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:

Section 1. **National Hijab Day.** The first day of February of every year is hereby declared as “National Hijab Day.”

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

Sec 3. **Definition of Terms.** As used in this Act, “hijab” refers to 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 further refer to any head, face, or body covering worn by Muslim women that conforms to a certain standard of modesty.

**Hijabi** refers to a Muslim woman wearing the hijab.
Sec. 4. Objectives.

a.) To encourage Muslim and non-Muslim women to wear the *hijab* and experience the virtue in wearing it;
b.) To remove the misconception of wearing the *hijab* that has been misunderstood as a symbol of oppression, terrorism and lack of freedom;
c.) To stop discrimination against Muslim *hijabi*;
d.) To protect the freedom of religion and the right of Muslim women to practice their religion;
e.) To promote and deepen understanding amongst non-Muslims about the value of wearing a *hijab* as an act of modesty and dignity of Muslim women;
f.) To promote appreciation for diversity in expression of oneself and one’s faith and religion, and
g.) To promote tolerance and acceptance of other lifestyles amongst the citizenry.

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

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

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

Sec. 7. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,