

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2265**



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
DIGITIZING ALL BOOKS NECESSARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY
PUBLIC EDUCATION AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE ONLINE
LIBRARY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The digital transformation of education is no longer a mere innovation – it is a necessity. The mobility restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the glaring gaps in the Philippines’ educational infrastructure, particularly in the delivery of digital learning.

The urgency of ensuring continuous learning, even amid disruptions, has emphasized the critical role of accessible, digitized learning materials in building a resilient and inclusive education system.

This measure seeks to institutionalize the Philippine Online Library, a centralized digital repository of all textbooks and reference materials deemed essential by DepEd for the country’s primary and secondary public education. By digitizing these learning resources and ensuring their availability through government-supported platforms, the State affirms its commitment to accessible, up-to-date, and equitable education.

This bill also addresses the digital divide by mandating the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) to provide fast and reliable internet in all public schools and directs government agencies to recycle computers for educational use. This approach not only expands access to technology by also promotes sustainability and cost-efficiency.

Furthermore, the Philippine Online Library shall be enriched with culturally relevant materials, in coordination with the National Library of the Philippines, to ensure that Filipino learners are not only equipped with core

academic knowledge but are also rooted in the nation's literary and cultural heritage.

Through the Philippine Online Library Act, we lay the foundation for a truly 21st-century public education system—one that leverages technology to ensure that no learner is left behind.

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



REP. PM VARGAS

Fifth District, Quezon City

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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 “*Philippine Online Library Act*”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. -It shall be the policy of the State to ensure that its citizens are computer literate and are provided access to an increasingly digitized world. Thus, the State shall provide its citizens with the opportunity to increase their adaptability to information and communications technology and to enhance their learning experience by providing access to digitized copies of textbooks necessary for the provision of quality primary and secondary education.

SECTION 3. Philippine Online Library. – The Department of Education (DepEd) shall create a digitized copy of all textbooks and reference books it deems necessary for the public education of Philippine elementary and secondary students. This shall be compiled in the Philippine Online Library which shall be jointly managed by the DepEd and the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT).

SECTION 4. Provision for Access to the Digitized Copies of Textbooks. - The DepEd shall ensure access to the digitized copies of textbooks by providing computers, laptops, or appropriate wherewithal to all primary and secondary public schools nationwide. Similarly, in order to ensure access to digitized copies

of textbooks, the DICT shall provide fast and reliable internet access to each primary and secondary public school.

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

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

SECTION 7. *Custody over Digitized Copies of Textbooks.* - The DepEd and the National Library of the Philippines shall have joint custody over the digitized copies of the textbooks. The DICT shall likewise ensure the technological management of the digital repository to ensure the integrity of the system.

SECTION 8. *Appropriations.* - The initial amount of five hundred million (Php 500,000,000.00) shall be appropriated for the immediate implementation of this Act and shall be jointly managed by the DepEd and DICT. The amount necessary for the continuous and effective implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the DepEd, the DICT, and the National Library of the Philippines shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations for the effective execution and enforcement of this Act.

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

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,