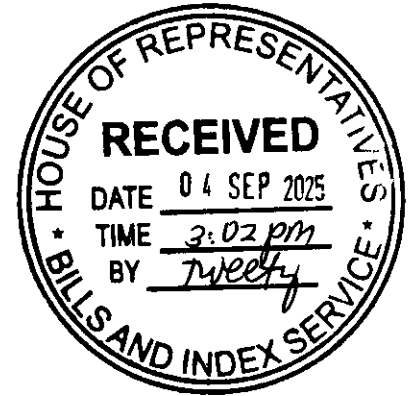




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 4354

Introduced by **Representative EDUARDO R. RAMA JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our country is facing a deep-rooted education crisis that places the future of our children at risk. The World Bank has reported that an alarming ninety-one percent (91%) of Filipino children at the age of ten (10) cannot read and comprehend a simple story. Furthermore, in the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Philippines ranked 76th in Reading and Mathematics out of the eighty-one (81) participants. These figures are not just numbers; rather, a representation of a barrier to national progress and an impediment to young Filipinos' development.

At the outset, the Philippines established the first Education Commission (EDCOM I) in 1991, which led to the creation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), allowing the then-Department of Education, Culture, and Sports to focus on basic education. Eventually, EDCOM II was also established. Evidently, these agencies have played an active role in solving issues in the education sector.

Despite efforts, issues like high dropout rates, insufficiently trained teachers, and inadequate technology remain persistent challenges. Therefore, there is a necessity to establish and organize a team dedicated to addressing these problems and overseeing the implementation of programs and measures to resolve them.

This bill proposes to create the Third Commission on Education (EDCOM III) to continue and build on the important work of EDCOM II. This new commission will monitor and update our national education plans to ensure our system is at par with the international standard and provides our students with the skills they need for the future.

By creating a permanent team of our top education and legislative leaders, EDCOM III will provide a strong, focused group to solve these challenges. Passing this bill is a necessary step to protect every Filipino's right to a quality education and to invest in our people for a better, stronger Philippines.

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


REP. EDUARDO R. RAMA JR.
2nd District, City of Cebu

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 4354

Introduced by **Representative EDUARDO R. RAMA JR.**

AN ACT

**CREATING A THIRD COMMISSION ON EDUCATION (EDCOM III),
STRENGTHENING AND CONTINUING THE MANDATE OF EDCOM II TO
ADDRESS THE NATIONAL EDUCATION CRISIS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

2 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the "Third Commission on
3 Education (EDCOM III) Act"

4 **SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 make education a critical component of human capital development, socio-economic equality,
6 inclusive growth, and sustainable development. It shall formulate national education policies and
7 plans in accordance with its constitutional mandate to establish a complete, adequate, and
8 integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

9 Towards this end, the State shall take appropriate steps to protect and promote the right
10 of all citizens to quality education at all levels, recognize the complementary roles of public and
11 private education, and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.

1 **SECTION 3. *Creation of EDCOM III.*** EDCOM III is hereby created to enhance and
2 strengthen the mandate of EDCOM II. EDCOM III shall ensure the active and direct
3 participation of the three education agencies, namely, the Department of Education (DepEd), the
4 Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Technical Education and Skills Development
5 Authority (TESDA), with the relevant Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives.

6 **SECTION 4. *Objectives of EDCOM III.*** - EDCOM III shall have the following
7 objectives:

8 1. Ensure that the quality of Philippine education, both public and private, is at par
9 with international standards by aligning its curricula, teaching methodologies, and assessment
10 systems with global best practices;

11 2. Determine and address challenges and gaps in school infrastructure, learning
12 resources, and availability of well-trained teachers and educators to achieve the best learning
13 environment for learners and students at all levels; and

14 3. Update the national education agenda and roadmap, as may be necessary to
15 integrate the recent educational developments on artificial intelligence, digital technologies, and
16 other emerging global advancements to future-proof the education system and the country's
17 workforce.

18 **SECTION 5. *Composition of EDCOM III.*** - Guided by the national strategic vision
19 on education, EDCOM III shall work towards its common goals and priorities and shall be
20 composed of the following:

21 **a. As Co-Chairpersons:**

22 i. Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Basic Education;

23 ii. Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational
24 Education;

25 iii. Chairperson of the House Committee on Basic Education and Culture; and

26 iv. Chairperson of the House Committee on Higher and Technical Education.

