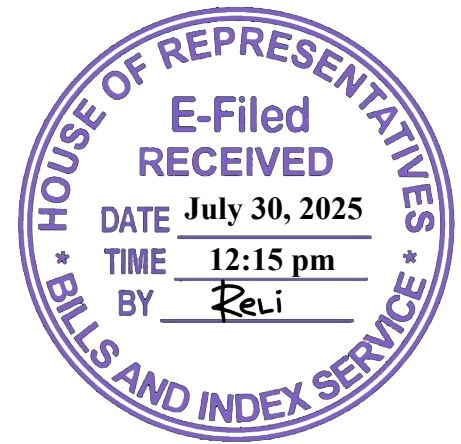


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2649**



Introduced by Honorable Ma. Alana Samantha Taliño Santos

AN ACT INTEGRATING VOTER EDUCATION IN THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The right of suffrage is a fundamental pillar of Philippine democracy, enshrined in Article V of the 1987 Constitution. However, the meaningful exercise of this right requires more than legal entitlement; it calls for informed, responsible, and active participation. In recent years, the Philippines has continued to face significant challenges to the integrity of its electoral processes, including disinformation, vote-buying, and low youth engagement. These issues underscore the urgent need to enhance civic awareness and political literacy, particularly among the youth.

At the same time, Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and to take appropriate measures to make such education accessible to all. In pursuit of this goal, the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 reformed the national education system to ensure that curricula are responsive, relevant, and attuned to societal needs.

Despite these reforms, there remains a significant gap in the formal teaching of voter education and political empowerment. Many young Filipinos reach voting age without adequate understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, the electoral system, or the ability to critically evaluate political information and resist manipulation.

This proposed measure seeks to integrate voter education into the basic education curriculum in order to cultivate a generation of informed, critical, and engaged citizens. By doing so, it aims to strengthen democratic institutions and foster meaningful participation in the country's political life.

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

MA. ALANA SAMANTHA TALIÑO SANTOS
Representative
3rd District, Cotabato Province

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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 “Expanded Voter Education and Political Empowerment Act of 2025.”

Section 2. **Declaration of Policy.** Pursuant to Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution and consistent with the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 as amended, it is the policy of the State to promote participatory and accountable governance by embedding civic consciousness, political literacy, and electoral responsibility in the formal education system. The State shall ensure that students are equipped with the necessary tools to critically evaluate political choices, resist electoral manipulation, and actively contribute to democratic development.

Section 3. **Definition of Voter Education.** As used in this Act, “voter education” refers to the structured and systematic teaching of the following: (a) The right of suffrage and its historical and legal foundations; (b) The structure and mechanics of the Philippine electoral system; (c) The rights and responsibilities of voters; (d) Ethical and evidence-based political decision-making; (e) Identification and rejection of disinformation, political propaganda, and manipulation.

Section 4. **Scope and Coverage.** Voter and civic education shall be integrated into the curriculum of all public and private junior and senior high schools nationwide, and may be adopted by higher education institutions as appropriate.

Section. 5. **Integration in the Curriculum.** The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and the Commission on Human

Rights (CHR), shall integrate voter and civic education in the Araling Panlipunan and other relevant subjects in junior and senior high school curricula within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is encouraged to adopt similar modules in higher education curricula.

Section. 6. ***Core Modules.*** The curriculum shall include, but not be limited to, the following modules: (a) Suffrage and Citizenship: History of voting rights in the Philippines; rights and duties of democratic citizens. (b) Philippine Electoral System: Types of elections and elective positions; registration and voting processes; role and functions of COMELEC and electoral tribunals. (c) Educated and Ethical Voting: Criteria for evaluating candidates and platforms; anti-vote buying laws and electoral fraud prevention. (d) Combating Disinformation: Media and political literacy; fact-checking techniques and legal remedies against fake news. (e) Participatory Governance: Youth engagement in barangay, Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), and national policy processes.

Section. 7. ***Teaching Personnel and Certification.*** DepEd and COMELEC shall jointly design a voter education teacher training program, including online and in-person modalities, within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act. Teachers who complete the training shall be certified and prioritized for assignment to teach voter education modules.

Section 8. ***Instructional Materials.*** DepEd shall provide textbooks, digital content, and multimedia tools aligned with the modules. Materials shall be: (a) Age-appropriate and culturally relevant; (b) Available in Filipino, English, and major regional languages; (c) Accessible in both print and digital formats, and compliant with accessibility standards for persons with disabilities. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall assist in creating an open-access online portal dedicated to voter education.

SECTION 9. ***School-Based Programs.*** DepEd shall encourage all secondary schools to conduct: (a) Mock elections and youth-led political debates; (b) Seminars on voting rights and democratic accountability; (c) Voter registration awareness campaigns for eligible students.

Section 10. ***Community and Institutional Partnerships.*** DepEd, in partnership with local government units (LGUs), COMELEC field offices, NGOs, and accredited people's organizations, shall promote community-based civic education activities in conjunction with the formal curriculum.

Section 11. ***Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting.*** An Inter-Agency Committee on Voter and Civic Education, composed of representatives from DepEd, COMELEC, CHR, and civil society, shall: (a) Monitor program compliance and impact; (b) Recommend curriculum updates every three (3) years; (c) Submit an annual report to the President and Congress not later than June 30 following the year of review, including recommendations to address gaps in the law and/or its implementation.

Section 12. ***Administrative Sanctions.*** Violations of the provisions of this Act shall be subject to administrative sanctions in accordance with relevant laws.

Section 13. ***Appropriations.*** The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged to the current year's appropriations of the DepEd and COMELEC. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 14. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, COMELEC, CHR, and other relevant stakeholders shall issue the rules and regulations implementing its provisions. The IRR shall take effect thirty (30) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Section 15. ***Separability Clause.*** If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

Section 16. ***Repealing Clause.*** All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 17. ***Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,