

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11555, June 24, 2021]

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BAYCOMMS BROADCASTING CORPORATION UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8718, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE BAYCOMMS BROADCASTING CORPORATION, A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES"

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

SECTION 1. *Nature and Scope of Franchise.* – Subject to the provisions of the Constitution and applicable laws, rules and regulations, the franchise granted to Baycomms Broadcasting Corporation, hereunder referred to as the grantee, its successors or assignees, under Republic Act No. 8718, to construct, install, establish, operate, and maintain for commercial purposes and in the public interest, radio and television broadcasting stations, including digital and pay television system, through microwave, satellite or whatever means, as well as the use of any new technology in television and radio systems, with the corresponding technological auxiliaries and facilities, special broadcast and other program and distribution services and relay stations in the Philippines, is hereby renewed for another twenty- five (25) years.

SEC. 2. *Manner of Operation of Stations or Facilities.* -The stations or facilities of the grantee shall be constructed and operated in a manner as will, at most, result only in the minimum interference on the wavelengths or frequencies of existing stations or other stations which may be established by law, without in any way diminishing its own privilege to use its assigned wavelengths or frequencies and the quality of transmission or reception thereon as should maximize rendition of the grantee's services and/or the availability thereof.

SEC. 3. *Prior Approval of the National Telecommunications Commission.* - The grantee shall secure from the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) the appropriate permits and licenses for the construction and operation of its stations or facilities and shall not use any frequency in the radio/television spectrum without authorization from the NTC. The NTC, however, shall not unreasonably withhold or delay the grant of any such authority.

In case of violation of any of the provisions of this franchise, the NTC shall have the authority to revoke or suspend, after due process, the permits or licenses it issued pursuant to the franchise. The NTC may recommend to Congress the revocation of the franchise for any violation of the provisions of the franchise.

SEC. 4. *Responsibility to the Public*, - The grantee shall provide, free of charge, adequate public service time which is reasonable and sufficient to enable the government, through the broadcasting stations or facilities of the grantee, to reach the pertinent populations or portions thereof, on important public issues and relay important public announcements and warnings concerning public emergencies and calamities, as necessity, urgency or law may require; provide at all times sound and balanced programming; promote public participation; assist in the functions of public information and education; conform to the ethics of honest enterprise; promote audience sensibility and empowerment including closed captioning; and not use its stations or facilities for the broadcasting of obscene or indecent language, speech, act or scene; or for the dissemination of deliberately false information or willful misrepresentation, to the detriment of public interest; or to incite, encourage, or assist in subversive or treasonable acts.

Public service time referred herein shall be equivalent to a maximum aggregate of ten percent (10%) of the paid commercials or advertisements which shall be allocated based on need to the Executive and Legislative branches, the Judiciary, Constitutional Commissions, and international humanitarian organizations duly recognized by statutes: *Provided*, That the NTC shall increase the public service time in case of extreme emergency or calamity. The NTC shall issue rules and regulations for this purpose, the effectivity of which shall commence upon applicability with other similarly situated broadcast network franchise holders.

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8370, otherwise known as the "Children's Television Act of 1997", the grantee shall allot a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the daily total airtime of each broadcasting network to child-friendly shows within its regular programming.

SEC. 5. *Right of the Government*. — The radio spectrum is a finite resource that is part of the national patrimony, and the use thereof is a privilege conferred upon the grantee by the State and may be withdrawn any time after due process.

A special right is hereby reserved to the President of the Philippines, in times of war, rebellion, public peril, calamity, emergency, disaster, or disturbance of peace and order: to temporarily take over and operate the stations or facilities of the grantee; to temporarily suspend the operation of any station or facility in the interest of public safety, security and public welfare; or to authorize the temporary use and operation thereof by any agency of the government, upon due compensation to the grantee, for the use of stations or facilities during the period when these shall be so operated.

SEC. 6. *Term of Franchise*. - This franchise shall be in effect for a period of twenty-five (25) years from the effectivity of this Act, unless sooner revoked or cancelled. This franchise shall be deemed *ipso facto* revoked in the event the grantee fails to operate continuously for two (2) years.

SEC. 7. *Self-regulation by and Undertaking of the Grantee*. - The grantee shall not require any previous censorship of any speech, play, act or scene, or other matter to be broadcast from its stations, but if any such speech, play, act or scene, or other matter should constitute a violation of the law or infringement of a private right, the grantee shall be free from any liability, civil or criminal, for such speech, play, act or scene, or other matter *Provided*, That the grantee, during any broadcast, shall cut