

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATTIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 823

Introduced by Representatives
DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO and GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE COMPULSORY DISCLOSURE OF FIRE
SAFETY STANDARDS AND MEASURES IN CAMPUS
BUILDINGS.

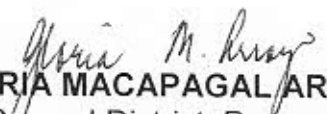
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Bearing in mind the paramount importance of ensuring our students' safety, this Bill seeks to compel all learning institutions, whether public or private, to disclose their current fire safety practices and programs so that areas of improvement can be properly identified and appropriate measures adopted.

Considering the congestion of students in certain educational facilities, the hazard posed by fire cannot be discounted. It is therefore imperative for educational institutions to take concrete steps which can guarantee their capability of dealing with such potential hazard. By mandating the compulsory disclosure of fire safety practices, it is hoped that all concerned parties will be able to intelligibly recommend programs and preventive action with the view of keeping our educational institutions safe and equipped to handle fire incidents.

In view of the foregoing, we urge the immediate passage of this Bill.


DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Camarines Sur


GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Pampanga

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title* – This Act shall be known as the “Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act of 2010.”

SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall be understood to mean as follows:

1. “Chairman” refers to the Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education;
2. “CHED” refers to Commission on Higher Education.

SECTION 3. *Disclosure of Fire Safety Standards and Measures in Campus Buildings.* - All public and private educational institution shall, beginning in the Academic Year 2010 – 2011, and each year thereafter, prepare, publish, and distribute, through appropriate publications or mailings, to all current students and employees, and to any applicant for enrollment or employment upon request, an annual Fire Safety Report containing at least the following information with respect to their campus fire safety practices and standards:

A. A detailed summary of all educational facilities, including student housing facilities of the institution, if any, with a statement of whether or not the said facilities are equipped with a fire sprinkler system or any other fire safety system, or both.

B. If available, statistics concerning the occurrence on campus, during the two (2) preceding calendar years of fires and false fire alarms in the subject facilities.

C. For each such occurrence, a statement of the human injuries or deaths and the structural damage caused by the occurrence.

D. Information regarding fire alarms, smoke alarms, the presence of adequate fire escape planning or protocols, rules on portable electrical appliances, smoking and open flames (such as candles), regular mandatory supervised fire drills, and planned and future improvement in fire safety.

E. Preventive steps and/or programs and other fire safety measures undertaken by the educational institution concerned to curb and mitigate fire hazards.

SECTION 4. *Autonomy of Educational Institutions.* - Nothing in the previous section shall be construed to authorize the Secretary of the Department of Education and/or the Chairman, when applicable, to require particular policies, procedures, or practices by educational institutions with respect to fire safety.

SECTION 5. *Periodic Reports.* - Each institution covered by this Act shall make periodic reports to the campus community on fires and false fire alarms which are reported to local fire departments in a manner that will aid the prevention of similar occurrences.

SECTION 6. *Reports to the Secretary of Education and/or Chairman* - On an annual basis, each institution covered by this Act shall submit to the Secretary of Education or any of his duly authorized representative, in the cases of primary and secondary educational institutions and the Chairman or any of his duly authorized representative, in the cases of tertiary educational institutions, a copy of the information required to be disclosed under Section 3 hereof. Thereafter, the Secretary of Education and the Chairman, in proper cases, shall:

A. Review such statistics;

B. Make copies of the statistics available to the public;
and

C. In coordination with representatives of the institutions concerned, identify exemplary fire safety policies, procedures, and practices and disseminate information concerning those policies, procedures, and practices that have proven effective in the reduction of campus fires.

SECTION 7. *Report to Congress by the Secretary of Education and/or Chairman of CHED* – Within one (1) year after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Education and/or Chairman of the CHED, in proper cases, shall prepare and submit to the Congress a report containing the following:

A. An analysis of the current status of fire safety systems in all educational facilities covered by this Act;

B. An analysis of the appropriate fire safety standards to apply to these facilities, which the Secretary of Education and/ or the Chairman, in proper cases, shall prepare after consultation with such fire safety experts, representatives of educational institutions, and other government agencies as the Secretary of Education and/or Chairman, considers appropriate;

C. An estimate of the cost of bringing all nonconforming dormitories and other campus buildings up to current building codes; and

D. Recommendations concerning the best means of meeting fire safety standards in all facilities, including recommendations for methods to fund such cost.

SECTION 8. *Lead Agency.* – The Department of Education shall be the lead government agency tasked to implement this Act.

SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Education shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations to enforce the provisions of this Act within one hundred twenty (120) days from the enactment of this law.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,