

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 9895



Introduced by the Honorable Precious Hipolito Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Under Section 24 of Article II of the Constitution, it is provided that: "The State recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation building". The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the relevance of this Constitutional provision. Now, more than ever, going digital is inevitable and necessary, especially in the education sector.

Filipinos are proven to be heavy users of the internet. In a report called Digital 2019, Filipinos are found to spend an average of 10 hours a day on the internet.¹ This data shows that Filipinos greatly spend a huge chunk of their time browsing on their computers or mobile phones. The quality of information absorbed by them on the internet is however, another question.

It is high time for the country to establish vital cyberinfrastructures for the overall improvement of quality of education. Instead of having to spend their time in social media sites where misinformation is apparent, children should be encouraged to read and consume academic articles and books from the internet.

Thus, it is the intent of this bill to establish the Philippine E-Library, which shall be an online central repository of books and other academic materials. This shall be accessible to all and shall be free of charge to the public. This E-Library will also resolve one major predicament of teachers and students when it comes to distance learning, which is the lack of available resources and printed academic materials.

The immediate passage of this bill is most earnestly sought.


PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO

¹ <https://cnnphilippines.com/lifestyle/2019/02/01/2019-digital-hootsuite-we-are-social-internet-philippines-facebook.html>

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A PHILIPPINE ELECTRONIC LIBRARY AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR

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 "Philippine E-Library Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State hereby recognizes the vital role of information and communications technology in nation-building, and declares its policy to promote an environment for the development of infrastructures that would ensure the availability and accessibility to reliable and secure internet access suitable to the needs and aspirations of the nation. Towards this end, the State shall institutionalize the delivery of education digitally by establishing the Philippine E-Library.

SEC 3. *Establishment of the Philippine E-Library.* – The Department of Education (DepEd) and Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall jointly establish and manage the Philippine E-Library, a centralized electronic library which shall be free of charge to the public. The DICT and DepEd shall put up mechanisms that will ensure compliance with the Philippine intellectual property laws.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd and DICT, in consultation with other relevant agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,