

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4210**



Introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE FRANZ S. PUMAREN

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the studies done by the World Bank and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the course of education in the world, effectively disrupting educators in over 190 countries and affecting 1.6 billion students.^{1 2} Schools across the globe have temporarily shut down operations (while some have unfortunately been closed), effectively halting face-to-face classroom interaction. To curb the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus, schools have implemented remote learning strategies to have students continue taking their classes online through video communication platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams, to mention a few.

In the case of the Philippines, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought a surge of mobile devices, such as tablet computers, being utilized by students for remote learning. A number of Local Government Units (LGUs) in the country have provided tablet computers to students, especially those from poor and disadvantaged families, within their jurisdiction. Most of the procurement for these tablet computers emanates from large cities within the Metro – Manila, Pasig, Quezon City, and Caloocan. Meanwhile, in remote areas in the country, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has provided a \$2.4 million grant to the Department of Education (DepEd) in support of distance learning, turning over information technology (IT) equipment such as tablet computers, solar-powered transistor radios, and other devices.

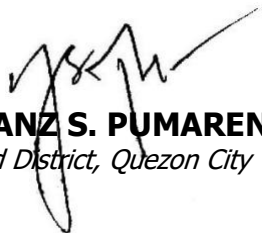
¹ Rodriguez, M. B., et al. "Remote Learning During the Global School Lockdown: Multi-Country Lessons." *World Bank*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/668741627975171644/pdf/Remote-Learning-During-the-Global-School-Lockdown-Multi-Country-Lessons.pdf>.

² "COVID-19 Response – Remote Learning Strategy." *UNESCO*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373764>.

While the efforts of some LGUs, as well as the private sector, to provide students with IT equipment such as tablet computers to aid their participation in remote learning is laudable, it is an irrefutable fact that a vast number of students are in dire need of educational equipment to continue their studies.³ It is highly likely that students with no access to tablet computers and other remote learning equipment will choose not to attend classes or quit school altogether.

COVID-19 has created remote learning as an emergency response but challenges conceived by the pandemic force the need to institutionalize support from the national government to provide effective remote learning tools such as tablet computers to Filipino students. It is hence the aim of this measure to assist students by giving them tablets, or similar learning devices, to help them cope with the current challenges in line with the national government's thrust to provide quality education for all Filipino students.

Given the foregoing, the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.



FRANZ S. PUMAREN
3rd District, Quezon City

³ The DepEd has estimated that more than 20 million primary and secondary students are enrolled in elementary and high schools. Meanwhile, CHED estimates that about 1.6 million students are enrolled in State Universities and Colleges and Local Universities and Colleges.

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**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE "ONE TABLET, ONE STUDENT" PROGRAM FOR
ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND STATE UNIVERSITIES AND
COLLEGES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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 "One Tablet, One Student Act of 2022."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels. Further, the State shall take appropriate measures to make education accessible to all, particularly in the midst of a hybrid classroom set-up due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SECTION 3. *One Tablet, One Student Program.* – The One Tablet, One Student program is hereby established to provide each public elementary and secondary student as well as students enrolled in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) a tablet computer to enable them to effectively participate in online learning.

SECTION 4. *Implementing Agencies.* – The Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) are hereby tasked to implement the One Tablet, One Student Program and shall:

- a. Develop a comprehensive system to determine the eligibility of students who will qualify under the said program;
- b. Develop an efficient and expeditious distribution system; and
- c. Formulate guidelines on usage, maintenance, and accountability for the tablets.

SECTION 5. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DepEd and CHED, in coordination with the local government units through the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall promulgate all the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation not later than thirty (30) days upon the effectivity of this Act. The DepEd and CHED shall publish such rules and regulations once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in two newspapers of general circulation.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, other issuances, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publications in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,