Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 714



Introduced by REP. JUDY J. SYJUCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution guarantees that the State shall give priority to education and shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.

The construction and maintenance of school buildings, classrooms and other facilities are very much essential to meet the requirements of a quality public education, considering the miserable situation of our school buildings, classrooms and other facilities. Most of our elementary and secondary public schools have inadequate classrooms due to either damaged or dilapidated status of the existing ones.

Shortage in classrooms compel our teachers and pupils to hold their classes in make-shift shelters, like in the case of the Leon National High School in the Municipality of Leon, Iloilo, which hold classes utilizing the shelter of mango trees and make-shift tents made of bamboos. In the National Capital Region (NCR), classroom-pupil ratio in the elementary level is equivalent to 1:78; while classroom-student ratio in the secondary level is 1:80.

Enrolment in our public schools continues to swell in the light of the rising cost of private education, depicting an average increase of 200,000 students from school year 1997-1998 to 1999-2000 and 90,000 students from school year 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 in the elementary public schools. In the same manner, enrolment in the secondary public schools depicts an average increase of 150,000 students from school year 1997-1998 to 1999-2000 and 400,000 students from school year 2000-2001 to 2001-2002.

At present, budget allocation for the Department of Education including the School Building Program in the amount of P98,306,733,000, which is 16.12 % of the national budget, does not suffice for the much needed construction, repairs, rehabilitation and maintenance of school buildings and classrooms nationwide.

This proposed measure seeks to eliminate classroom shortage in the elementary and secondary education through an equitable allocation of the Department of Education (DepEd)-School Building Program. The total amount of the School Building Program shall be allocated to each legislative district according to their classroom shortage as determined by the DepEd's Division Superintendent and District Supervisors.

This bill further propose that the budget allocation for the construction of school buildings and classrooms shall be determine by the population of enrolled students in the elementary and secondary level to be divided by forty (40).

Hence, to uplift the standard of our public elementary and secondary education, immediate consideration and passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

JUDY J. SYJUCO

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE ALLOCATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION-SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAM BUDGET, ENSURING BUDGET PRIORITY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND CLASSROOMS, REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7880, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EDUCATION ACT 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 ensure the establishment and maintenance of school buildings and facilities as a pre-requisite to a quality public education.

SECTION 2. Objective – It is the purpose of this Act, to eliminate classroom shortage in the elementary and secondary education through an equitable allocation of the Department of Education (DepEd)-School Building Program.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms - As used in this Act, the term:

a) School Building Program – refers to the provisions of the General Appropriations Act pertaining to the budget of the Department of Education for them construction, rehabilitation, replacement, completion and repair of school buildings.

b) Classroom Shortage – refers to the number of utilizable classrooms that is below or do not meet the required classroom-pupil/student ratio of 1:40.

SECTION 4. Allocation of the Appropriation – Notwithstanding any provision of the law to the contrary, the annual Department of Education (DepEd) budget for School Building Program shall be allocated in the following procedure:

a) The total amount of the School Building Program shall be allocated to each legislative district according to their classroom shortage, as defined in Section 3 b), and as determined by the DepEd's Division Superintendent and District Supervisors.

b) The remaining balance of the School Building Program, if any, shall be allocated pro-rata according to each legislative district's student population in relation to the total student population of the country.

SECTION 5. Classroom-Pupil/Student Ratio – The allocation for the construction of school buildings and classrooms shall be determine by the population of enrolled students in the elementary and secondary level to be divided by forty (40).

SECTION 6. Increase in the Annual Budget Allocation – Budget allocation provided under the School Building Program of the Department of Education shall be increased annually to comply with the classroom-pupil/student ratio provided in Section 5 of this Act.

SECTION 7. School Building/Classroom Report - The Department of Education (DepEd) shall submit an annual status report on school buildings and classrooms to the President, three (3) months prior to the preparation of the General Appropriation Bill, to be considered and prioritized in the DepEd budget.

SECTION 5. 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,