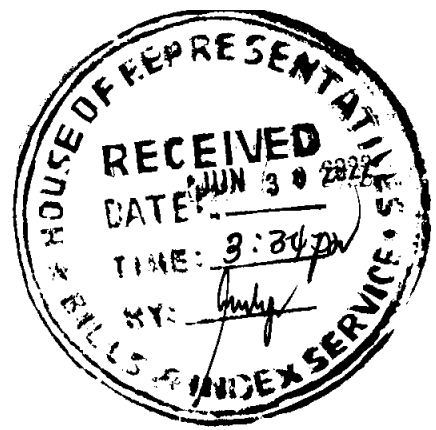


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 255



Introduced by
KABATAAN PARTY-LIST Representative Raoul Dannel A. Manuel,
ACT TEACHERS PARTY-LIST Representative France L. Castro,
and GABRIELA WOMEN'S PARTY Representative Arlene D. Brosas

**AN ACT PROMOTING CRITICAL MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY IN THE
PHILIPPINES AND PRESCRIBING ITS ENHANCED INCLUSION IN THE EDUCATIONAL
SYSTEM AND CURRICULUM IN THE PHILIPPINES, FOR SUCH OTHER PURPOSES, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With technological developments, we already live in a society that is "media saturated, technologically dependent, and globally connected."¹ Media is treated not as a parrot of information, but also as an influencer of public opinion. For this reason, the role and importance of media is a double-edged sword and calls for a more critically-minded public.

Being less reliant on print media with the accessible online news, the public are exposed to various information, may it be truthful or not. Without thorough assessment and fact-checking, it is no longer unacceptable to say that the public is exposed to a wide variety of news, the truthfulness of which ranging from most reliable to most questionable. How the Duterte administration spent about PhP 10-million, according to a study of the University of Oxford, only proves how media can now be used for propaganda and spreading false information.

The dangers of historical revisionism, not only in *memes* or informal posts but also in history books used in schools, have also become more apparent. To erase the struggle of the Filipino people by allowing the students and the youth to absorb incomplete, or worse, false, information, is a disgrace to the martyrs of the struggle for genuine democracy.

¹ Kellner, D., & Share, J. (2007). Critical media literacy, democracy, and the reconstruction of education. In D. Macedo & S.R. Steinberg (Eds.), *Media literacy: A reader* (pp. 3-23). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

While media literacy is a core subject in the Kindergarten to 12 (K-12) program of the government, it is not mandatorily provided in all schools. Moreover, the curriculum itself treats an individual as a passive receiver of information given by the media, obviously ignoring the role of an individual as a contributor to the media, especially online. Other than media-related courses in the tertiary level of education, many students do not receive any education on media literacy.

It is, therefore, the strong recommendation of this representation to have a mandatory course not only on media literacy, but on **critical media literacy**, defined by Kellner and Share (2007) as:

"The type of critical media literacy that we propose includes aspects of the three pre-vious models, but focuses on ideology critique and analyzing the politics of representation of crucial dimensions of gender, race, class, and sexuality; incorporating alternative media production; and expanding textual analysis to include issues of social context, control, resistance, and pleasure.'

"A critical media literacy approach also expands literacy to include information literacy, technical literacy, multimodal literacy, and other attempts to broaden print literacy concepts to include different tools and modes of communicating (Kellner, 1998). In addition to these elements, critical media literacy brings an understanding of ideology, power, and domination that challenges relativist and apolitical notions of most media education in order to guide teachers and students in their explorations of how power and information are always linked. This approach embraces the notion of the audience as active in the process of making meaning, as a cultural struggle between dominant readings, oppositional readings or negotiated readings (Ang, 2002; Hall, 1980)."²

The creation of a critical media literacy curriculum, in accordance with the growth and understanding not only of high school students but even primary/elementary students will help in cultivating a more informed and well-educated public not only to combat the surge of false information in the wake of technological advancements—which is gravely detrimental to our democracy and foundation as a nation now—but also to develop their critical thinking skills at a very young age.

Let this be a model for the international community, a step closer to a more informed, dynamic, and critical public crucial for democracy.

² Douglas, K. & Share, J. (2007). Critical media literacy is not an option. *Springer Science + Business Media, LLC* 2007.

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



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

SECTION 1. Short Title. -- This Act shall be known as the "Critical Media Literacy Act of
2022".

TITLE I
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
integrate the development of critical media literacy among Filipinos at an early age (1) to
develop an understanding of media, whether mainstream or alternative, and its importance
in sharing opinion, and (2) to create an environment conducive for critical thinking by raising
awareness on how to combat false and misleading information being circulated in different
forms of media.

TITLE II
DEFINITION OF TERMS

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.

- a) *Alternative Media* refers to media contents (print, broadcast, film, radio, etc.) contents
that fall outside the mainstream or dominant contents. Alternative media contents are
progressive, critical, and pro-people. They are usually produced and distributed
independently.

1 b) *Basic Education* encompasses kindergarten, elementary, and secondary education,
2 as well as alternative learning systems for out-of-school learners and those with
3 special needs.³

4
5 c) *Critical Media Literacy* is an educational response that expands the notion of literacy
6 to include different forms of mass communication, popular culture, and new
7 technologies. It deepens the potential of literacy education to critically analyze
8 relationships between media and audiences, information, and power. Along with this
9 mainstream analysis, alternative media production empowers students to create their
10 own messages that can challenge media texts and narratives.⁴

11
12 d) *Literacy* involves gaining the skills and knowledge to read, interpret, produce texts and
13 artifacts, and to gain the intellectual tools and capacities to fully participate in one's
14 culture and society.

