



Computer Professionals' Union

Advancing ICT for the People

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Continue the Journey for a People's FOSS Agenda: Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza for Senator, Bayan Muna for Partylist

Statement of Support by the Computer Professionals' Union
May 09, 2010

It is said that the Information Era has dawned upon the Philippines, despite the pervading local context of chronic economic crises, continuing feudal conditions in the countryside, and still limited information and communications technology or ICT infrastructure. This has resulted in an aberrant ICT sector that has no heavy industry output and largely dependent on outsourcing raw and human resources and importing expensive finished hardware and proprietary software.

The concept of Appropriate Technology has given rise to a burgeoning movement for the promotion of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) as a cheap, flexible, and competitive alternative to the inaccessible costs of commercial software. The Philosophy of FOSS has also inculcated in practitioners a sense of Community in its embrace of collective development, and Service in its aim to make high-end software freely accessible to the public.

We in the Computer Professionals' Union, as pioneers of FOSS in the Philippines, and with the principle of advancing ICT for the People, seek to spread the FOSS Philosophy to the broadest ranks of the Filipino masses. We seek to utilize appropriate FOSS solutions in helping address the people's welfare and concerns.

It is in this context that we in the CPU resolutely endorse the senatorial candidacies of Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza, as well as the congressional re-election bid of the Bayan Muna Partylist.

Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza are co-authors of the House Bill 1716, or the proposed FOSS Act primarily spearheaded by the Bayan Muna Partylist, of which Ka Satur was a representative of. The bill aims promote the use and development of FOSS by mandating the government to use open standards, open formats, and FOSS in its data storage, communications, documents and ICT goods and services except in situations where such software are not available. It also encourages the private sector to develop a truly Filipino FOSS-based software industry.

FOSS in government will lower the cost of ICT implementations, diverting funds that would have been spent on expensive software to much needed hardware. It reduces dependencies on restrictive and oppressive license and patent conditionalities imposed by foreign software monopolies. It will also serve to reduce if not completely erase software piracy in the Philippines given its free and open nature.

We have taken HB 1716 up to the third reading. Let us continue the journey for a People's FOSS Agenda, and take it to a higher level. Let us vote for the genuine voice of the ICT community in the government. Let us vote for Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza. Let us vote for Bayan Muna.

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