

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila



SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3544**

Introduced by **Kabataan Party-list Representative Terry L. Ridon**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 11 of the Philippine Constitution declares that the State values the dignity of every person and guarantees full respect for human rights. The principles and values of human rights that are enshrined in the Philippine Constitution and international covenants, however are rendered hollow and meaningless when the citizens are not informed of their rights and when human rights violations continue to occur.

The human rights situation in the Philippines took a serious beating during the past decades. According to human rights group Karapatan, human rights atrocities and violations continuously occurred, victimizing thousands of Filipinos particularly those who are critical of the government's economic policies and of the rampant corruption in the bureaucracy.

Karapatan noted in its 2009 report that from the time former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo assumed the presidency in 2001 up to October 2009, there are a total of 1,118 victims of extrajudicial killings and 204 who have been forcibly disappeared and are still missing. Karapatan has recorded 152 cases of extrajudicial killings, 168 cases of frustrated extrajudicial killings, 18 cases of enforced disappearances, and 80 cases of torture from July 2010 to August 2013 under the term of President Benigno S. Aquino III.

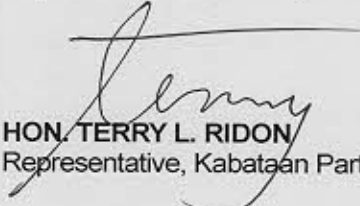
Aside from the rampant violations of the civil and political rights, the government's grim human rights record is also manifest in the economic, social and cultural realm. More than three decades after the Philippines ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the rights of millions of Filipinos are increasingly being neglected and undermined such as the right to education, decent jobs, health, food, and other social services, and adequate standard of living, among others.

Amidst this backdrop, there is a pressing and serious need for the government to educate its citizens, especially the youth, on their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. This role is stipulated in the Constitution, which specifically calls for all educational institutions to "inculcate... respect for human rights" and in the mandate of the Commission

of Human Rights, which is tasked to "establish a continuing program of research, education, and information to enhance respect for the primacy of human rights."

At present, the subject "Human Rights" is being taught by Philippine schools only on a voluntary basis. This bill seeks to make human rights subjects a mandatory part of the curriculum of all educational institutions in the country. In the face of the country's human rights situation, it is high time that the importance of human rights be inculcated in our youth.

In our commitment to human rights, we re-file this bill from my predecessor Rep. Raymond Palatino. The passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. TERRY L. RIDON
Representative, Kabataan Party-list

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY STUDY OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CURRICULA OF
IN ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the "Human Rights Education Act"

2 **SECTION 2. Human Rights Education.** – All public and private schools shall include in
3 their curricula courses, subjects and/or special lectures on human rights. No school shall be
4 established or allowed to operate unless this requirement is complied with.

5 **SECTION 3.** The Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education, in
6 consultation and close coordination with the Commission on Human Rights and various non-
7 government organization, advocacy groups and human rights organizations, shall formulate
8 courses, subjects and/or special lectures on human rights to be taught as separate courses or
9 incorporated in existing subjects now being taught in all levels of education throughout the
10 country.

11 **SECTION 4.** The Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education shall
12 consult and coordinate with the Commission on Human Rights and various non-government
13 organizations, advocacy groups and human rights organizations, in the writing, printing and
14 publication of textbooks, manuals and other reading materials to be used in the human rights
15 courses.

16 **SECTION 5.** This Act shall be implemented initially within the framework budget of the
17 Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education and state universities and colleges

1 for the year it is enacted into law. As far as practicable, the funds required therefor shall be drawn
2 from its appropriations for policy formulation, program planning, standards development and
3 instructional materials development.

4 Thereafter, such amounts as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be
5 included in the budget of the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education and
6 state universities and colleges in the annual General Appropriations Act.

7 **SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.***—The Department of Education and
8 Commission on Higher Education shall promulgate and issue the necessary implementing rules
9 and regulations within thirty (30) days after the effectivity of this Act.

10 **SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part thereof is held invalid or
11 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
12 valid and subsisting.

13 **SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
14 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule of regulation contrary to or inconsistent with,
15 the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

16 **SECTION 9. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
17 publication in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,