

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 6644

Introduced by Hon. Salvador B. Belaro Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Many of our Muslim brothers follow the Madrasah education program. Madrasah (*madaris*, pl.), an Arabic term, generally refers to a Muslim private school with core emphasis on Islamic studies and Arabic literacy. In the Philippines, the madrasah educational system covers the weekend madrasah where teaching is basically religious in nature; the developmental madrasah where learning is structured hierarchically and chronologically, like the formal basic education; and the standard private madrasah which is designed to be part of the Philippine education system.

It has three components—Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (Alive) in public schools, Alive for out-of-school Muslims, and assistance to private madaris.

In the 2013 Religious Freedom Report released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor of the United States, a total of 1,569 madaris are present across the Philippines, 53% of which are located in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). In 2011, there were 893 public elementary schools nationwide that offer Alive classes.

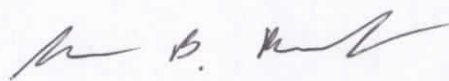
Likewise, there are 1,140 madaris registered with the Offices on Muslim Affairs (presently known as the National Commission on Muslim Filipino) seeking financial assistance from local and foreign donors, of which only 35 are registered with the Department of Education.¹

Because of the variance of the Madrasah system of education with the Philippine educational system in force in other parts of the country, there is a need to integrate the same for the welfare of our Muslim brothers so that they can be assured of employment in the Philippine labor market, among others.

However, the integration of madaris system requires a serious commitment. There is a need of a radical reform both in the terminology and approach. While preserving the religious studies as vital component, there is an urgent need to include other subjects. Accelerated teachers' training is needed with special focus on methods of teaching. There is also an urgent need to develop instructional facilities including libraries and laboratories.

Funding is also one of the critical aspect considering the minute amount of financial support the government has given to the Madrasah program during the past years. In 2011, the national government has released an amount of P251.6 million for the nationwide implementation of Madrasah education program, which is considerably low considering the much-needed developments in the program.²

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



CONG. SALVADOR B. BELARO, JR.

Representative

1-Ang Edukasyon Party List

¹ Jun Mercado, OMI. *Modernization of the Madrasah*. GMA News Online.

² Ronnel W. Domingo. 2011. *Muslim education program gets 252-M funding*. Philippine Daily Inquirer

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AN ACT
CREATING THE BUREAU OF MADRASAH EDUCATION (BME) IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DepEd) TO STRENGTHEN
THE MADRASAH EDUCATION PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the “Madrasah Integration Act of 2017”.

SECTION 2. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to 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. Such education shall also include alternative learning systems for out-of-school youths and adult learners. It shall be the goal of basic education to provide them with the skills, knowledge and values they need to become caring, self-reliant, productive and patriotic citizens.

SECTION 3. The Bureau of Madrasah Education (BME) is hereby established to ensure the capacity of the department in performing various functions concerning the Madrasah system of education, which includes overseeing of the operations of madaris schools in the country.

The various divisions under the bureau shall include:

- A. Curriculum and Instruction Division
- B. Human Resource Management and Development Division
- C. Finance and Scholarship Division
- D. Infrastructures and Projects Division

SECTION 4. The Madrasah Curriculum shall be a reconciliatory curriculum for the smooth transition of learners from the Madrasah education system and the formal educational system, and vice versa. It shall also be enhanced and harmonized making it compatible with the curriculum of Philippine formal education system.

SECTION 5. The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the National Commission on Muslim Filipino (NCMF) and the regional government of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), is hereby mandated to formulate the implementing rules and regulations.

SECTION 6. The initial funding of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00) necessary to carry out the provision of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriation Act (GAA) of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved.