

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1947



Introduced by

HON. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
and
HON. JUDE A. ACIDRE

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN GEOGRAPHICALLY ISOLATED
DISADVANTAGED CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS, AND ACCESS ROADS
LEADING TO LAST MILE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine 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 State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

The proposed legislative measure seeks to make education more physically accessible to the public by regulations and repairs and prioritizing the construction of new school buildings, to ensure the safety of the students and staff as well as the effectiveness of onsite education.

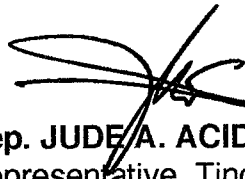
Due to the natural terrain of the Philippines, as well as socio-economic divides of certain groups of people, the lengths that civilians are willing to go in order to achieve education can be categorized as problematic or even dangerous.

As such, this bill authorizes renovations for roads and school facilities to improve their condition. Not only does this protect the physical welfare of students but it improves the effectiveness of education in designated areas.

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



Rep. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan



Rep. JUDE A. ACIDRE
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Geographically Isolated Disadvantaged Conflict-Affected Schools (GIDCAS) and All Roads to All Learners (ARAL) Act.*”

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to 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. It is also the policy of the State to promote and advance the right of every Filipino to education. The state recognizes the people's need for a quality, affordable and adequate educational system as a tool in nation building.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

(a) *Geographically Isolated Disadvantaged Conflict-Affected Areas (GIDCAAs)* refers to communities with marginalized population

physically and socio-economically separated from the mainstream society and characterized by physical factors and socio-economic factors.

- 1) Physical Factors - isolated due to distance, weather conditions, armed conflicts, and transportation difficulties (island, upland, lowland, landlocked, hard to reach and unserved/underserved communities).
- 2) Socio-economic Factors (high poverty incidence, presence of vulnerable sector, communities in or recovering from situation of crisis or armed conflict).

(b) *Access Roads to All Learners (ARAL)* refers to all roads leading to the last mile public schools.

(c) *Last Mile Public Schools* refers to schools in far flung areas, located in the farthest areas or hours away from the town centers and have less than four classrooms or any of the following:

- 1) Schools farthest/remotest from town centers
- 2) Schools with less than 4 classrooms
- 3) Schools with no electricity
- 4) Schools with more than 50% indigenous people learners
- 5) Schools with less than 100 learners
- 6) Schools with makeshift/non-standard rooms
- 7) Schools with no repairs/new projects for the last 4 years

Section 4. Coverage. – The Department of Education (DepEd) is hereby mandated to be the lead agency in the implementation of this Act. It is also mandated to formulate a guideline of requirements and to structure a timetable to ensure the implementation of this Act, in consultation with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), under the following circumstances:

- (a) All public schools nationwide that have no access roads;
- (b) All public schools in Geographically Isolated Disadvantaged Conflict-Affected Areas (GIDCAAs)

(c) All school buildings under the criteria of Last Mile Public Schools

For this purpose, an inventory will also include all school buildings, whether fully functional or condemned, in all public elementary and secondary schools to determine the physical status of each structure.

School heads shall submit to their respective Schools Division Superintendents, for appropriate action, a report indicating the existence of or any need of repair, rehabilitation, construction, and structural damage under their respective supervisions. The exigency of constructing new school buildings is a priority in anticipation of the increase in student population by virtue of the implementation of Republic Act No. 10533, or the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013."

Section 5. *Inter-connectivity Access.* – All schools under this coverage shall gain access to the availability of the programs under the Public Schools of the Future in Technology (PSOFT) that may be established by law or by the Department of Education, consistent with the emerging Fourth Industrial Revolution and socio-economic realities being shaped by shifting employment, demographic, cultural, and other internal and external forces which may be spurred by fast-paced technological progress.

It shall also consider a satellite-based digital learning as alternative to the traditional mode of learning.

Section 6. *Period of Implementation.* – The programs under this Act shall be implemented within three (3) years.

Section 7. *Administrative Provision.* – Failure to act any of the programs provided under this Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations by the DepEd and DPWH officials shall be dealt with accordingly by law through an administrative action of suspension from government service.

Section 8. *Appropriations.* – The appropriation necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Section 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,