



Press Statement

13 January 2012

**MBC LAUDS THE PUSH FOR THE PASSAGE OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION BILL**

The Makati Business Club applauds the pronouncement of Malacañang that President Benigno S. Aquino III has approved the Administration's version of the freedom of information (FOI) bill. The measure guarantees the constitutional provisions on citizens' right to information and the state policy of full public disclosure of all government transactions on matters of public concern.

MBC believes that the passage of the FOI law is an indispensable element of the Aquino administration's commitment to the "*daang matuwid*." As a pillar of good governance, it will institutionalize transparency and accountability in government not only under this administration but also beyond it.

In the previous Congress, the FOI bill could have been enacted into law were it not for the failure of the House of Representatives to muster a quorum on its last session day. In the present 15th Congress, several versions of the bill have been filed but have remained pending at the committee level in the House and the Senate awaiting for the Administration's proposed draft. With the endorsement of President Aquino, the ball is now back in the hands of Congress.

We now urge our legislators to work for the immediate enactment of the Freedom of Information Act. MBC is ready to continue to work with Congress and civil society groups, led by the Right to Know, Right Now Coalition, to further improve and fine tune the FOI bill. As we mark the 25th anniversary of the 1987 Constitution, we hope to finally see an FOI law in full effect, one that affords full access to information, subject to clear-cut and well-defined exceptions.

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