Republic of the Philippines

House of Representatives

Quezon City, Metro Manila

Nineteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HOUSE BILL NO. **10454**

Introduced by Representative LORDAN G. SUAN

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE INCLUSION IN THE SECONDARY EDUCATION CURRICULA THE LIVES AND HEROISM OF COMFORT WOMEN DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Rough estimations indicate that approximately 1,000 Filipina comfort women were subjected to sexual slavery by the Japanese military during World War II. Sadly, due to the trauma and societal stigma associated with their experiences, many survivors opted to remain silent. As a result, there is no precise count of the remaining survivors, although some advocacy groups speculate that the number could be as low as 10.

In spite of the potentially diminishing number of surviving comfort women, their legacy remains profoundly significant. The lessons drawn from their courageous sacrifices and unwavering resilience continue to resonate deeply in our modern era. Their enduring spirit in the face of immense hardship and adversity serves as an enduring inspiration, reminding us of the importance of courage, dignity, and the pursuit of justice.

Despite the atrocities they endured, these women exhibited remarkable resilience and courage in the face of adversity. Many of them bravely resisted their captors, often at great personal risk, while others endured their plight with quiet dignity, bearing their suffering in silence. Their sacrifices were instrumental in the broader context of the Philippines' struggle for freedom and

sovereignty during World War II, underscoring their significance as symbols of resilience and resistance in the face of oppression.

Inclusion of comfort women's stories in the secondary education curriculum not only honors their courage and sacrifices but also contributes to the preservation of historical truth and collective memory. It provides a platform for amplifying marginalized voices, challenging historical revisionism, and promoting social justice and reconciliation. By educating students about this dark chapter in our history, we strive to build a more compassionate and empathetic society, committed to upholding the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of gender or nationality.

In light of the preceding, this bill's approval is fervently sought.

LORDAN G. SUAN
Cagayan de Oro City – 1st District

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the "Comfort Women Education Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The state acknowledges the immense hardships endured by Filipino women who were subjected to suffering and sexual slavery during the Japanese occupation. Their courageous involvement in the resistance efforts during the war is recognized as heroic. To commemorate their sacrifices and valor, the government pledges to integrate the stories of comfort women into educational curricula and historical narratives, ensuring that their courage and martyrdom are never forgotten.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms are defined as follows:

a) Comfort Women refers to the victims of state-sanctioned military sex slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army in World War II

b) Comfort Women Education refers to the teaching on the lives and heroism of comfort women during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, and on their continuing struggle for justice and recognition

SEC. 4. *Integration of Comfort Women Education in Curriculum.* **-** All public and private secondary schools and institutions shall integrate comfort women education as part of their curriculum. Thus, the struggles and plight of Filipino comfort women shall be included in the Araling Panlipunan (AP) subject for the secondary levels.

All covered educational institutions shall also integrate comfort women education in the learning materials and history books corresponding to the curriculum.

SEC. 5. Curriculum Review – The coverage and quality of comfort women education in public and private secondary institutions shall be included in the comprehensive curriculum review to be conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd).

SEC. 6. *Appropriation.* - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged to the respective appropriations of the Department of Education (DepEd) under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for its continuous implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd), in consultation with comfort women organizations and relevant stakeholders, shall formulate the rules and regulations to effectively implement this Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* — Any portion or provisions of this Act that may be declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not have the effect of nullifying

other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions or provisions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, memoranda, circulars, and other issuances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette, in a newspaper of general circulation, or on a website provided for by law.

Approved,