

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2919



Introduced by Representative Dibu S. Tuan

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates that “The State shall recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.” (Section 17, Article XIV).

This bill seeks to institutionalize the establishment of a school of living traditions in the Municipality of Lake Sebu in the Province of South Cotabato, as part of the formal school system (basic education) under the Department of Education.

A School of Living Traditions (SLT) is one where a living master/culture bearer or culture specialist teaches skills and techniques of doing a traditional art or craft. The mode of teaching is usually non-formal, oral and with practical demonstrations. The site maybe the house of the living master, a community social hall, or a center constructed for the purpose.

The teacher at SLTs is the culture bearer or master or specialist. This term refers to the individual who is recognized to possess the skills and techniques in doing a particular traditional art or craft. He shall be responsible in teaching his craft to a group of learners and shall ensure that his/her students learn the craft. On the other hand, the students of SLTs are limited to the young people from the same ethno-linguistic community. The establishment of Schools of Living Traditions (SLTs) is in response to UNESCO’s call for the preservation of cultural heritage by preserving it in a living form, ensuring its transmission to the next generations (the other approach being the recording of it in a tangible form and conserving it in archives). While there are various facets of cultural heritage that can be transmitted to the next generations, this program would like to specifically focus on the transmission of indigenous skills and techniques to the young. It aims to encourage culture specialists/masters to continue with their own work, develop and expand the frontiers of that work, and train younger people to take their place in the

future. The program for the establishment of SLTs is also anchored on the mandate of National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

As of today, SLTs are short-lived and very much dependent on the support of the local government, the communities themselves and the private sector. The budget of the NCCA for this program is also limited. However, once these SLTs become DepEd schools following the basic education structure as primary and secondary schools, indigenous children will not only have their own schools but will be DepEd-recognized graduates of such schools qualified to pursue higher levels of education.

In the 19th Congress, a similar bill was filed by the Hon. Rep. Lordan G. Suan.

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



DIBU S. TUAN
Third District, South Cotabato

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

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**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SCHOOL OF
LIVING TRADITIONS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAKE SEBU, PROVINCE OF
SOUTH COTABATO AS PART OF THE BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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 "School of Living Traditions in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared policies of the state:

- a.) To conserve, promote, and popularize the nation's historic and cultural heritage and resources;
- b.) To recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions; and
- c.) To ensure equal access to cultural opportunities through the educational system, public and private cultural entities, scholarships, grants and other incentives.

In relation thereto, the state shall ensure that non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems shall form parts of a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of this Act:

- a.) **School of Living Traditions (SLT)** refers to a public or private elementary or secondary school whose curriculum is an integration of the core subjects in basic education and indigenous knowledge, skills and practices. Its methods of teaching shall be formal and non-formal.
- b.) **Master of Living Traditions** refers to a recognized cultural bearer, expert or specialist of a particular Indigenous Cultural Community. He/She must possess knowledge, skills and techniques on customs, language, traditions, philosophies, spirituality, arts and crafts of the cultural community.
- c.) **Indigenous Cultural Communities** refer to groups of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized communities on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and cultures, became historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos (Republic Act No. 8371).

SEC. 4. *Establishment of School of Living Traditions.* The School of Living Traditions (SLT) under this Act shall be established in the Municipality of Lake Sebu in the Province of South Cotabato. It shall be under the direct supervision of the Department of Education (DepEd).

SEC. 5. *Objectives of SLT.* The SLT shall be established to:

- a.) Safeguard and preserve traditional and cultural knowledge and practices;
- b.) Transmit cultural knowledge, traditions, and skills to succeeding generations;
- c.) Preserve cultural identity and integrity;
- d.) Identify, document, research and promote intangible cultural heritage through formal and non-formal methods of learning;
- e.) Integrate formal education curricula with indigenous knowledge systems and practices;
- f.) Teach indigenous knowledge systems, skills, practices, crafts, language, philosophies and spiritualities;
- g.) Provide safe and conducive spaces of learning for indigenous children;
- h.) Help indigenous children navigate mainstream culture while being deeply rooted in their own culture; and
- i.) Promote culture as an essential foundation for human development

SEC. 6. *Structure and Characteristics.* The SLT shall be established as a primary education SLT or a secondary education SLT, consistent with the Philippine basic education structure. It shall be owned by the state.

The SLT shall be headed by a principal who has obtained a Graduate Diploma in Cultural Education (GDCE) or a Graduate Diploma in Teaching the Arts (GDTA) or its equivalent. The teaching personnel shall be composed of teachers who shall teach the regular subjects, and the Masters of Living Traditions who will teach the Indigenous Knowledge, Skills and Practices.

Qualified teaching and non-teaching personnel must come from the same Indigenous Cultural Community (ICC). If none is available, teaching and non-teaching personnel shall be employed provided that they shall undergo cultural sensitivity training which shall be conducted by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

SEC. 7. *Consent.* The SLT under this Act can only be established through the written consent of the recognized leader or chieftain of the ICC concerned, and shall be duly endorsed by the NCCA, NCIP, and the Local Government Unit (LGU) which has jurisdiction over the area of operation.

SEC. 8. *Curriculum.* The DepEd, NCCA, NCIP and the Master/s of Living Traditions (MLT) of the ICC in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato shall formulate and develop a curriculum for the SLT established for such ICC. The curriculum shall be an integration of the core curriculum of basic education and the Indigenous Knowledge, Skills, and Practices through formal and non-formal methods of learning.

SEC. 9. *Identification and Accreditation of Masters of Living Traditions.* The NCCA in consultation with the NCIP and elders of the ICC concerned shall identify and accredit all Masters of Living Traditions who can teach in the SLT. A qualified Master of Living Traditions identified and accredited by the NCCA shall be duly endorsed to the DepEd.

SEC. 10. *Remuneration of State-owned Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel.* The Department of Budget and Management shall formulate a system of remuneration for the Masters of Living Traditions. The rest of the teaching and non-teaching personnel shall receive their remuneration based on the existing Salary Standardization Law.

SEC. 11. *Office of Indigenous Peoples' Education.* The Schools of Living Traditions shall be under the Office of Indigenous Peoples' Education of the Department of Education.

SEC. 12. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be taken from the current budget of the Department of Education. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 13. *Rules and Regulations.* Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education, National Commission on Culture and the Arts, and National Commission of Indigenous Peoples in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management and relevant stakeholders shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the provisions not hereby affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof, inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are repealed, amended or modified, accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,