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SENATE
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Introduced by SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA

RESOLUTION

COMMENDING LIGAYA FERNANDO-AMILBANGSA AS A CULTURAL ADVOCATE OF PANGALAY, A TRADITIONAL DANCE FROM MINDANAO, FOR HER INSTRUMENTAL ROLE AS DOCUMENTOR, PERFORMER, SCHOLAR, AND ADVOCATE OF THIS UNIQUE CULTURAL TREASURE

WHEREAS, Section 15 of the Philippine Constitution states that "the State shall conserve, develop, promote and popularize the nation's historical and cultural heritage and resources, as well as artistic creations;"

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 10666, the National Cultural Heritage Act, further notes that the State "shall likewise endeavor to create a balanced atmosphere where the historic past coexists in harmony with modern society, and it shall approach the problem of conservation in an integrated and holistic manner, cutting across all relevant disciplines and technologies;"

WHEREAS, Ligaya Fernando-Amilbangsa has devoted her life to studying, practicing, performing and conserving the *pangalay*, a traditional dance form of the Sulu Archipelago;

WHEREAS, the *pangalay*, which means "gift offering" or "temple of dance" in Sanskrit, is a "pre-Islamic dance tradition among the Samal, Badjao, Jama Mapun and Tausug. It features complex body postures and gestures, renowned for its graceful arm and hand movement, emphasized by the use of *janggay* (metal claws), to the beat of *kulingtangan*, *gadang*, *agong* and *gabang*, performed during weddings and other festivals;

WHEREAS, Amilbangsa, who was born in Marikina, moved to Sulu when she married a schoolmate who was related to the Sultanate of Sulu. There, she studied and perfected *pangalay* in spite of non-conducive circumstances. With no electricity, she perfected the dance by looking at her own silhouette reflected on the wall by a lighted candle;

WHEREAS, she conceptualized the *Amilbangsa Instruction Method* (AIM) which "gives equal emphasis on technique and creativity", a method based on Fernando-Amilbangsa's decades of experience, study, documentation and performance which has become a method

of instruction, modification, elaboration of the Islamic traditional dance;

WHEREAS, AIM allows for the preservation of the *pangalay*, the precious intangible cultural heritage by a detailed and conclusive manner in which students and practitioners can distinguish between “the good and bad manners of dancing (*pangalay*) and to correct whatever may be aesthetically inferior”;

WHEREAS, AIM is a training program that is easy to disseminate and followed by students of any age and level in order to “enrich their vocabulary of traditional movements already half-forgotten”;

WHEREAS, she wrote a book titled *Pangalay: Traditional Dances and Related Folk Artistic Expressions*, published in 1983, which documents the long and tedious process of *pangalay* with accurate cohesive movement. The same publication was awarded the National Award for Best Art Book by the Manila Critics Circle;

WHEREAS, she also worked on the *linggisan* choreography which is the most complex version, being a complete dance in itself—with a beginning, middle and ending—that combines complex postures and gestures distilled from observing many native dancers;

WHEREAS, she has been vocal in opposing the commercialization of *pangalay*, which distorts and converts the dance into a “touristy street dance.” For her, “*when you transform traditional dance into street dance, many are lost. The performance space is very important in the development of a dance form.*”

WHEREAS, her dedication to dance has earned her several accolades. Her alma mater, Far Eastern University, gave her the Green and Gold Artist Award for dance in 1994. In 2005, she received the Tanglaw ng Lahi Award and was awarded the First Most Outstanding Artist of Tawi-tawi in September 2011. This year, she will be given the Ramon Magsaysay Award, together with Kommaly Chantavong from Laos, Kyaw Thu from Myanmar, Anshu Gupta of India and Sanjiv Chaturvedi (for Emergent Leadership);

WHEREAS, for her love of the performing arts and Filipino culture, it is but timely and fitting for the Senate to commend Fernando-Amilbangsa;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Philippine Senate commend and congratulate Ligaya Fernando-Amilbangsa as a cultural advocate of *pangalay*, a traditional dance from Mindanao, for her instrumental role as the documentor, performer, scholar, and advocate of this unique cultural treasure.

Adopted,


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator