



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

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session  
House Bill No. **7021**



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**INTRODUCED BY REP. JOSE “BONG” J. TEVES, JR.**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

A shift into the digital platform is an inevitable occurrence in the present educational landscape in the Philippines. Affirmed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic where a number of educational institutions still conform to online learning or at least hybrid setup, the digitalization of our educational materials is needed. It also carries many benefits to our students such as easy and mobile access to these materials whenever or wherever they need such.

This proposed amendment affirms and further strengthen the goal of Republic Act No. 7743 or “An Act Providing for the Establishment of Congressional, City, and Municipal Libraries and Reading Centers Throughout the Philippines” by enabling the digitalization of our educational materials in our libraries.

Likewise, this is in consonance with Section 17, Article II of the 1987 Constitution which provides that the State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.

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



**HON. JOSE "BONG" J. TEVES, JR.**  
Representative, TGP Party-List



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**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SYSTEM, AMENDING THE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7743, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS  
"AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL,  
CITY, AND MUNICIPAL LIBRARIES AND BARANGAY READING CENTERS  
THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

**SECTION 1.** Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7743 Is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 2. Establishment of Public Libraries and Reading Centers. – National Library Establishment in coordination of Public with Libraries the and Department Interior and Local Government (DILG shall undertake the establishment of additional public libraries to serve all) congressional districts, cities and municipalities In the Philippines and reading centers In every barangay except In cities or municipalities where there are existing public libraries or In barangays where there are existing reading centers: Provided, That the [~~establishment of such libraries and reading centers shall be based on the development program of the National Library~~] **PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR ESTABLISHING SUCH PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND READING CENTERS SHALL BE CONTINUOUSLY UPDATED TO INCLUDE THE LATEST COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY**, in coordination with the development council of each city or

municipality and in the case of the barangay reading centers, in coordination with the respective barangay councils: Provided, further, That where these public libraries and reading centers already exist, the National Library shall continue to upgrade the facilities thereof **WITH COMPLETE STANDARD SETS OF BOOKS, E-BOOKS, ONLINE RESEARCH RESOURCES, SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ONLINE ACADEMIC JOURNALS, DATABASES AND PERIODICALS, AND OTHER MATERIALS AS PROVIDED UNDER SEC. 3 OF THIS ACT AS WELL AS THE LATEST ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SYSTEM FOR STORING, CATALOGING, AND FILING OF DATA AND MATERIALS: PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT BY THE YEAR 2023, ALL THE CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES WILL BE PROVIDED WITH AN ELECTRONICALLY-OPERATED LIBRARY SYSTEM."**

**Sec. 2.** Section 6 of Republic Act No. 7743 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 6. Functions of the Public Libraries and Barangay Reading Centers. – The public libraries and barangay reading centers shall have the following functions:

- (a) to make available to the members of the community reading materials of wide array, **CONTENT AND FORMAT, WHETHER PHYSICAL OR DIGITAL, including BUT NOT LIMITED TO** reading materials prescribed by the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports and national newspapers of general circulation and others;
- (b) to be used as a venue for audio-visual presentations [~~in the community~~] and other kinds of exhibitions, **SEMINARS, TRAINING MODULES, WEBINARS, and activities WITH OBJECTIVES THAT INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:**
  - 1. INCREASING THE FUNCTIONAL LITERACY RATE;**
  - 2. ENCOURAGING A CULTURE OF READING, SELF-STUDY AND LIFELONG LEARNING;**
  - 3. PRESERVING THE LOCAL HERITAGE AND HISTORY;**
  - AND,**
  - 4. PROMOTING NATIONALISM, SOCIO-CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS, AND HARMONY THROUGHOUT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY;**
- (c) **TO SERVE AS ACCESS POINTS FOR FREE FAST INTERNET CONNECTIVITY, IN LINE WITH THE POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND**

**PROJECTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (DICT);**

**(d) TO PROVIDE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY STUDENTS, TEACHERS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS), AND SENIOR CITIZENS, AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE RENTAL SERVICES FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND EQUIPMENT SUCH AS BUT NOT LIMITED TO SMARTPHONES, TABLETS, LAPTOPS, DESKTOP COMPUTERS, AND MOBILE WIFI HOTSPOTS;**

**(e) to offer such other related services in the furtherance of this Act.**

**Sec. 3.** Section 7 of Republic Act No. 7743 Is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Sec. 7. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law [~~and for the next five (5) years: thereafter this local government units shall undertake the maintenance of public libraries and reading centers while the National Library shall continue provide reading materials and supplies to the said libraries and reading centers~~]. **IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FUNDS NECESSARY FOR THE ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SYSTEM TO BE IMPLEMENTED, THE BUDGET OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY SHALL BE INCREASED IN THE AMOUNT OF FIVE HUNDRED MILLION PESOS (P500,000,000.00) PER YEAR UNTIL ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES ARE PROVIDED AND HAVE ACCESS TO FULL ELECTRONIC LIBRARY FACILITIES.**"

**Sec. 4. Role of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).**

– The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall assist in the provision of the cutting-edge computer and electronic library technology, as well as a fast and reliable Internet connection, through the Department's flagship programs, including but not limited to the Technology for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs, and Economic Development (Tech4ED) Project.

**Sec. 5. Separability Clause.** - If any portion or provision of this Act is subsequently declared Invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

**Sec. 6. Repealing Clause.** – All other laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, presidential proclamations, Issuances, rules and regulations, or parts thereof which are contrary to or Inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

**Sec. 7. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication In the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,