15
16 e) *Media Literacy* provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate and create
17 messages in a variety of media forms (print, broadcast, film, radio, etc.)— from print to
18 video to the Internet.

19
20 Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as
21 essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy.

22
23 Media literacy, therefore, is about helping students become competent, critical, and
24 literate in all media forms so that they control the interpretation of what they see or
25 hear rather than letting the interpretation control them. To become media literate is not
26 to memorize facts or statistics about the media, but rather to learn to raise the right
27 questions about what you are watching, reading, or listening to.

28
29 **TITLE IV**
30 **NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR MEDIA LITERACY**

31
32 **SECTION 4. National Commission for Media Literacy.** -- A National Commission for
33 Media Literacy (NCML) shall be established immediately after the effectivity of this law,
34 composed of the following:

- 35
36 a) Secretary of the Department of Information and Communications Technology
37 (DICT);
38 b) Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd);
39 c) Commission of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
40 d) A maximum of five (5) representatives from different organizations that advocate for
41 critical media literacy;
42 e) A maximum of three (3) representatives from different mainstream broadcasting
43 networks; and
44 f) A maximum of three (3) representatives from different alternative media networks

45
46 **SECTION 5. Functions and Responsibilities of the NCMLP.** -- The NCML shall have the
47 following functions and responsibilities:
48

³ Section 3, Republic Act No. 10533.

⁴ Douglas Kellner and Jeff Share:

- 1 1. To provide for trainings and programs that shall help develop and enhance the skills
2 and knowledge of instructors, teachers, and professors who teach critical media literacy
3 and information among the students;
4
5 2. To conduct a thorough review of existing curricula about critical media literacy and
6 information courses and to draft a standardized curriculum for all schools and universities,
7 following the principles and guidelines set therefor;
8
9 3. To hold consultations with the public in order to further enhance its programs,
10 curriculum, and projects for a better understanding of critical media literacy and
11 information for all Filipinos;
12

13
14 **TITLE III**
15 **SCOPE OF MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION**
16

17 **SECTION 6. Responsible Agencies.** -- The following government departments, agencies,
18 instrumentalities, and non-government organizations shall be responsible for promoting
19 critical media information and literacy among all Filipinos:
20

- 21 a) Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)
22 b) Department of Education
23 c) Commission on Higher Education
24

25 **SECTION 7. Scope.** -- All Filipinos starting from grade level one shall receive critical media
26 literacy education, the curriculum being adjusted based on child development and his/her
27 capacity to understand.
28

29 **TITLE IV**
30 **PRIORITY PROGRAMS AND POLICIES**
31

32 **SECTION 8. Curriculum Development and Review.** -- All existing curricula that already
33 include critical media literacy shall be reviewed and amended.
34

35 All schools, universities, and colleges that do not have a curriculum on critical media
36 literacy and information shall develop one.
37

38 In both cases of curriculum development and review, the following principles shall be
39 adhered to:
40

- 41 1. Media is a COMPETENT TOOL. Media is a competent tool, not only in gathering
42 information, but also as a tool for critical analysis of various social issues. (shapes
43 opinion)
44 2. Media is EVOLVING (technology)
45 3. Media takes DIFFERENT FORMS. (alternative and mainstream)
46 4. Media can be CONTROLLED (hegemony)
47

48 **SECTION 9. Curriculum Committee .** -- The Department of Education (DepEd) and the
49 Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in partnership with (1) non-government
50 organizations that advocate for critical media literacy and information, (2) mainstream and
51 alternative media outlets, and (3) nationwide alliances of student councils and publications,

1 shall ensure that all schools in the Philippines shall have an effective curriculum on critical
2 media literacy and information.

3
4 **SECTION 10. Curriculum Implementation.** -- The Curriculum Committee should be able
5 to develop, revise, or improve the curriculum on critical media literacy and information
6 within six (6) months after the effectivity of the law.

7
8 **SECTION 11. Capacity-building and Training.** -- The Department of Information and
9 Communications Technology (DICT), in partnership with DepEd and CHED, and (1) non-
10 government organizations that advocate for critical media literacy and information, (2)
11 mainstream and alternative media outlets, (3) nationwide alliances of student councils and
12 publications, and (4) nationwide alliances of teachers or professors and their unions, shall
13 create appropriate programs for teachers, professors, or instructors who teach critical
14 media literacy and information at all levels.

15
16 **TITLE V**
17 **MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**
18

19 **SECTION 12. Rules and Regulations.** — The Department of Budget and Management
20 shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of the provisions
21 of this Act.

22
23 **SECTION 13. Appropriations.** — The amounts necessary to carry out the initial
24 implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the
25 agencies. Thereafter, the amounts necessary for the continued implementation of this Act
26 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

27
28 **SECTION 14. Separability Clause.** — If for any reason any section or provision of this Act
29 is declared unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall
30 continue to be in full force and effect.

31
32 **SECTION 15. Repealing Clause.** — Any laws, decrees, or laws, decrees, or rules and
33 regulations which are inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby
34 amended or repealed.

35
36 **SECTION 16. Effectivity.** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the publication
37 in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

38
39
40 *Approved,*