

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **7799**



Introduced by Representative Stella Luz A. Quimbo

**AN ACT PROVIDING AN INTERNET ALLOWANCE FOR ALL PUBLIC
SCHOOL TEACHERS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall 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. Further, the succeeding section mandates the State to establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society. To help ensure the quality of our public education system, Republic Act No. 4670 or the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers declares as its policy the improvement of the living and working conditions of public school teachers.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented distance learning in the entire country¹, where the mode of instruction has shifted from classroom-based to digital. As a result, teachers will need to rely on new tools for instruction, including computers and stable internet connections. According to DepEd, only about 48 percent of all public schools have internet connections.² Moreover, among 687,911 public school teacher respondents, only 49 percent had internet connections at home as of July 2020.³ This means many teachers will face added expenses in the coming school year in order to keep up with the requirements of online classes.

An entry-level public school teacher at Salary Grade 11 earns a basic pay of P22,316 a month. Purchasing a laptop or computer with basic specifications would cost almost an entire month's pay. Further, paying for internet will now become a

¹ Retrieved from https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/DepEd_LCP_July3.pdf

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

regular monthly expense, given continuous online class sessions. These additional expenses for teachers will use up the disposable income that could have gone to other household needs. Thus, the Government must now step in to provide our teachers with additional support to cover such expenses, which could not have been anticipated prior to the pandemic.

However, during DepEd's budget briefing to the House Committee on Appropriations held on 15 September 2020, the Department admitted that it has no budget allocated for internet allowances to teachers in the coming year.

This bill proposes to provide our public school teachers with a monthly internet allowance of P1,500 each, in order to help them effectively conduct online classes. The quality of our students' learning greatly depends on their teachers and the efficiency of instruction. Today, that connection hinges on stable internet. It is the role of the Government, in its ultimate pursuit to establish and maintain quality education, to equip our teachers with the tools they need to deliver their lessons, especially during these unprecedented times.

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


STELLA LUZA QUIMBO
Representative
Second District, Marikina City

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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 “*Internet Allowance for All Public School Teachers Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to promote and improve the economic status of teachers and assist them in providing quality education to their students.

SEC. 3. *Internet Allowance.* – A monthly Internet Allowance of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00) is hereby granted to all public school teachers pursuant to Section 4 of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Coverage.* – The grant of the cash allowance authorized in this Act shall be limited to teachers who are engaged in the blended learning program in public basic education. The allowance shall only be granted in the implementation of the blended learning program for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SEC. 5. *Immediate Release.* Upon effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), shall ensure that the allowance is immediately released to all public schools teachers.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DepEd and the DBM shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within thirty (30) days from the date of its effectivity.

SEC. 7. Periodic Review for Increases. - The Secretary of Education is hereby mandated to conduct a periodic review of the Internet Allowance, taking into account the current rates of Internet service subscription plans, and if warranted, recommend the necessary increase in the amount of the allowance.

SEC. 8. Appropriations. - Upon effectivity of this Act, the amount necessary for its implementation shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Education for the current fiscal year. Thereafter, the funds shall be provided in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. Separability Clause. - If any part, section or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 11. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,