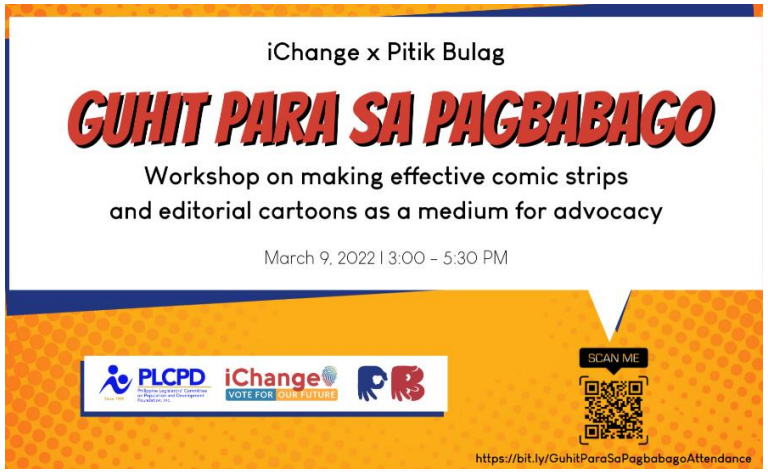
# Hi, I'm Cartoonist ZACH!

PITIK BULAG

@cartoonistzach
@pitikbulagph

# It all started in 2022.



# Satire

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9603

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES · BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE · RECEIVED DATE 01 JUN 2026 TIME 4:35pm BY

Introduced by Representatives **Cielo Krisel B. Lagman, Ma. Rene Ann Lourdes G. Matibag, Janice V. Degamo, Ysabel Maria J. Zamora, Maria Angela S. Garcia, Jaime R. Fresnedi, Kaka J. Bag-ao, Leila M. de Lima, Edgar R. Erice, Jernie Jett V. Nisay, Kathryn Joyce F. Gorriceta, Jose Manuel Tadeo I. Diokno, Percival V. Cendaña, Dadah Kiram Ismula, and Antonino B. Roman III**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

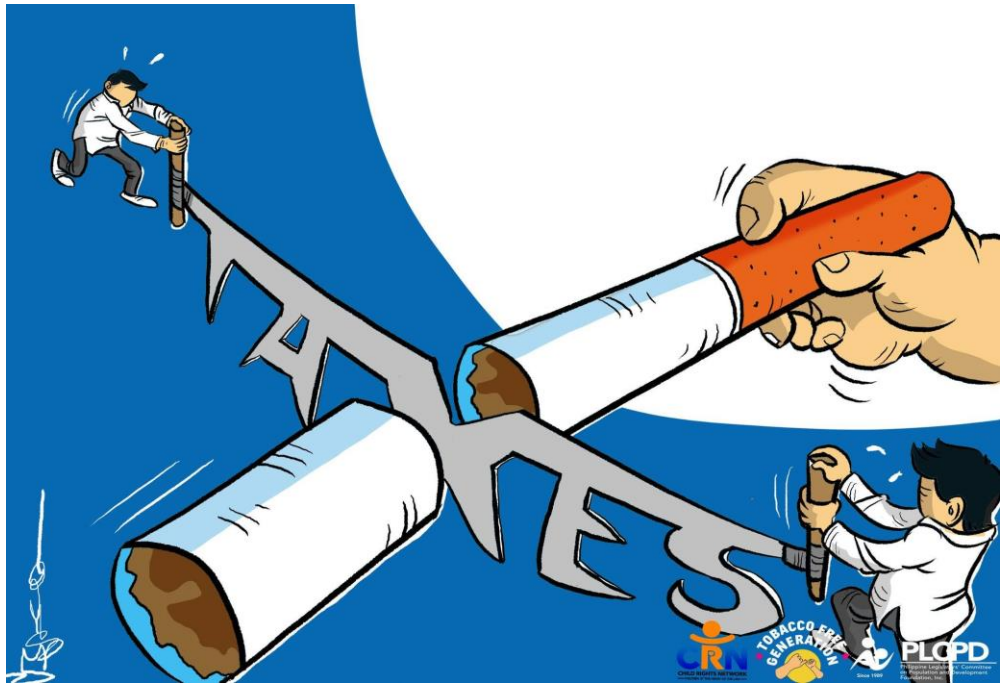
Tobacco use continues to constitute a grave public health concern in the Philippines. Tobacco smoke contains over 7,000 chemicals, including proven carcinogens such as formaldehyde, benzene, arsenic, and lead, which significantly contribute to the national burden of non-communicable diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory illnesses, and diabetes. These conditions inflict substantial harm on Filipino families and impose heavy social and economic costs on the State.

