

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2320



Introduced by Representative BELLA VANESSA B. SUANSING

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE INTEGRATION OF BANGSAMORO HISTORY, CULTURE,
AND IDENTITY IN THE STUDY OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY IN BASIC AND
HIGHER EDUCATION

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the years leading up to and following the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the Philippine Government and Bangsamoro leaders have made significant strides in establishing enduring peace in the region, continually encouraging high hopes for prospects and promises of long-term development in the BARMM. Recently formulated and implemented institutional and political systems have expanded the rights of the Bangsamoro people towards self-governance and enfranchisement in national politics, with recent legislation passed by the Bangsamoro Transitional Authority, such as the Bangsamoro Electoral Code (BEC), standing as hallmark models of progressive, innovative legislation in the country.

However, while progress through the partnership of the Philippine Government and the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) has strengthened political, economic and legal instruments to ensure enduring peace and development in the region, much of the historical narratives that have shaped, continually shape and will continue to shape the Bangsamoro remain unstudied, circumscribed to the geographical boundaries of the BARMM (or, if conditions are fortuitous, to its adjacent provinces), unknown to Filipinos outside of the region who do not concern themselves with the academic study or fieldwork in the BARMM. For Filipinos proud of their storied heritage and so quick to narrate tales of heroism, resilience and fortitude of renowned and average Filipinos alike, to not know the Bangsamoro is to long for a part of one's identity that one did not even know existed.

With education and continual dialogue through academic circles as salient forces for more profound knowledge, understanding and comprehension of matters of utmost national importance, particularly the study of national history, politics and culture, the following measure seeks to introduce and Bangsamoro history, culture and identity into the curriculum of basic and higher education in the Philippines.

Upon approval, this measure would amplify current momentum for creating an all-encompassing representation of the Bangsamoro, started years leading up to the passage of important legislation which culminated to the passage of the Bangsamoro Organic Law. The approval of this measure would facilitate dialogues of cultural understanding between the Bangsamoro people and local communities outside the region, not only within our vibrant, diverse and spirited academic communities, but in platforms and venues outside the classroom, creating a virtuous cycle of building ideas, frameworks, values and character based on discussions among our local youth. Such potential outcomes contribute invaluable to the necessarily variegated nature of our national consciousness and assure enduring peace in the region as dialogues address latent, long-term points of friction and conflict that once plagued relations between the Bangsamoro people and the rest of the country.

On July 21, 2016, Republic Act No. 10908 or the “Integrated History Act of 2016” was passed into law to integrate the Filipino-Muslim and Indigenous Peoples history, culture and identity into the study of Philippine history. However, with limited progress on curriculum integration, there is a need to create a more material mandate to ensure the accurate and faithful integration of Bangsamoro history within the national curriculum. Hence, this Representation elected to introduce the following measure.

So many of the conflicts in our nation’s history were caused by a hesitancy to learn, a lack of willingness to know what hurts the other side of the battlefield, only for the two sides to know, after many thousands have died, that peace was always achievable.

To honor the sacrifices of the past in order to learn in the present, to assure that such conflicts, with its complementary and senseless losses, shall be avoided, to pursue the integration of the beliefs, customs, traditions and aspirations of our Moro communities into our national consciousness, to appreciate and hold to high esteem the Moro struggle for the right to self-determination, the gains of the peace process and to engage the whole country, through every locality and community, in aspirations to actualize the promises of long-term peace and development in the BARMM, the immediate consideration and approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


BELLA VANESSA B. SUANSING
Second District of Sultan Kudarat

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “*Bangsamoro History, Culture and Identity Studies Act.*”

SECTION 2. Inclusion in Philippine History Curricula. – With the ultimate objective of creating an inclusive history that accounts for all Filipinos, the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall integrate the history, culture, and identity studies of Bangsamoro people in the curricula of Philippine history courses or subjects, adapting the scope and treatment to the respective educational levels.

SECTION 3. Curriculum Consultative Committee. — There shall be created a curriculum consultative committee chaired by the DepEd Secretary or his/her duly authorized representative and with members composed of, but not limited to, a representative each from the CHED, the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). The consultative committee shall oversee the review and evaluation of the implementation of the integrated history curriculum and may recommend to the DepEd the formulation of necessary refinements in the curriculum.

SECTION 4. Curriculum Development. — The DepEd shall formulate the design and details of the integration of Bangsamoro history within the basic education history curriculum. It shall work with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on the integration of Bangsamoro history into the tertiary national curricula.

SECTION 5. Material Development. – In the formulation and creation of courses or subjects on Bangsamoro history, culture and identity to be included in the school curricula or subjects, including the writing, printing and publication of textbooks and other reading materials relative thereto, the following considerations must be taken into account:

- a. That the character of the Bangsamoro region and its related provinces, emphasizing the fluidity of the Bangsamoro identity, not confined within the geographical demarcation of the Bangsamoro region, and the multiplicity of ethnic and religious groups that exist within the region;
- b. The cultural elements of the Bangsamoro region including, but not limited to: art history, fashion theory, gastronomy, musicology, and social anthropology;
- c. The socio-political, historical, and socioeconomic context for the Bangsamoro people's desire for, and journey towards self-governance; and
- d. The importance of fostering the attitudes and values of respect, sensitivity, and empathy in the appreciation of the various cultures and ethnic identities towards building a regime of just and lasting peace, and national unity.

SECTION 6. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 7. Repealing Clause. – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 8. Effectivity. -This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days after its complete publication either in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,