

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 967

Introduced by Rep. Oscar G. Malapitan

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 7743 enacted in June 1994 aims to further the moral and intellectual well-being of the Filipino people by establishing public libraries and reading centers throughout the Philippines, with the National Library of the Philippines (NLP) and local government units responsible for their establishment, maintenance, and provisions of reference materials. It recognizes the vital role of knowledge and information in nation building, and as a tool to elevate the literacy level of every Filipino to the end of eradicating illiteracy.

Yet, despite of the lofty ideals behind the enactment of Republic Act No. 7743, only a small fraction of the intended number of libraries and/or reading centers have so far been established throughout the country since its implementation in 1995. Base on the informational website of the NLP showing the statistical number of affiliated public libraries in the Philippines, there are only 1,660 public libraries and reading centers as of December 2023, or a mere 3% of the total number of barangays, cities, and municipalities in the Philippines.

A lot has come to pass since the passage of Republic Act No. 7743 three decades ago. The advances in information and communication technology (ICT) has, in fact, increasingly put to question the relevance of ordinary libraries as repositories of physical books and resources, and as centers for learning, research, and community engagement, in today's digital landscape.

This bill which seeks to establish a modern library in the 1st District of Caloocan City aims to ensure that the value and significance of libraries will remain undiminished, even in the midst of these prevailing new dimension and growing misgivings. It is a strategic initiative aimed at adapting to the evolving needs of the community in an era characterized by rapid technological advancement. It recognizes the importance of a modern library amidst the digital age and elucidates the essential equipment and services needed to ensure their effectiveness.

Libraries, despite the proliferation of digital resources and on-line platforms, remain indispensable for several reasons. It curate and validate information, ensuring its accuracy, reliability and relevance-a function that is particularly crucial in an era of misinformation and fake news. It serve as an inclusive spaces where individuals from diverse backgrounds can gather, interact and exchange ideas, fostering social cohesion and community engagement. It also promote equity and access by providing free and open access to information, resources and educational opportunities. And finally, libraries promote and preserve cultural heritage through their collections of books, manuscript, archives, and artifacts which enrich the cultural fabric of society.

In fine, the establishment of a modern library in the 1st Congressional District of Caloocan City represents a proactive response to the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital age. By embracing innovation, and promoting lifelong learning, it will well-served as catalyst for social progress, economic development, and individual empowerment within the community.

Hence, with the foregoing considered, the immediate approval of this bill is earnestly requested.


HON. OSCAR G. MALAPITAN

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A MODERN LIBRARY IN THE FIRST CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF CALOOCAN, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. There shall be established in the First Congressional District of Caloocan City a modern library which shall be under the direct control and supervision of the National Library of the Philippines (NLP).

SEC. 2. In addition to the conditions provided under Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7743, the establishment of a modern library in the 1st Congressional District of Caloocan City shall be based on the latest computer and electronic library technology with complete standard sets of books and other materials as mandated under Section 3 of the same Act, including high-speed internet access, computers and workstations, digital collections, interactive technologies, maker spaces and innovative labs, and other technology based functions.

SEC. 3. The Director of NLP shall appoint the following to manage the Caloocan City First Congressional District Library:

- (a) Librarian III
- (b) Librarian I
- (c) Administrative Assistant III
- (d) Computer File Librarian I
- (e) Administrative Aide VI; and,
- (f) Watchman (Security Guard)

The appointments of such positions shall be in accordance with the Compensation and Position Classification System and other civil service rules and regulations. In addition, their salaries and allowances shall be in accordance with Republic Act No. 11466, otherwise known as the “Salary Standardization Law of 2019,” and other applicable laws.

SEC. 4. The NLP shall include in its program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the NLP shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 6. If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 7. All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules and regulations as well as local ordinances contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,