On the other hand, recent government data from the Department of Science and Technology – Food and Nutrition Research Institute show a dramatic increase in youth vaping, from over 37,000 users in 2021 to approximately 423,000 in 2023, representing an increase of more than 1,000 percent. This trend is consistent with earlier findings, including the 2019 Global Youth Tobacco Survey, which reported that 14.1 percent of students aged 13 to 15 had tried e-cigarettes, and the 2019 National Nutrition Survey, which found that 44 percent of e-cigarette users were non-smokers.

The consequences of tobacco and nicotine use are severe and well-documented. Each year, approximately 112,000 Filipinos die from tobacco-related diseases. The 2021 Global Adult Tobacco Survey reports that 15.1 million Filipino adults currently use tobacco products, of whom 14.4 million are smokers, with 11.2 million smoking daily. The average age of initiation is 19 years old. National data further indicate an alarming incidence of early nicotine exposure among the youth, with the 2019 Global Youth Tobacco Survey documenting widespread use among children aged 13 to 15, and a 2023 survey by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute reporting one million new smokers aged 10 to 19.

The same surveys also revealed that exposure to second-hand smoke remains a significant public health concern in the Philippines, particularly among vulnerable populations and in public spaces. Data show that 54.2% of Filipino youth are exposed to second-hand smoke in enclosed places, while 21.5% of Filipino adults experience exposure in workplaces. In addition, 33.6% of Filipino adults are exposed to second-hand smoke in public conveyances, highlighting the continued prevalence of tobacco smoke in shared environments despite existing regulations.

**Complex issues**




*Cartoon by Isang Tasang Kape*

# Satire

Jokes

Exaggeration

Sarcasm

*Cartoon by The Political Idiot*

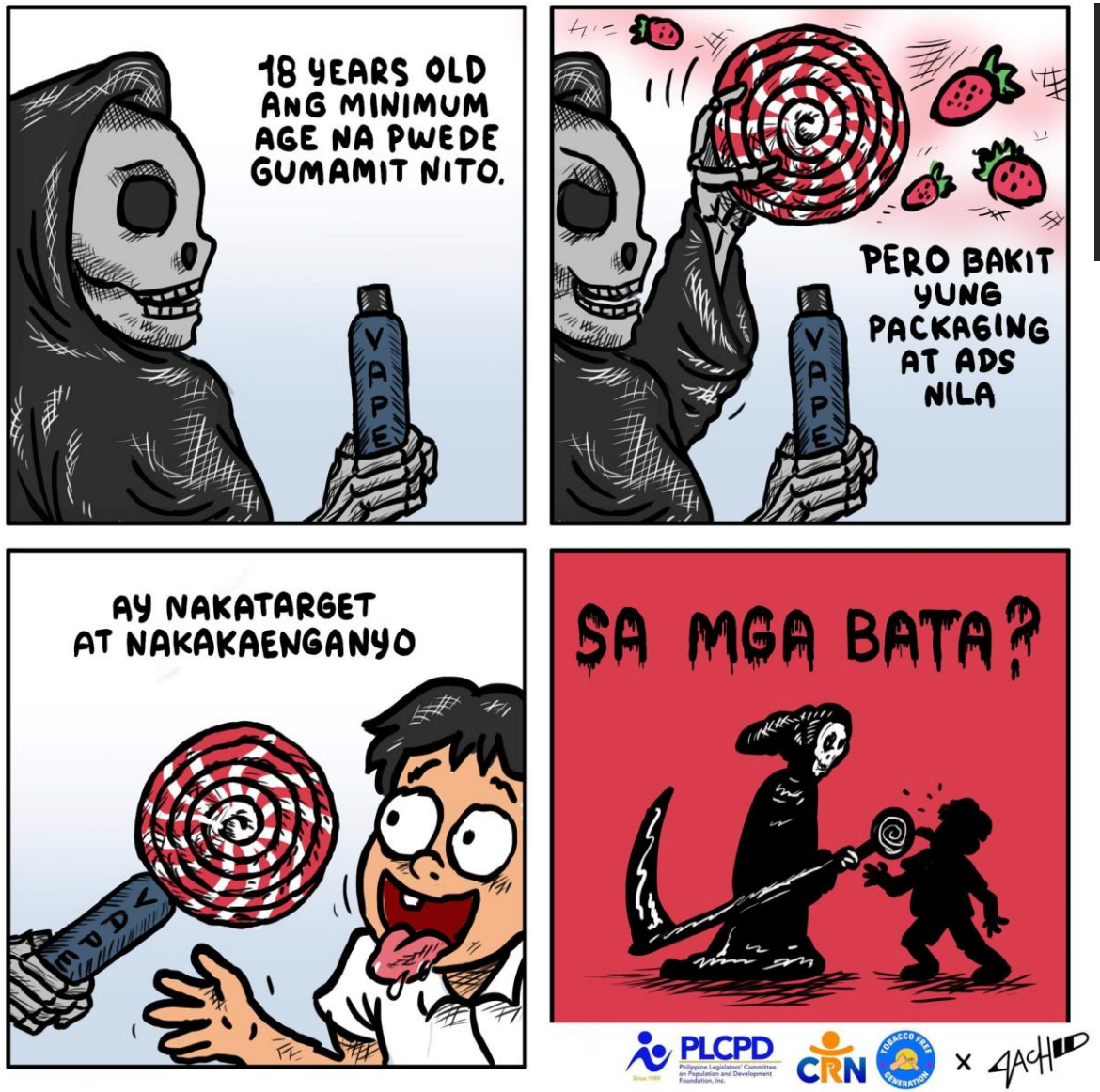
# Identify the following:

