

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2213



Introduced by **Representative Ryan S. Recto**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This legislative measure aims to establish an online library designed to revolutionize public education which shall serve to provide readily accessible, digitized copies of textbooks and other learning materials for learners across the country.

This proposed bill envisions to equip Filipino students with the necessary resources and skills to thrive in an increasingly digitized world. At a time when most of the world is rapidly moving online, access to digital resources is no longer a luxury but a necessity for quality education. It is then high time that we provide our learners with sufficient, convenient and reliable access to their textbook materials.

The necessity of this legislative proposal is further underscored by the several pressing issues confronting our public education system. The persistent shortage of textbooks and other learning materials has long hampered the quality of education. This is further compounded by the continuous increase in student enrollment in public schools nationwide. In fact, it was projected by the Department of Education (DepEd) that for school year 2025-2026 there will be an approximate 27.6 million enrollees. This further exacerbates the scarcity of physical textbooks and thus diminishing the ideal teacher-to-student textbook ratio of one is to one.

It is hoped that through the creation of an online library, the pervasive issue on textbook shortage will finally be addressed. By providing the necessary digital infrastructure, the bill envisions to bridge the existing digital divide and fundamentally enhance learning experience.

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


Ryan S. Recto
Representative
6th District, Batangas

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE ONLINE LIBRARY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION ONE. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Philippine Online*
2 *Library Act*".

3
4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State to ensure that
5 its citizens have the knowledge, skills, competency and necessary resources to
6 access and navigate an increasingly digitized world. Thus, the State shall provide its
7 citizens with the opportunity to increase their adaptability to information and
8 communications technology and to enhance their learning experience by providing
9 access to digitized copies of textbooks necessary for the provision of quality primary
10 and secondary education.

11
12 SEC. 3. *Philippine Online Library.* – The Department of Education (DepEd) shall
13 create a digitized copy of all textbooks and reference books it deems necessary for
14 the public education of Philippine elementary and secondary students. These shall
15 be compiled in the Philippine Virtual Library which shall be jointly managed by the
16 DepEd and the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT).

17
18 SEC. 4. *Provision for Access to Digitized Copies of Textbooks.* – The DepEd
19 shall ensure access to the digitized copies of textbooks by providing computers,
20 laptops or appropriate wherewithal to all primary and secondary public schools
21 nationwide. The DICT shall provide fast and reliable internet access to each primary
22 and secondary public school nationwide. Similarly, in order to ensure access to the
23 digitized copies of textbooks, the DICT shall provide fast and reliable Internet access
24 to each primary and secondary public school.
25

1 SEC. 5. *Recycling of Computers.* – In order to offset expenses related to the
2 procurement of computers, laptops or appropriate wherewithal necessary for the
3 immediate execution of the provisions of this Act, national government agencies,
4 government-owned and controlled corporations and other government financial
5 institutions which shall procure new computers shall endorse their old units to the
6 DICT to check if the computers can still be used for the intent of this Act and
7 afterwards shall be given to DepEd for deployment to primary and secondary public
8 schools nationwide.

9
10 SEC. 6. *Additional Online Educational Materials.* – The DepEd may seek the
11 assistance and support of the National Library of the Philippines to complement the
12 Philippine Online Library's digital repository of textbooks with additional materials
13 that is representative of Filipino culture and literature. DepEd shall also be allowed to
14 add other online materials that it deems necessary for expanding the learning
15 opportunities for students.

16
17 SEC. 7. *Custody over Digitized Copies of Textbooks.* – The DepEd and the
18 National Library of the Philippines shall have joint custody over the digitized copies
19 of the textbooks. The DICT shall likewise ensure the technological management of
20 the digital repository to ensure the integrity of the system.

21
22 SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The initial amount of Five hundred million (Php
23 500,000,000.00) shall be appropriated for the immediate implementation of this Act
24 and shall be jointly managed by the DepEd and DICT. The amount necessary for the
25 continuous and effective implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual
26 General Appropriations Act.

27
28 SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from
29 the approval of this Act, the DepEd, the DICT, and the National Library of the
30 Philippines shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations for
31 the effective implementation of this Act.

32
33 SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part, section, or provisions
34 of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected
35 thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

36
37 SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,
38 rules and regulations, and parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of
39 this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

40
41 SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following
42 the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2)
43 newspapers of general circulation.

44
45 *Approved,*