

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 146



Introduced by: **REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.”

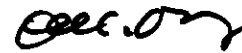
One of the greatest failures the world can ever have is for the love for knowledge and passion for learning to become more and more a thing of the past as time goes by. As we gain heaps of milestones in terms of technological advances, it is feared that such technological achievements also provides various distractions and disincentives for the youth to learn. It becomes increasingly difficult for people to distinguish false information, more popularly known as “fake news” from facts that are backed by evidence and science, and curiosity and critical thinking are starting to fade to obscurity.

Clearly, there is a need to re-awaken the people’s thirst for knowledge and passion for learning if we want to keep making the world a better place. The only way to do this is to educate as many people as we can through every means, channel, or platform available to them.

One such way is to revive the educational programs that we used to regularly see on television. In the Philippines, television is one of the main sources of entertainment of the people, especially the general masses. It will be a very good entry point for educating the public about sensible topics in the fields of Science,

Mathematics, Arts, History, Language, and/or other academic disciplines. A TV show can reach thousands of people, and if given a strategic time slot, it can very well reach very specific target audiences like the children. What more, TV networks are in fact experts in finding a way to deliver its message in an engaging, entertaining manner to keep the interest of its intended viewers. Thus, it could serve as a great instrument to deliver educational and factual information to the public.

Having said the forgoing, this bill seeks to mandate all TV networks to air a regular program of educational content for at least 50 hours in a year, in order to revive that love for knowledge and passion for learning in our people, especially the children and the youth. We believe that the television is a very powerful tool for education if it chooses to be so. Hence, this bill seeks to direct the television networks to contribute in this noble objective of educating the public in a more direct, straightforward manner, free of fiction, sensationalism, drama, and inappropriate content.



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AN ACT
MANDATING ALL TELEVISION NETWORKS TO AIR AT LEAST ONE
REGULAR PROGRAM OF PURELY EDUCATIONAL CONTENT
RUNNING FOR AT LEAST 50 HOURS PER YEAR

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 “Educational Television Shows Act of 2021”.

Sec. 2. *Policy of the State.* It shall hereby be declared as policy of the State to promote and uphold with utmost regard the passion for knowledge and the pursuit of excellence among its citizens, particularly the youth.

Sec. 3. *TV Show of Educational Content, defined.* For purposes of this Act, a TV show of Educational Content shall mean any television program the content of which is primarily based on factual information in the fields of Science, Mathematics, History, Arts, Language, and other Academic Subjects, shown or aired with the main purpose of teaching, educating and expanding the knowledge of the viewers, especially the children and the youth, on certain established scholastic truths and novel discoveries.

Sec. 4. *Mixed and blended TV programs.* TV programs that are substantively loaded with sensationalism; drama; fictional plots especially those that tend to change, mix, blend or bend scientific

and historical truths or facts; public entertainment; and personal-opinion-heavy content shall not be considered as “educational television show” for purposes of this Act.

Sec. 5. *TV programs with incidental educational contents.* TV shows primarily aimed at entertainment, but which may contain an incidental amount of educational content, such as “medical drama”, “detective drama”, “political dramas”, “historical dramas” and other analogous shows, shall not be considered as “educational television show” for purposes of this Act.

Sec. 6. *News and public affairs programs.* News and public affairs programs, while on its own merit a purveyor of current events and factual information, shall likewise not be covered as “educational television show” for purposes of this Act.

Sec. 7. *Mandatory Regular Airing of a TV Program of Educational Content.* All television networks operating under Philippine Laws are hereby required to air at least one regular program of educational content as defined in this Act, for at least 50 hours in a year.

Sec. 8. *Monitoring System.* The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) shall develop a system to monitor the compliance of all TV networks on this act. The NTC shall review and determine whether a television show can be classified or not as purely educational program in compliance with this act. Should the NTC determine that certain episodes, or significant portions of an episode of a regular program of educational content aired by a television network did not comply with the requirements set by this Act as to what constitutes “educational content”, it shall deduct the number of hours to the required 50 hours of airtime and give notice to the television network to carry over the deducted number of hours the following year.

Sec. 9. *Reporting.* All television networks shall make an annual reporting on their respective compliance of this act. They shall submit the list of educational tv programs to the NTC that were aired in a current year that complied with at least 50 hours of education programs mandated by this act subject to the provision of the preceding paragraph.

Sec. 10. *Development of Guidelines.* The NTC shall develop guidelines on the proper implementation by the TV networks of the

provisions of this Act. Such guidelines shall, among others, ensure that TV Shows of educational content do not perpetuate or promote baseless, unfair, or discriminatory remarks and stereotypes on gender, age, culture, religion, ethnicity, disability, and/or any form or kind of disease, whether directly or indirectly. The guidelines shall also ensure that the TV show of educational content adopt a gender-, culture-, and disability- sensitive, and age-appropriate language at all times. The NTC shall develop the guidelines in close consultation with the relevant government agencies such as the Philippine Commission on Women, National Council on Disability Affairs, The Council for the Welfare of Children, The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos, the Department of Health, the Commission on Human Rights, National Youth Commission, among other agencies, as well as academic experts whenever applicable.

Sec. 11. *Penalty.* Failure to air a regular program of educational content in accordance with the provisions of this Act within one year from the time it becomes effective, upon the determination of the NTC shall be a ground for the imposition of fine in the amount of P1,000,000.00. Once notice to the tv networks for compliance has been issued by the NTC and the tv networks still failed to comply, the NTC shall suspend the tv network's license to operate based until such time that the requirements of this Act are complied with.

Sec. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* The National Telecommunications Commission in partnership with the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education shall, within sixty (60) days from the of this Act, come up with the Implementing Rules and Regulations to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 13. *Separability Clause.* If, for any reason, any part, section or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in force and effect.

Sec. 14. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and other issuances, or part or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 15. *Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,