



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH (18th) CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1372

Introduced by REP. JOSE CHRISTOPHER Y. BELMONTE

RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING THE 107TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF JUSTICE CECILIA MUÑOZ-PALMA AND HONORING HER INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTION IN DEFENDING THE FREEDOMS OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

WHEREAS, Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma was a historic Filipino jurist and the first woman justice appointed to the Supreme Court Justice of the Republic of the Philippines. She was also the first female prosecutor of Quezon City, the first female district judge for Negros Oriental, and the second woman to be appointed to the Court of Appeals.

WHEREAS, Justice Muñoz-Palma was a legal luminary who championed democracy, human rights, truth, and freedom during the Martial Law period. She penned several landmark dissents to the declaration of Martial Law, denounced the flagrant abuses of power under the dictatorial regime, and fought for the liberties of the Filipino people.

WHEREAS, in 1986, Justice Muñoz-Palma was elected the President of the Constitutional Commission that framed a new Charter and laid the legal foundation for a nation grounded on principles of democracy, sovereignty, and social justice.

WHEREAS, the 1987 Constitution was written to enshrine the spirit of freedom and democracy, establishing the presidential system of government with three branches —

the legislative, executive, and judicial – each separate and independent of each other, but affording an effective check and balance; creating the Commission of Human Rights; and strengthening and expanding the Bill of Rights, which secures the basic liberties of Filipinos to humanistic processes and a democratic way of life.

WHEREAS, the all-embracing Bill of Rights and the new structure of government established in the 1987 Constitution safeguards against the return of authoritarian rule and reaffirms the Filipino people's right to life, liberty and property, due process, equal protection of the laws, freedom of religion, speech, the press, and peaceful assembly.

WHEREAS, the celebration of the invaluable contributions of Justice Muñoz-Palma brings to mind the impetus of crafting the 1987 Constitution, highlighting the vitality of democracy and the value of indignation against tyranny rife with grave violations to human rights and suppression of fundamental political and economic freedoms.

WHEREAS, under Article VIII of the 1987 Constitution, one of the powers of the Supreme Court of the Philippines is to protect and enforce constitutional rights, pleading, practice, and procedure in all courts, the admission to the practice of law, the Integrated Bar, and legal assistance to the underprivileged.

WHEREAS, the magnanimous responsibility bestowed to the Supreme Court signifies the need for unyielding, grounded, and empathetic Justices. Hence, the constant pursuit of compassionate justice in the Philippines should remain one of the fundamental pillars of the Judiciary, with the character of Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma as an exemplary standard of humility and integrity.

WHEREAS, under her leadership in the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office from 1998 to 2000, Justice Muñoz-Palma also implemented feeding programs, scholarships for the indigent students, and other benefits for the less fortunate.

WHEREAS, Justice Muñoz-Palma's legacy endures to this day through the Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma Foundation, Inc., which ensures that her ideals live through the works of others who, like her, have chosen a life of service to their fellow countrymen.

WHEREAS, it is the fundamental obligation of Congress to promote the rights and liberties of its people as enshrined in the Constitution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives commemorates Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma on her 107th

birthday anniversary and honoring her invaluable contribution in defending the freedoms of the Filipino people.

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyrle Belmont". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "K".