

Statement from Atty. Evalyn G. Ursua on Fullido's Sexual Harassment Complaint

It is unfortunate that Gretchen Fullido has chosen to pursue a criminal complaint of sexual harassment against my clients Cheryl Favila and Maricar Asprec despite that the same complaint had been previously dismissed as baseless after a thorough formal investigation within ABS-CBN. This dismissal came about after Favila and Asprec proved that the text messages that Fullido used as evidence were distorted and maliciously taken out of their conversation threads.

The story behind Fullido's baseless charge of sexual harassment is a complicated one, involving personal, professional, and political matters. Her baseless complaint is also a classic example of discrimination against LGBTQ individuals and gender stereotyping against them in matters of sexuality. The prevailing homophobia in society result in a stereotyped belief that women of same-sex sexual orientation indiscriminately go after any woman or are prone to sexually harassed other women. We invite the LGBTQ community to examine this case closely and to stand by Favila and Asprec, two decent and upright women whose integrity is widely known among their peers and colleagues.

I have always been an advocate of women's rights and empowerment in my personal and professional life. My decades of work as a feminist lawyer speak of my consistent advocacy against those who abuse women and girl children. But while I am a women's rights advocate, I have never supported nor will I ever support any abuse of the right to file a sexual harassment complaint based on fabricated stories and out of pure malice. It is the duty of every women's rights advocate to ensure that a woman complainant exercises her rights to file a sexual harassment complaint *responsibly*. We owe this to the thousands of advocates and genuine victims who fought long and hard to have this form of abuse recognize by society and the State, and to have remedies institutionalized in law.

While it pains me to go against another woman in a sexual harassment case, I welcome the opportunity to rise to the defense of two women who are wrongly accused. I hope that, with truth on their side, they will be vindicated in God's time.

Reference: Atty. Evalyn G. Ursua
Counsel for Cheryl Favila and Maricar Asprec
09179444600/2859122
egulaw@gmail.com