

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3517



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
REQUIRING MANDATORY TEACHING OF HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION
IN ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIV, Section 3 (1&2) of the Philippine Constitution provides that:

- 1) All educational institutions shall include the study of the Constitution as part of the curricula;
- 2) They shall inculcate patriotism, foster love of humanity, respect for human rights, appreciation of the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country, teach the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline, encourage critical and creative thinking, broaden scientific and technological knowledge, and promote efficiency.

It is, however, alarming that the human rights situation in the country has deteriorated¹ in the past years. Endemic human rights violations continued to wreak havoc among families and individuals, whether through sexual assault, extrajudicial killings, discrimination, internal displacement, and many other defilements. Even more concerning is that despite frequent media coverage, many of our countrymen remain unaware that these actions constitute grave violations of our human rights, nor do they know how to seek redress and protection.

¹ Human Rights Watch. July 24, 2020 <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021> Accessed Online on August 24, 2022

Teaching every citizen their basic human rights not only provides them the knowledge about human rights and the mechanisms to protect them, but more importantly, imparts the skills needed to promote, defend, and apply human rights in daily life. Now more than ever, every Filipino – regardless of age- must be equipped with a clear

As it is the States' responsibility to uphold the human rights of its citizens, this proposed legislation mandates the detailed study of human rights as part of the curriculum of all educational institutions in the country.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'PM Vargas', is positioned above the printed name.

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 “*Human Rights Education Act.*”

SECTION 2. Mandatory Human Rights Education. – All public and private schools shall include human rights courses in their curricula. The Department of Education (DepEd), in consultation with the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), shall formulate courses on human rights education to be taught as separate courses or incorporated in existing subjects now being taught in all levels of education throughout the country.

SECTION 3. Human Rights Education Reading Materials. The DepEd, shall consult and coordinate with the CHR in the writing, printing, and publication of textbooks, manuals, and other reading materials to be used in the human rights courses.

SECTION 4. Appropriation. – This Act shall be implemented initially within the framework of the budget of the DepEd, for the year it is enacted into law. As far as practicable, the funds required therefore shall be drawn from its appropriations for policy formulation, program planning, standards development, and instructional materials development. Thereafter, such amounts as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the budget of the DepEd, in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The DepEd, in consultation with the Commission on Human Rights, shall, within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, prepare the implementing rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Non-Impairment Clause.* – Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to diminish, impair, or repeal rights recognized, granted, or made available to disadvantaged, marginalized, or specific sectors under existing laws.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* - If any part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,