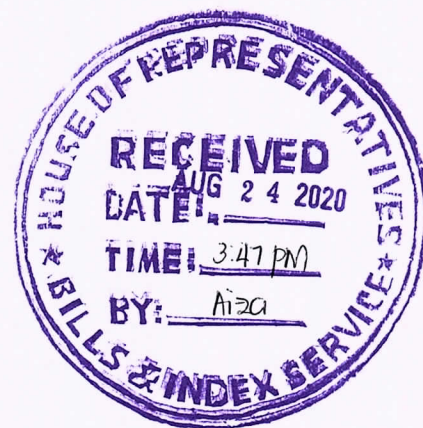




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 7470

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The rise and emphasis on differentiation in learning in terms of content, process, outcomes, learning environment, assessment and evaluation tools in response to variance among learners in the classroom¹ have paved the way to the understanding that a resource which contains all information and materials such as a textbook misses to acknowledge variance among learners. Gregory and Chapman (2013) argue that, with the growing number of culturally and linguistically diverse learners in the second decade of the 21st century (Goodwin, Lefkowitz, Woempner & Hubbell, 2011), an effective teacher must know “that learners cannot be placed through the same education hoops” and, thus, “specific materials and resources are selected to teach to the needs of the particular group of students”. This inevitably led to the existence of online and digitalized learning resources and handouts which are more congenial to the idea of differentiated learning. Moreover, aside from the interactivity of these technologically advance and enhanced learning resources, they are found to be cost-efficient compared to the publication and production of textbooks.

Be that as it may, some recent studies suggest that textbooks remain to be effective learning tools and continue to play vital roles in the curriculum and beyond. The Global Education Monitoring Report of January 2016 published by no less than the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) observes that there is “a growing body of evidence confirming the critical role of textbooks in improving student achievement”. The document, furthermore, states that, since 1990s, the

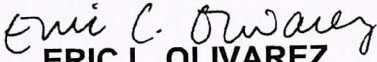
¹ For an introduction to differentiated learning, see Tomilson, C.A. (August, 200). Differentiation of Instruction in the Elementary Grades. ERIC Digest. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

significance of appropriate textbooks in improving the quality of education has been increasingly highlighted and effecting influence on education policies. In the findings of White (2004) and Zuze and Reddy (2014) as quoted in the same document, the increased availability of textbooks partly increased the Mathematics and English test scores of Ghanaian students between 1988 and 2003. South African students, particularly girls, did better on the Reading tests when they have their own textbooks. Despite the limitations of textbooks posed by the differentiation trends and the disadvantages to teachers and students,² textbooks still yield positive results: textbooks do not only reflect learning plans and curricula - they influence them. According to Gak (2011), they provide "consistency within a program across a given level, if all teachers use the same textbook". Moreover, textbooks provide "security for the students because they have a kind of road map of the course: they know what to expect and they know what is expected from them".

The point of this representation is simple: textbooks remain to be effective learning tools and, when appropriately written, yield positive results even in the context of differentiation in learning. There is, therefore, an urgent need to 1) stipulate standards and regulations to govern the entire process of publication of textbooks which are to be handmaids in achieving quality education and 2) provide support for teachers who intend to produce quality textbooks. We have seen and have been alerted to error-filled textbooks spread and use in schools across the country. The existence of these error-filled textbooks – one of which has been reported to have 775 errors "ranging from conceptual, pedagogical, logical and grammatical errors" i.e. "an average of 2.4 errors per page"³ – attest to the non-existence of appropriate measures which must ensure the quality of these materials. The creation of a development council whose primary functions are the ones mentioned above is, now more than ever, an urgent concern and need given all these propositions.

Providing quality education does not only amount to making education accessible to all. We have to make sure that our children are formed in our schools using quality and appropriate learning resources and tools. Making sure that they enjoy the use of quality and appropriate learning resources and tools is making sure that the coming generations are not only educated but epistemically conscientious and responsible and capable of making significant and fully-informed free choices.

It is for these reasons that the immediate passage of this bill is sought.


ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

² For studies on disadvantages of textbooks, refer to Basturkmen, H. (2010). *Developing Courses in English for Specific Purposes*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan and Graves, K. (2000). *Designing Language Course, A Guide for Teachers*. Boston: Cengage Learning.

³ See December 27, 2015. "Wrecking Ball" (inquirer.net), December 27, 2015. "Errors in 'Science Learner's Material' for Grade 4" (inquirer.net), June 08, 2015. "Crusader finds 1,300 errors in Grade 10 book" (inquirer.net) among others.



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**AN ACT CREATING THE
NATIONAL TEXTBOOK DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known "National Textbook Development Council Act of 2017".

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SEC. 2. The State, in fostering patriotism and nationalism, accelerating social progress and promoting total human liberation and development (1987 Constitution, Art. II, Sec. 17), gives priority to education as a social institution which plays as agent in forming responsible citizens capable of making intelligent decisions that affect both personal and social domains of life. In ensuring that this policy is observed and translates to concrete measures and programs, the State enables the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education and other related government agencies in coordination with related non-government agencies to develop policies relevant to their mandates.

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SEC. 3. The National Textbook Development Council shall be established in order to oversee, regulate, and support the development and publication of all textbooks and similar learning resources and tools in whatever format used in both basic and higher education in the Philippines.

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SEC. 4. The primary functions of the National Textbook Development Council are:

- a) Lay down specific conceptual, pedagogical, and publication standards and guidelines in the development of textbooks and similar learning resources and tools in whatever format;

- b) Coordinate with and tap the academic community in the review of content, structure, and other pedagogical aspects of textbooks and similar learning resources and tools in whatever format;
- c) Regulate, assess and, if necessary, stipulate appropriate sanctions on textbooks and similar learning resources and tools authors, publishers and developers in their compliance with the standards and guidelines; and
- d) Create an accreditation system for authors, publishers and developers so that those whose performance are excellent may get support from the council.

SEC. 5. The National Textbook Development Council shall begin the review process of any manuscript or prototype (in the case of other formats) as soon as it is officially received. The review period must take a minimum of three (3) months to a maximum of six (6) months. The process is as follows:

- a) The Council assigns the submitted manuscript or prototype to two (2) reviewers whose identities are not disclosed to the author/publisher/developer.
- b) The reviewers are given two (2) months to evaluate and make recommendations on the submitted manuscript or prototype. As soon as the review process ends, the author/publisher/developer is notified by the Council regarding the results.
- c) By the end of the review process, the manuscript or prototype may have the following status: APPROVED, APPROVED WITH MINOR REVISIONS, FOR RE-EVALUATION or REJECTED.
- d) A manuscript or prototype which earned the APPROVED status may proceed with the publication or production fifteen (15) days upon receipt of notice.
- e) A manuscript or prototype which earned the APPROVED WITH MINOR REVISIONS status must make the necessary revisions within the period of thirty (30) days or one (1) month. If it fails to comply, it will be submitted again for initial review.
- f) A manuscript or prototype which earned the FOR RE-EVALUATION status has to be revised for substantial corrections. It must be submitted again for initial review within the period of two (2) months or less otherwise will be rejected.
- g) A manuscript or prototype which earned the REJECTED status will have implications to the performance rating of the author/publisher/developer.

1 h) All textbooks and similar learning resources and tools in whatever format
2 must carry the seal of approval of the Council.

3 **SEC. 6.** The National Textbook Development Council must be composed of
4 authorized qualified representative from the following government and non-government
5 agencies:

- 6 a) Department of Education;
7 b) Commission on Higher Education;
8 c) National Book Development Board; and
9 d) Philippine Educational Publishers Association.

10 **SEC. 7.** Any person, company or entity who refuses or fails to comply with the
11 review process will be not awarded certification and may be sanctioned appropriately.

12 **SEC. 8.** Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the agencies which
13 compose the inter-agency committee mentioned in Section 4 shall issue the necessary
14 rules and regulation for the effective implementation of this Act.

15 **SEC. 9.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official
16 Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation

17 **Approved.**