the hijab and
14 experience the virtue in wearing it;

- 1 (b) remove the misconception of wearing the hijab that has been
2 misunderstood as a symbol of oppression, terrorism, and lack of
3 freedom;
- 4 (c) stop discrimination against Muslim hijabi;
- 5 (d) protect the freedom of religion and the right of Muslim women to
6 practice their religion;
- 7 (e) protect and deepen the understanding amongst non-Muslims about the
8 value of wearing a hijab as an act of modesty and dignity of Muslim
9 women;
- 10 (f) promote appreciation for diversity in expression of oneself and one's
11 faith and religion; and,
- 12 (g) promote tolerance and acceptance of other lifestyles amongst the
13 citizenry.

14 **Sec. 5. *Awareness Program.*** – The National Hijab Day shall be observed every
15 first day of February to showcase hijabi's rights and the Muslim tradition of wearing
16 a hijab. Muslim and non-Muslim women shall be encouraged to don the hijab on
17 this day.

18 Government Institutions, schools, and the private sector shall be encouraged
19 to observe this event in a manner that promotes understanding and awareness
20 among its employees and students of the objective of the campaign.

21 **Sec. 6. *Implementing Agency.*** – The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos
22 (NCMF) is hereby mandated as the lead agency in promoting and raising
23 consciousness about the practice of wearing a hijab. It shall conduct activities that
24 shall aim to deepen understanding of the hijab as a lifestyle choice amongst Muslim
25 women. Towards this end, it may conduct fora, information dissemination campaigns
26 and other educational drive to effectively meet the objectives of this Act.

27 **Sec. 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
28 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision or part not otherwise
29 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

30 **Sec. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
31 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation

1 contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed,
2 modified, or amended accordingly.

3 Sec. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
4 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,