

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **1339**



Introduced by Honorable **GERALD ANTHONY V. GULLAS, JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bilingual Policy of the Department of Education, which was introduced in 1974 (through DECS Order No. 25, s. 1974), was designed to develop a "bilingual nation competent in the use of English and Filipino". This policy mandated the teaching of Filipino as a subject in all curricular levels from the elementary to college. In addition, it required the use of Filipino as a medium of instruction in Social Studies, Character Education, Values Education, Physical Education, Industrial Arts and Home Economics.

As a result of this policy, the learning of the English language suffered a set back. One reason is what linguists call language interference. Targeting the learning of two languages (English and Filipino) is too much for the Filipino learners, especially in the lower grades. And if the child happens to be a non-Tagalog speaker, this task actually means learning two foreign languages at the same time, an almost impossible task.

Another reason is that the use of Filipino (actually Tagalog) as a medium of instruction in the subjects mentioned earlier has limited the exposure of the learner to English, and since exposure is basic to language learning mastery of the language is not attained.

This is tragic. Because books in almost disciplines are written in English, learning these disciplines become a tremendously difficult undertaking. Science and Mathematics, for example, cannot be fully mastered by our students, thus we lag behind other Asian nations in these areas. The TIMS results in 1998 is proof of this.

This bill aims to correct the defects of the current Bilingual Education Program of the Department of Education. Its ultimate objective is the improvement of the learning process in schools to ensure quality outputs.

In view of this, the approval of this measure, which was duly approved in both Committees of Higher Education and Basic Education in the 14th Congress, is urgently sought.


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AN ACT
TO STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE THE USE OF ENGLISH AS THE MEDIUM OF
INSTRUCTION IN PHILIPPINE SCHOOLS

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Strengthening and Enhancing the Use of English as the Medium of Instruction Act".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the declared policy of the State to provide the citizenry with the opportunities to have quality education to learn, communicate, grow and change in the pursuit of a higher standard of life. Towards this end, the government undertakes to align the education of the young with the requirements and realities of business life and competitive in the global environment by strengthening, enhancing and developing the use of the English language as the medium of instruction in all levels of education, from the preschool to the tertiary level.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms or acronyms shall refer to and/or mean as hereunder defined:

(a) "Medium of Instruction (MOI)" refers to the language or dialect used in teaching.

(b) "School Year (SY)" refers to the part of the year during which schools is in session typically from June to March.

(c) "Parents, Teachers and Community Association (PTCA); refers to a group of parents and teachers organized for the welfare of the school and its pupils.

(d) "Regional or native language" refers to the regional language or any dialect prevailing in region or place.

(e) "Academic subjects" refers to curricular subjects in the areas of general education, science and technology.

SEC. 4. Medium of Instruction (MOI). - The MOI in all subjects taught shall be as follows:

(a) English and Filipino or the regional/native language may be used as the MOI in all subjects from preschool unit Grade III.

(b) English and Filipino shall be taught as separate subjects in all levels in the elementary and secondary.

© In all academic subjects in the elementary grades from Grade IV to Grade VI and in all levels in the secondary, the MOI shall be English.

(d) In the tertiary level, the current language policy as prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall be maintained.

(e) In addition to formal instruction, the use of English shall be encouraged as a language of interaction in the school. Corollary to this, the organization of English clubs such as book, oratorical, debating, writing and related associations shall be encouraged. In school publications, the use of English shall be given priority as far as practicable.

SEC. 5. Government Examinations and Entrance Examinations. - Government Examinations and entrance examinations to public schools and state colleges and universities at all levels shall use English as the language of assessment: Provided, however, That it may include questions in Filipino for which the credit for such questions shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total points in the examination.

SEC. 6. Support Facilities. - All the requirements, devices and support facilities necessary to strengthen, enhance and develop English as the MOI such as training and orientation for teachers' manuals, learning modules and workbooks, textbooks, audiovisual aids and other auxiliary teaching and learning materials shall be formulated, developed and provided by the Department of Education (DepEd).

SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The DepEd, in consultation with the CHED, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and other concerned government agencies shall promulgate within sixty (60) days the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) that shall be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. Congressional Oversight Committee. - There is hereby created a congressional oversight committee composed of Three Members from the Senate and Three Members from the House of Representatives. The Members from the Senate shall be appointed by the Senate President based on the proportional representation of the parties or the coalitions therein with at least one Senator representing the Minority. The Members of the House of Representatives shall be appointed by the Speaker, also based on the proportional representation of the parties or the coalitions therein with at least one Member representing the Minority.

The committee shall be headed by the respective Chairpersons of the Senate and the House of Representatives' Committees on Education.

The Congressional Oversight Committee on Education shall, in aid of legislation perform the following:

- (a) Participate in the crafting of the IRR;
- (b) Approve the final draft of the IRR;
- © Set the guidelines and the overall framework to monitor and ensure the proper implementation of this Act;
- (d) Ensure transparency and require the submission of reports from government agencies concerned on the conduct of programs, projects and policies relating to the implementation of this Act;
- (e) Determine inherent weaknesses in the law and recommend the necessary remedial legislations or executive measures; and
- (f) Perform such other duties and functions and responsibilities as may be necessary to effectively attain the objectives of this Act.

The Congressional Oversight Committee on Education shall be assisted by the secretariat, of the committees of both the House of Representatives and the Senate and shall be assisted by personnel who may be seconded therefrom. It may likewise retain the services of Consultants.

SEC. 9. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not effect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause. - All executive orders, Laws and department orders and parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,