

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11421, August 22, 2019]

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO VTMCONTU BROADCASTING CORPORATION, UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8116, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE VTMCONTU BROADCASTING CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

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 under Republic Act No. 8116 to VIMCONTU Broadcasting Corporation, hereunder referred to as the grantee, its successors or assignees, to construct, install, establish, operate, and maintain for commercial purposes and in the public interest, radio and/or television broadcasting stations, including digital television system, through microwave, satellite, terrestrial 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.

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 the 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.

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 said 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: *Provided*, That the grantee, during any broadcast, shall cut off from the air the speech, play, act, or scene, or other matter being broadcast if the tendency thereof is to propose or incite treason, rebellion or sedition; or the language used therein or the theme thereof is indecent or immoral: *Provided, further*, That willful failure to do so shall constitute a valid cause for the cancellation of this franchise.

SEC. 8. *Warranty in Favor of the National and Local Governments.* — The grantee shall hold the national, provincial, city, and municipal governments of the Philippines free from all claims, liabilities, demands, or actions arising out of accidents causing injury to persons or damage to properties, during the construction or operation of the stations of the grantee.

SEC. 9. *Commitment to Provide and Promote the Creation of Employment Opportunities.* - The grantee shall create employment opportunities and shall allow