



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



Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2578**

Introduced by HON. MIRO S. QUIMBO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Access to reliable energy remains a significant challenge even in urban areas. As of October 2024, the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) reports that approximately 1,500 public schools nationwide still lack access to electricity. Even for schools already connected to the grid, energy demand surges strain the system, while continued reliance on conventional power sources contributes to increased carbon emissions. By integrating solar energy into public school infrastructure, we not only reduce pressure on the national grid but also take concrete steps toward a cleaner, renewable energy future.

Turning to solar energy also cuts down on electricity expenses for schools, allowing for the savings to be used for ICT infrastructure, learning materials, water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities.

To address these gaps, the bill leverages the Philippines' natural advantage in solar energy by mandating the installation of solar energy systems in public school buildings. The measure aims to achieve 100% solar electrification coverage within five years for the country's 323,378 school buildings, while also ensuring that newly constructed schools are built solar-ready.

Solar energy presents a sustainable and scalable solution that aligns with the Philippines' geographic and climatic conditions. Beyond addressing the electrification gap, this bill positions the education sector as an active participant in the country's transition to renewable energy.

While the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) have taken initial steps toward this goal, focusing

on Last Mile Schools (LMS), further legislative support is necessary to accelerate and institutionalize these efforts.

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

The image shows a handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'M. Quimbo'. To the right of the signature is a circular official seal. The seal is pink and contains the text 'OFFICE OF ATTY. MIRO S. QUIMBO' around the perimeter. In the center of the seal is a smaller circular emblem featuring a shield with a sun and a book, surrounded by the words 'OFFICE OF REPRESENTATIVE' and 'SECOND DISTRICT, MARIKINA CITY'.

HON. MIRO S. QUIMBO
Representative
Second District, Marikina City



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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A RELIABLE AND EFFICIENT SOLAR
ENERGY SYSTEM TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the "*Solar Powered Public Schools Act*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote energy security, sustainability, and resilience in public education by ensuring that all public schools are equipped with reliable and renewable energy sources. Recognizing the critical role of electricity in delivering quality basic education, the State shall prioritize the electrification of public schools, particularly those in unserved and underserved areas, and shall adopt solar

energy as the preferred technology in achieving this objective.

The State further commits to reducing the fiscal burden on local government units and school administrators by facilitating the transition to cost-efficient solar energy systems, thereby enabling greater investment in educational infrastructure and learning resources. Toward this end, the State shall integrate solar energy systems in both existing and newly constructed public school buildings, in accordance with the principles of environmental sustainability and inclusive development.

SEC. 3. Coverage. — This Act shall apply to all public school buildings under the supervision of the Department of Education (DepEd). It shall cover the installation, integration, and maintenance of solar energy systems in:

- a) Existing public school buildings that are not connected to the electricity grid, including but not limited to those as identified under DepEd's Last Mile Schools Program;
- b) Existing public school buildings located in areas with intermittent, unstable, or unreliable electricity supply, as determined by the Department of Energy (DOE) or any of its attached agencies, including the National Electrification Administration (NEA) and the National Power Corporation (NPC);
- c) Existing public school buildings with stable grid access, which shall nonetheless be required to integrate a minimum level of renewable energy capacity as may be determined by DepEd and DOE.
- d) All newly constructed public school buildings, which shall be designed and constructed to be solar-ready, with the cost of solar energy systems integrated into the total construction cost of the school.

SEC. 4. *Construction of Solar Energy Systems in Existing Public Schools.*

— The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), in coordination with DepEd and DOE, shall undertake the installation and construction of solar energy systems in existing public school buildings: *Provided*, That DepEd shall, from its inventory of all public school buildings at the time of the approval of this Act, develop a master list of target schools for the electrification and installation of solar energy systems; *Provided further*, That DepEd shall, in coordination with the DPWH and DOE, annually identify a subset of target schools from the master list to be equipped with solar energy systems; *Provided finally*, That the implementation of this program shall be completed within five (5) years from the effectivity of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Solar Energy System Requirement for New DepEd School Buildings.*

— The DepEd shall incorporate the requirement for solar energy systems in its Minimum Performance Standards and Specifications (MPSS) for all newly constructed public school buildings. All such buildings shall be designed and constructed to be solar-ready, which shall include the structural, electrical, and spatial provisions necessary for the installation and operation of solar panels, inverters, battery storage systems, and related infrastructure; *Provided*, That the cost of solar energy systems and related installations shall be integrated into the total construction cost of the school building.

SEC. 6. *Reportorial Requirements.* — The DPWH, in coordination with DepEd, shall submit to Congress an annual report on the implementation of this Act. The report shall include the list of existing public school buildings where solar energy systems have been installed, the list of newly constructed school buildings that are compliant with the solar-readiness requirement under Section 5, the status of the annual implementation targets identified under Section 4, and any implementation challenges and recommendations.

SEC. 7. *Congressional Oversight.* — The implementation of this Act shall be subject to the oversight functions of Congress. For this purpose, the Chairperson of the House Committee on Basic Education and Culture, and the Chairperson of the House Committee on Energy, as well as their counterparts in the Senate, shall monitor and evaluate the compliance of implementing agencies with the provisions of this Act, and may call upon such agencies to submit reports or appear before Congress as may be necessary to ensure its proper implementation.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, DPWH, and DOE shall formulate rules and regulations for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC 12. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,