*Cartoon by Steph B.*

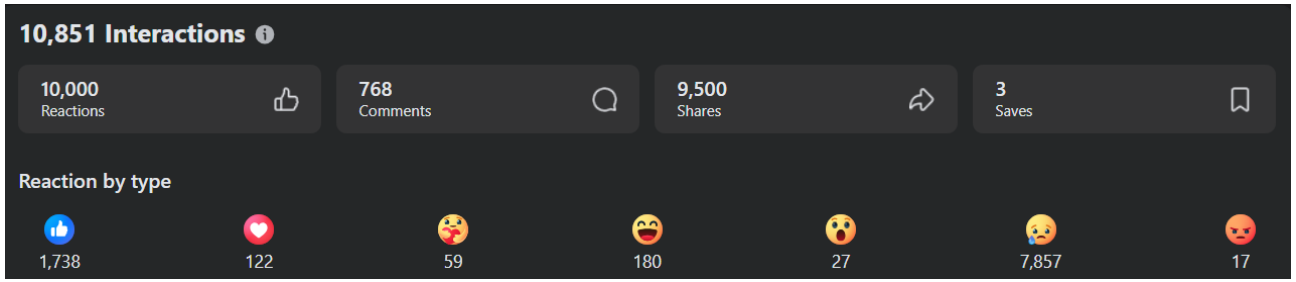
- Intended audience?
- Target of humor?

| Audience | Action |
| --- | --- |
| Tobacco industry | Criticize / Mock |
| Policymakers coddling with tobacco industry | Criticize / Do not mock |
| Policymakers against tobacco industry | Commend |
| Vape and cigarette users | Do not criticize |
| Non-vape and non-cigarette users | Commend |

