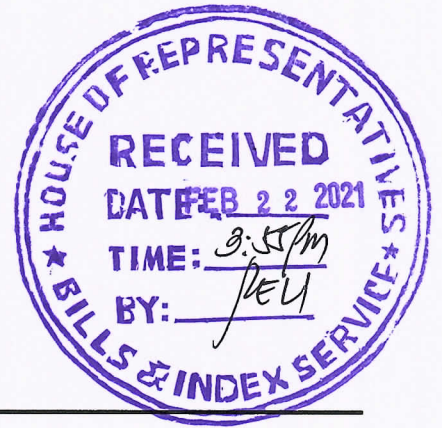


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8798



Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

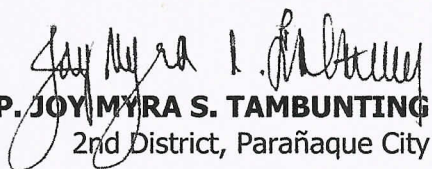
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The right to vote is embodied in three instruments, namely, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. The 1987 Constitution provides that, "Suffrage may be exercised by all citizens of the Philippines not otherwise disqualified by law, who are at least eighteen years of age, and who shall have resided in the Philippines for at least one year and in the place wherein they propose to vote for at least six months immediately preceding the election. No literacy, property, or other substantive requirement shall be imposed on the exercise of suffrage."

Suffrage is one of the most basic means of political participation for the public. It exists not only to put individuals into power but also as a means of the public to affirm its government and the political system. Voting enables citizens to legitimize governments to adopt and develop policies for their benefit. It allows people to choose how to shape the nation's future through the types of leaders they select.

Considering this, it is essential that the citizens are adequately prepared to make responsible and informed choices about the leaders they will elect. To this end, this measure seeks to integrate voter education into the curricula of junior and senior high school students in both public and private educational institutions. The syllabus for voter education shall include three thematic areas: suffrage, electoral system and process, and educated voting. It shall also include other additional topics and studies relevant to the above-mentioned thematic areas. This is proposed with the goal of empowering the youth to actively and responsibly participate in the political process through the elections.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.


REP. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING
2nd District, Parañaque City

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8798

Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

AN ACT
INTEGRATING VOTER'S EDUCATION IN THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
CURRICULA IN BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Voter's Education Act of 2021."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes the vital role of the Filipino youth in nation-building and encourages their involvement in public and civic affairs. It recognizes the role of educational institution in inculcating among the Filipino youth patriotism and nationalism, and in teaching the Filipino youth the rights and duties of citizenship in nation building. Moreover, the State recognizes the need to educate junior and senior high school students, who are about to become first-time, in becoming responsible members of the electorate through curriculum-based Voter's Education to preserve the integrity and sanctity of the electoral process through the educational system.

SEC. 3. Definition of Voter's Education. – As used in this Act, "Voter's Education" refers to the dissemination of information, materials and programs designed to inform citizens about the specifics and mechanics of the voting process. It includes providing information on the right to suffrage, its importance, and the proper exercise thereof, as well as information on who is eligible to vote; where and how to register; how electors can check the voter lists to ensure they have been duly included; what type of elections are being held; where, when and how to vote; who the candidates are; and how to file complaints.

SEC. 4. Mandatory Voter's Education. – Voter Education shall be integrated by the Department of Education (DepEd) in the senior high school curriculum effective at the start of the school year immediately following one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act. The Department of Education (DepEd), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) shall formulate the Voter's Education curriculum. Such curriculum shall be common to both public and private schools-I" out of school youth, and enrollees in the Alternative Learning System (ALS).

The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) shall assist DepEd in preparing teachers during the one-year transition period by conducting seminars and trainings on the electoral system and process. COMELEC shall certify that the teacher, after attending such seminars and trainings, is qualified to teach topics relating to the electoral system and process.

SEC. 5. Voter Education Curriculum. –

- a) Voter Education. – The main syllabus shall include, but not limited to, the following thematic areas:
 - i. Suffrage. - This area introduces to students the right to vote accorded by the Constitution, and other rights enabling the citizens to participate in the conduct of public affairs.
 - ii. Electoral System and Process - This area deals with the general principles underlying the present electoral system, and legislation regulating all the phase of election, namely, pre-election, election proper, and post-election. It discusses the proper conduct of elections including registration, casting of ballots, and counting of votes;
 - iii. Educated Voting- This area focuses on the attitude and behavior that a voter must adopt to ensure fair, free, and honest elections. It emphasizes the importance of participating in elections in a manner that shall stimulate and strengthen democracy.
- b) Supplementary Topics. - This curriculum should have additional topics and studies on the political system of the country, the contextual background of elections, current political, social, and economic issues affecting the elections and the possible solutions to address them.
- c) Other Subject Matter - Other area of voter education may be included in the syllabus.

SEC. 6. Educational Materials. – It shall be obligatory on all schools offering secondary education to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the textbooks, primers and leaflets on voter education to be issued by the Department of Education. The Department of Education shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of the school.

SEC. 7. Implementing Agency. – The Secretary of Education is hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out effectively the provisions of this Act. The Secretary of Education shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the rules and regulations, including those of a disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. Appropriations. – The sum necessary for the implementation of this Act, including but not limited to the development of the Voter's Education Curriculum, training and deployment of teachers, transportation of Vote Counting Machines (VCM) shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the implementing agencies under the General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,