

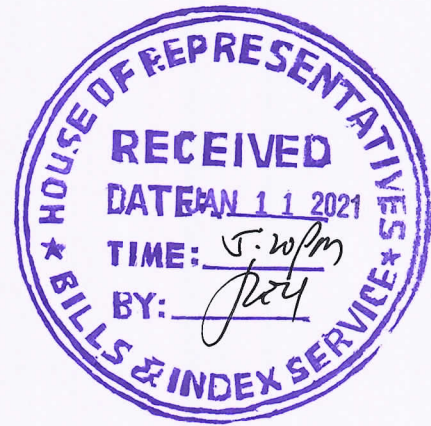
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**

Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 8329



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Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**

**HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Public libraries play a vital role in providing access to information, knowledge, skills, as well as recreation to the public. Public libraries aid the overall development of the community. It is therefore imperative that they are supported with updated materials and resources, and safe and accessible infrastructure. However, most of our public libraries struggle due to lack of access to the latest book collections, obsolete materials, insufficient facilities, and inadequate accession of records. These are hindrances in making public libraries more responsive and accommodating to the needs of the students and researchers.

This bill seeks to amend Republic Act No. 7743 to strengthen the public library system by ensuring that public libraries and reading centers are equipped and are continuously updated with the latest materials, computer facilities, and electronic library technology. It shall also provide for the affordable and reliable rental services of ICT equipment such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, and mobile Wi-Fi hotspots that will be beneficial for everyone who wants to learn. As we tread the path of distance learning in education, establishing public libraries is more relevant and needed now.

We must recognize the importance of public libraries and centers even in the modern age of information technology. They serve as a medium in spreading information, promoting our national history, instilling socio-civic consciousness, and fostering harmony through the local community.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MDC' with a large 'R' or 'B' at the end, enclosed within a circular scribble.

**MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III**

*Representative*

Magdalo Para Sa Pilipino Party-List

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**AN ACT**  
**STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM, AMENDING**  
**FOR THE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7743, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL, CITY AND**  
**MUNICIPAL LIBRARIES AND BARANGAY READING CENTERS THROUGHOUT**  
**THE PHILIPPINES," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1       SECTION 1. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7743 is hereby amended to read as  
2 follows:

3  
4       "Sec. 2. *Establishment of Public Libraries and Reading Centers.*— The National  
5 Library in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local  
6 Government (DILG) shall undertake the establishment of additional public  
7 libraries to serve all congressional districts, cities and municipalities in the  
8 Philippines and reading centers in every barangay except in cities or  
9 municipalities where there are existing public libraries or in barangays where  
10 there are existing reading centers: *Provided, That the [establishment of such*

1 ~~libraries and reading centers shall be based on the development program of~~  
2 ~~the National Library]~~ **PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR**  
3 **ESTABLISHING SUCH PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND READING CENTERS**  
4 **SHALL BE CONTINUOUSLY UPDATED TO INCLUDE THE LATEST**  
5 **COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY,** in coordination  
6 with the development council of each city or municipality and in the case of the  
7 barangay reading centers, in coordination with the respective barangay  
8 councils: *Provided further,* That where these public libraries and reading centers  
9 already exist, the National Library shall continue to upgrade the facilities thereof  
10 **WITH COMPLETE STANDARD SET OF BOOKS, E-BOOKS, ONLINE**  
11 **RESEARCH RESOURCES, SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ONLINE ACADEMIC**  
12 **JOURNALS, DATABASES AND PERIODICALS, AND OTHER MATERIALS**  
13 **AS PROVIDED UNDER SECTION 3 OF THIS ACT AS WELL AS THE**  
14 **LATEST ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SYSTEM FOR STORING, CATALOGING**  
15 **AND FILING OF DATA AND MATERIALS: *PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT***  
16 **BY THE YEAR 2022, ALL THE CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES OF THE**  
17 **PHILIPPINES WILL BE PROVIDED WITH AN ELECTRONICALLY-**  
18 **OPERATED LIBRARY SYSTEM."**