*Cartoon by Latagaw*




*Cartoon by Cartoonist Zach*

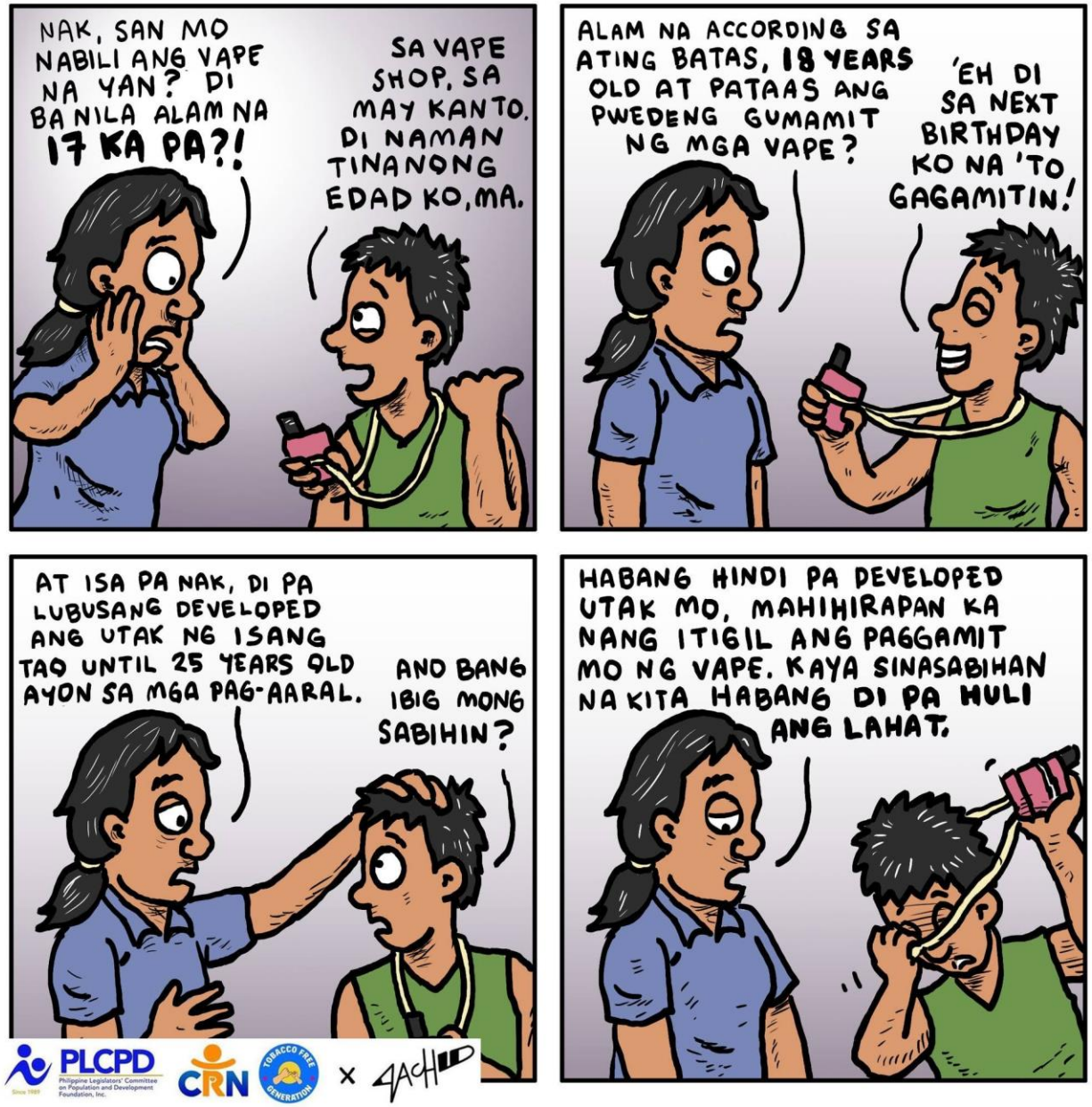



**Visually appealing**

**Relatable**

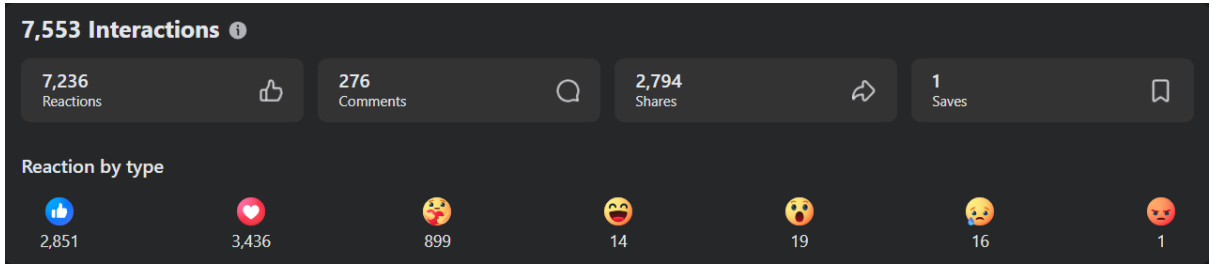
**Humorous**

**Ethical / politically correct**

