

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2188



Introduced by Representative Roman T. Romulo

AN ACT
SUSPENDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUE AS THE MEDIUM
OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to suspend the implementation of the provisions on the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, particularly on the use of the Mother Tongue or the first language as the medium of instruction for learners in Kindergarten to Grade 3.

It cannot be gainsaid that we are in full support of the intentions and rationale behind the crafting of the provision. However, we can no longer turn a blind eye and deny that our schools are ill-equipped to be able to achieve our desired objectives. It appears that amidst the height of passion to be able to deliver internationally competitive education to our people, we have utterly failed to consider the proper preparations that are necessary to fruitfully implement the provisions of the law. What is worrisome is the fact that those who are suffering are precisely the youth that we sought to nurture with this Act. Instead of comprehending the lessons and expanding their knowledge which the law seeks to attain, our primary schoolers are afflicted with learning an unfamiliar language. Worse, they do not have sufficient materials to understand the said language.

We must act urgently to address the patent lack of materials in our schools. The 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. It must be emphasized that there may be more than one mother tongue in a region, province, city, or municipality. To make education accessible to all, we must consider

the different languages of our learners. This ensures that we shall be true to the mandate in providing our learners with quality education that is accessible to all.

To this end, this bill seeks to suspend the implementation of Sec. 4 of Republic Act No. 10533. It provides further that it shall remain suspended until and unless the Department of Education can satisfactorily certify the preparedness of its agency to Congress. It is in this manner that we will be able to bring forward our mandate of providing equal access to quality education.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of the proposed measure is earnestly requested.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Romulo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

ROMAN T. ROMULO

Lone District, Pasig City

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Suspension of the Implementation of Mother Tongue or First Language***
2 ***as Medium of Instructions from Kindergarten to Grade 3.*** – Section 4 of Republic Act 10533,
3 otherwise known as the “Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013” states as follows:

4 “SEC. 4. *Enhanced Basic Education Program.* — The enhanced basic
5 education program encompasses at least one (1) year of kindergarten
6 education, six (6) years of elementary education, and six (6) years of
7 secondary education, in that sequence. Secondary education includes four
8 (4) years of junior high school and two (2) years of senior high school
9 education.

10 Kindergarten education shall mean one (1) year of preparatory education for
11 children at least five (5) years old as a prerequisite for Grade I.

12 Elementary education refers to the second stage of compulsory basic
13 education which is composed of six (6) years. The entrant age to this level is
14 typically six (6) years old.

15 Secondary education refers to the third stage of compulsory basic education.
16 It consists of four (4) years of junior high school education and two (2) years
17 of senior high school education. The entrant age to the junior and senior high
18 school levels are typically twelve (12) and sixteen (16) years old, respectively.

1 Basic education shall be delivered in languages understood by the learners
2 as the language plays a strategic role in shaping the formative years of
3 learners.

4 For kindergarten and the first three (3) years of elementary education,
5 instruction, teaching materials and assessment shall be in the regional or
6 native language of the learners. The Department of Education (DepED) shall
7 formulate a mother language transition program from Grade 4 to Grade 6 so
8 that Filipino and English shall be gradually introduced as languages of
9 instruction until such time when these two (2) languages can become the
10 primary languages of instruction at the secondary level.

11 For purposes of this Act, mother language or first Language (L1) refers to
12 language or languages first learned by a child, which he/she identifies with,
13 is identified as a native language user of by others, which he/she knows best,
14 or uses most. This includes Filipino sign language used by individuals with
15 pertinent disabilities. The regional or native language refers to the
16 traditional speech variety or variety of Filipino sign language existing in a
17 region, area or place.”

18
19 However, since the enactment of RA 10533 almost a decade ago, the Department of
20 Education (DepEd) does not have the complete books, teaching materials, and supplies, to
21 effectively implement the use of mother tongue or first language (L1) in the instructions and
22 assessment of learners in Kindergarten to Grade 3.

23
24 Considering the current inability of DepEd to effectively implement the use of the
25 mother tongue or first language in all regions as provided by RA 10533, the implementation
26 of the use of mother tongue or first language is hereby suspended until such time as DepEd
27 is able to certify to Congress that it has completed its books, teaching materials, and supplies
28 to effectively implement the use of mother tongue or first language to learners in
29 Kindergarten to Grade 3.

30
31
32 **SECTION 2. *Development of Teaching Materials.*** – The DepEd shall coordinate with
33 the Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino (KWF) in developing books, teaching materials, and other
34 supplies necessary in the implementation of the use of mother tongue or first language within
35 sixty (60) days from its effectivity. It shall consider that regions, provinces, cities, or
36 municipalities may have more than one mother tongue.

37
38 **SECTION 3. *Assessment and Certification of First Language Instruction.*** - The DepEd
39 and KWF shall provide for the assessment of the appropriateness and capacity of all local
40 schools districts to use the mother tongue or first language as a mode of instruction to
41 learners in Kindergarten to Grade 3. They shall take into account that there can be more than
42 one mother tongue in the schools districts to absolutely achieve the intent of the law. Upon

1 complete assessment of said agencies of the completeness of the materials to be used in
2 Kindergarten to Grade 3, they shall provide Congress with the results of their assessment and
3 recommendation for the approval of Congress.
4

5 **SECTION 4. Automatic Repeal of this Act.** - This Act shall be deemed repealed upon
6 the approval of Congress of the assessment provided in Section 3 and the certification of
7 DepEd to Congress of the readiness of all the schools districts to implement the use of mother
8 tongue or first language as the medium of instruction for learners in Kindergarten to Grade 3.
9

10 **SECTION 5. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary for the implementation of this
11 Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DepEd. Thereafter, the
12 amount equivalent to at least one percent (1%) of the total annual appropriations of the
13 DepEd, which may be necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act, shall be
14 included in the annual General Appropriations Act.
15

16 **SECTION 6. Separability Clause.** - If any part of this Act is held invalid or
17 unconstitutional, the other parts or provisions thereof shall remain valid and effective.
18

19 **SECTION 7. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or
20 part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or
21 amended accordingly.
22

23 **SECTION 8. Effectivity Clause.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
24 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.
25

26 *Approved,*