

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 705

Introduced by REP. JUDY J. SYJUCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

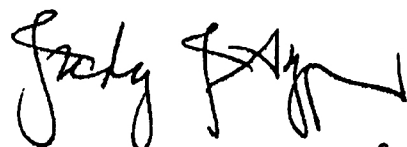
The Philippine Constitution guarantees that the State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture and sports and to promote and protect the physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being of the youth. Towards this end, the State shall guarantee the safe and conducive learning atmosphere of children and youth in every learning and educational institution.

At present, the school opening starts on the first week of the month of June each year, falling within the rainy and typhoon season, which makes it difficult for our school children to commute to their respective schools. Further, our schoolchildren have become prone to health hazards, such as the common cold and flu due to heavy rains and floods.

The coming rainy and typhoon months will be aggravated with the outbreak of the mysterious ailment called "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome" or SARS also tagged as "killer pneumonia" that raises worldwide panic. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared SARS as "a worldwide health threat" that already claimed the lives of at least 435 people and sickened about 6,234 others worldwide. The mysterious respiratory ailment believed to have first broken out in Guangdong province, China last November has spread in more than 20 countries including the Philippines.

This proposed bill seeks to change the school opening and beginning of classes to the first Monday of September each year for the following reasons: 1.) to make the school opening consistent internationally with the rest of the world; 2.) to avoid the difficulties experienced by our school children due to rainy months and floods; and 3.) to allow the SARS epidemic worldwide to pass over for the next months of June, July and August, further allowing our health authorities to contain, abate and develop remedies for SARS.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



JUDY J. SYJUCO

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AN ACT
CHANGING THE SCHOOL OPENING AND BEGINNING OF CLASSES TO THE
FIRST MONDAY OF SEPTEMBER OF EVERY SCHOOL YEAR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared as the policy of the State to secure and guarantee the learning atmosphere of the children and the youth in every educational and learning institution. The State shall protect and promote their physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual well-being as a pre-requisite of the educational process.

SECTION 2. School Opening and Beginning of Classes. - It is hereby declared that the school opening and beginning of classes shall commence on the first Monday of September of every school year.

SECTION 3. Promulgation of Implementing Guidelines. – The Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education shall issue the implementing guidelines for the change and adjustment of the current school year and calendar.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation. The publication shall not be later than seven (7) days after approval hereof.

Approved,