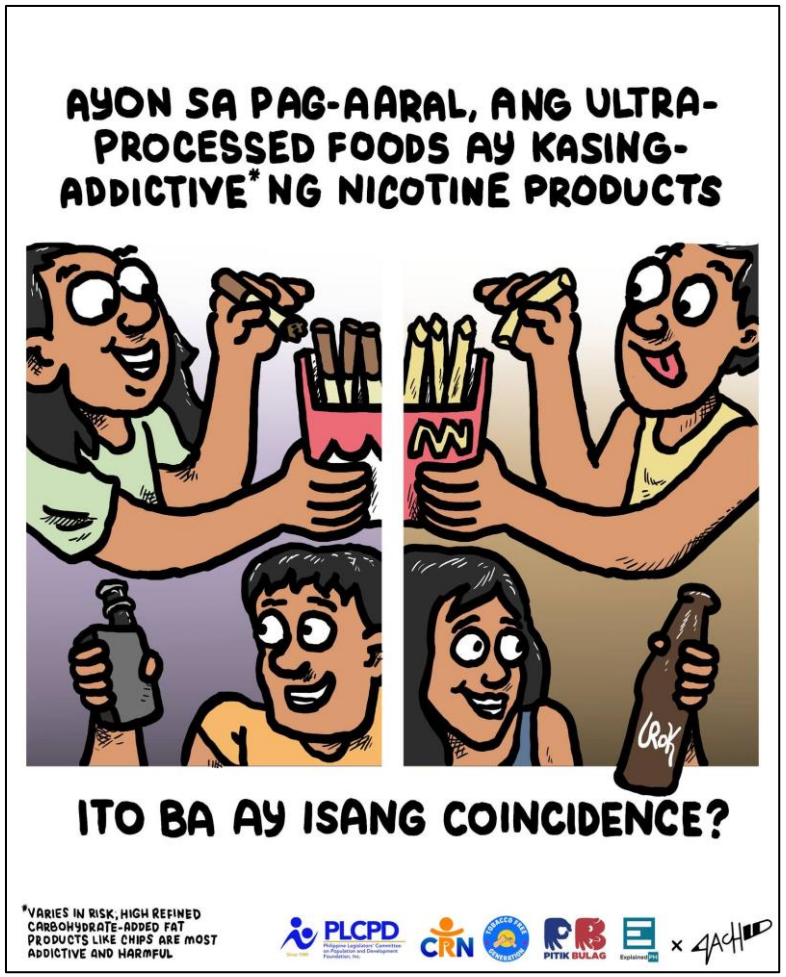



*Cartoon by Cartoonist Zach*

# Being very wordy doesn't necessarily mean it won't get engagements



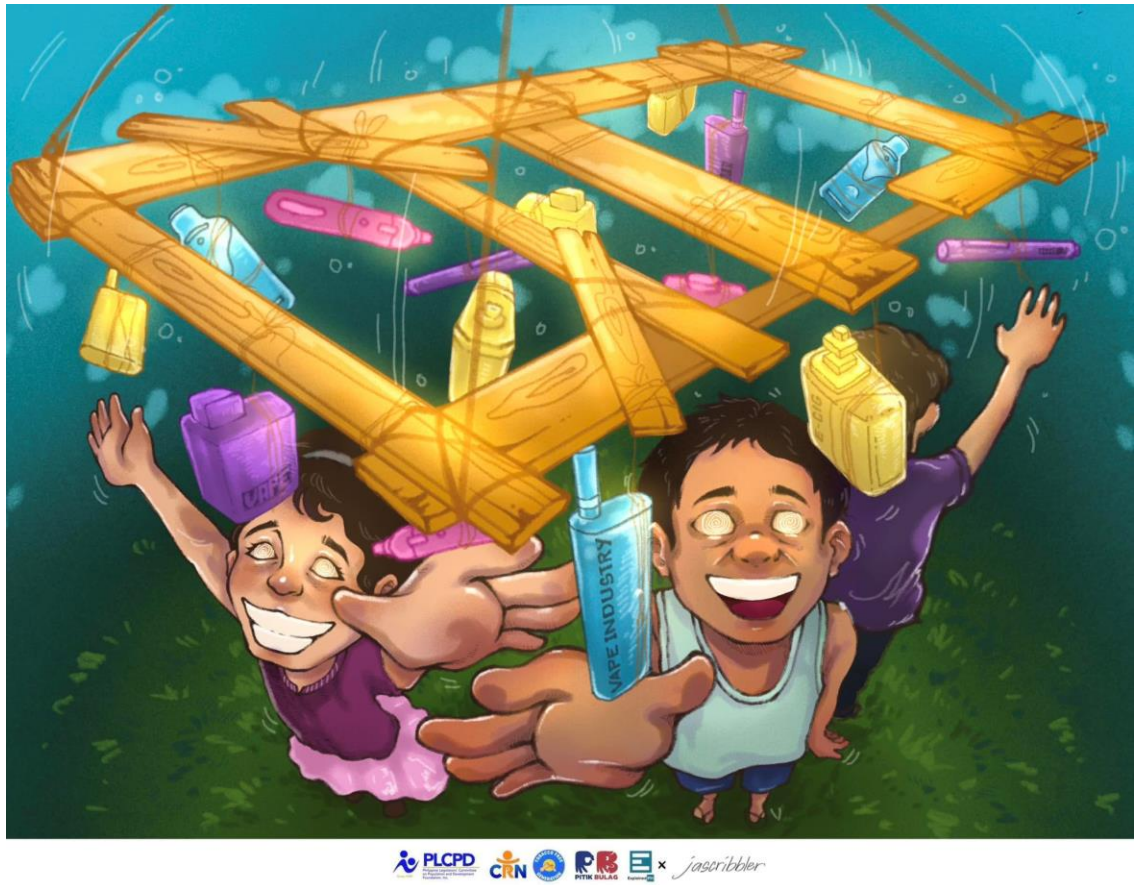
# New frontier: Cartoon-style infographic