19  
20 Sec. 2. Section 6 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:  
21

22 "Sec. 6. *Functions of the Public Libraries and Barangay Reading Centers.*– The  
23 public libraries and barangay reading centers shall have the following functions:

- 24 (a) to make available to the members of the community reading materials  
25 of wide array, **CONTENT AND FORMAT, WHETHER PHYSICAL OR**  
26 **DIGITAL,** including **BUT NOT LIMITED TO** reading materials  
27 prescribed by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and  
28 national newspapers of general circulation and others;
- 29 (b) to be used as a venue for audio-visual presentations [~~in the community~~]  
30 and other kinds of exhibitions, **SEMINARS, TRAINING MODULES,**  
31 **WEBINARS,** and activities **WITH OBJECTIVES THAT INCLUDE BUT**  
32 **ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:**

- 1  
2                   **(1)     INCREASING THE FUNCTIONAL LITERACY RATE;**  
3                   **(2)     ENCOURAGING A CULTURE OF READING, SELF-**  
4                   **STUDY AND LIFELONG LEARNING;**  
5                   **(3)     PRESERVING THE LOCAL HERITAGE AND HISTORY;**  
6                   **AND**  
7                   **(4)     PROMOTING NATIONALISM, SOCIO-CIVIC**  
8                   **CONSCIOUSNESS AND HARMONY THROUGHOUT THE**  
9                   **LOCAL COMMUNITY;**

10  
11           **(C)    TO SERVE AS ACCESS POINTS FOR FREE FAST INTERNET**  
12           **CONNECTIVITY, IN LINE WITH THE POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND**  
13           **PROJECTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND**  
14           **COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (DICT);**

15  
16           **(D)    TO PROVIDE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY**  
17           **STUDENTS, TEACHERS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDs),**  
18           **AND SENIOR CITIZENS, AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE RENTAL**  
19           **SERVICES FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**  
20           **TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND EQUIPMENT SUCH AS BUT NOT**  
21           **LIMITED TO SMARTPHONES, TABLETS, LAPTOPS, DESKTOP**  
22           **COMPUTERS, AND MOBILE WI-FI HOTSPOTS;**

23  
24           (e)    to offer such other related services in the furtherance of this Act.

25  
26           Sec. 3. Section 7 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

27  
28           "Sec. 7. *Appropriations.*— The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of  
29           this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following  
30           its enactment into law [~~and for the next five (5) years: thereafter this local~~  
31           ~~government units shall undertake the maintenance of public libraries and~~  
32           ~~reading centers while the National Library shall continue to provide reading~~

1 ~~materials and supplies to the said libraries and reading centers~~]. **IN ORDER**  
2 **TO PROVIDE FUNDS NECESSARY FOR THE ELECTRONIC LIBRARY**  
3 **SYSTEM TO BE IMPLEMENTED, THE BUDGET OF THE NATIONAL**  
4 **LIBRARY SHALL BE INCREASED IN THE AMOUNT OF FIVE HUNDRED**  
5 **MILLION PESOS (P500,000,000.00) PER YEAR UNTIL ALL CITIES AND**  
6 **MUNICIPALITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES ARE PROVIDED AND HAVE**  
7 **ACCESS TO FULL ELECTRONIC LIBRARY FACILITIES."**  
8

9 *Sec. 4. Role of the Department of Information and Communications Technology*  
10 *(DICT).—* The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)  
11 shall assist in the provision of the cutting-edge computer and electronic library  
12 technology, as well as a fast and reliable internet connection, through the  
13 Department's flagship programs, including but not limited to the Technology for  
14 Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs and Economic Development (Tech4ED)  
15 Project.  
16

17 *Sec. 5. Separability Clause.—* If any portion or provision of this Act is  
18 subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are  
19 not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.  
20

21 *Sec. 6. Repealing Clause.—* All other laws, acts, presidential decrees,  
22 executive orders, presidential proclamations, issuances, rules and regulations, or parts  
23 thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are  
24 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.  
25

26 *Sec. 7. Effectivity.—* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
27 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,