*Cartoons by Cartoonist Zach*

# Finding the "right" cartoonists to collaborate with

1. Knows how to draw?
2. Has an established online presence?
3. Current or former vape / cigarette user?
4. Passionate on drawing about social issues?
5. Committed to advocacy?



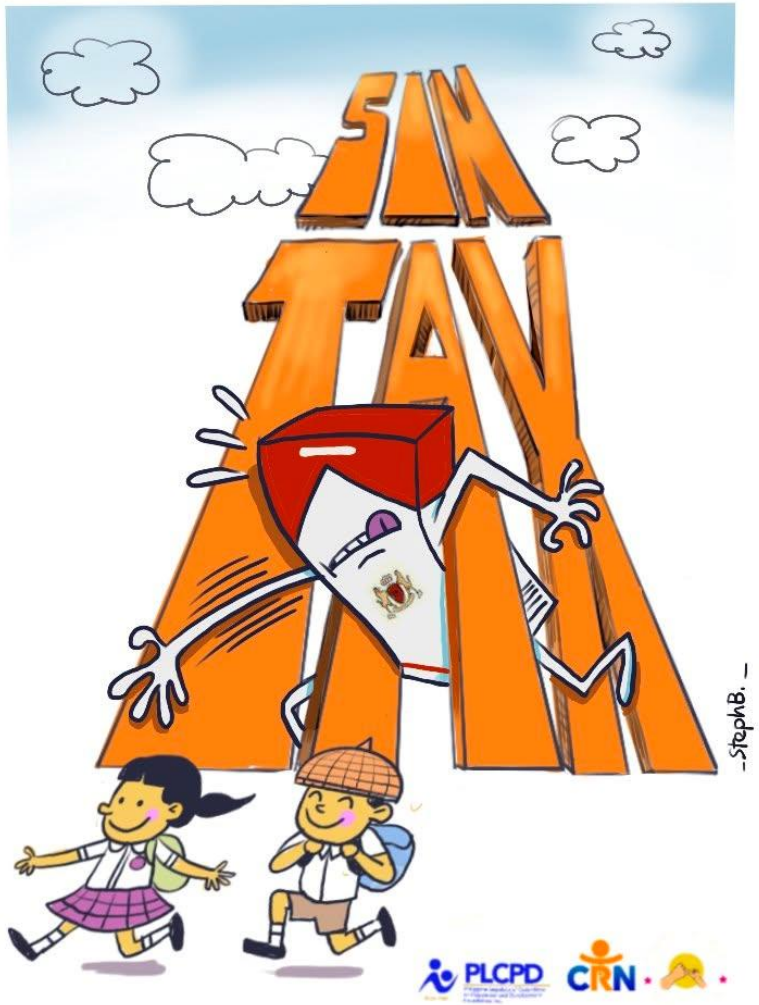

*Cartoon by Jascribbler*

# Hard to find collaborating cartoonists? Organize online contests

# Capacity-building workshops

1. Cartoon / comics strip workshops
2. Briefing on technicalities and advocacies
3. Legal protection

# Local context matters




- Does it align with current trends?
- Are there "local" elements included?
- Does it cross the line regarding the current norms and sensitivities of the general public?

# How can advocates and cartoonists truly collaborate together?

# How can advocates and cartoonists truly collaborate together?

Advocates should provide space for cartoonists to execute the output either freely or through compromise...

...but cartoonists should be reminded that the core advocacy and ethics are non-negotiable.

# Thank you!

PITIK BULAG

@cartoonistzach
@pitikbulagph