27 **b. As Commissioners:**

28 i. Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education;

29 ii. Secretary of the Department of Education;

30 iii. Director-General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;

31 iv. Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST);

1 v. Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Sustainable Development Goals,
2 Innovation and Futures Thinking;

3 vi. Chairperson of the House Committee on Sustainable Development Goals.

4 The members of the Commission shall receive no compensation, but travelling,
5 communications, and other necessary expenses shall be allowed, subject to existing laws, and rules
6 and regulations.

7 **SECTION 6. *Powers and Functions of EDCOM III.*** - EDCOM III shall have the
8 following powers and functions:

9 a. Continue to review, monitor, and formulate an action agenda, policies, and
10 programs to address education challenges, with primary focus on the following: stunting, learning
11 poverty, high attrition rates, availability of well-trained teachers, digital infrastructure, emerging
12 global industries and technologies, and skills mismatch in the country;

13 b. Coordinate with government agencies, local government units (LGUs), and other
14 relevant sectors to promote policy and program coherence;

15 c. Serve as a regular forum for inter-sub-sectoral consultations and proposals for
16 intervention to address cross-cutting policies and programs of the three sub- sectors of education,
17 with a focus on proposing reforms in the basic education curriculum, scholarship grants, and
18 voucher systems;

19 d. Submit annual reports to Congress on the progress of implementation of this Act;
20 and

21 e. Perform other functions as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this
22 Act.

23 **SECTION 7. *Standing Committees.*** - The members of the EDCOM III shall establish
24 from among its members standing committees, to be chaired by such members or experts from
25 multisectoral groups, and engage resource persons from the public and private sectors as may be
26 needed.

27 The standing committees shall include the National Commission for Culture and the Arts
28 and the Philippine Sports Commission in their respective consultations to ensure that arts and
29 sports education are integrated into the education system.

1 **SECTION 8. *Advisory Support Council of EDCOM III.*** - The Advisory Support
2 Council (ASC) of EDCOM III is hereby created to provide the Commission with expert assistance
3 and advice.

4 The members of the EDCOM III shall always be present at all of the Commission's
5 meetings. The Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall choose
6 recognized experts from the following sectors to form part of the ASC: two (2) members from the
7 academe, two (2) members from the business sector, two (2) members from parents' associations
8 duly recognized by EDCOM III, two (2) members who are heads of LGUs, and two (2) members
9 from civil society organizations and development partners engaged in education.

10 EDCOM III shall undertake the necessary measures to ensure the broadest possible, most
11 inclusive and diversified composition of the ASC.

12 The members of the ASC who are government officials shall serve in the Council without
13 any additional emoluments, allowances, or pay, by virtue of and in connection with the positions
14 they have been elected to or appointed to, as the case may be.

15 **SECTION 9. *Technical Secretariat and Executive Director.*** - A Technical Secretariat,
16 to be headed by an Executive Director (ED), shall be organized to provide technical and
17 administrative support to the EDCOM III in the exercise of its powers and performance of its
18 functions under Section 6 of this Act. The Technical Secretariat shall co-exist with the
19 Commission.

20 The ED to be appointed by the Commission must be a recognized expert with experience
21 both in the fields of education and management. The ED shall work full-time and shall have the
22 rank, privileges, and emoluments of an Executive Director IV (Salary Grade 29).

23 Subject to the review and approval of the DBM, and in accordance with existing civil
24 service laws, rules, and regulations, the members of EDCOM III shall determine the necessary
25 human resource requirements in order to fulfill its mandate under this Act.

26 **SECTION 10. *Meetings of EDCOM III.*** - The EDCOM III shall meet at least once
27 every quarter, but may be convened by its Chairpersons to such special meetings as may be
28 necessary. The members of the EDCOM III shall be duly notified of any meeting in advance. The

1 first meeting of the Council shall take place within one (1) month from the effectivity of this Act,
2 at a time and place to be designated by the Chairpersons.

3 **SECTION 11. *The National Education Agenda.*** - The national education agenda
4 formulated by EDCOM II shall be implemented, monitored and updated by EDCOM III, as may
5 be necessary. An annual report on its implementation shall be submitted to the Philippine
6 Congress.

7 The national education agenda developed by EDCOM II, shall be subject to further
8 evaluation by the other important stakeholders in education, such as the parents' associations and
9 school communities.

10 **SECTION 12. *Appropriations.*** - The amount necessary for the initial implementation
11 of this Act shall be charged against the available appropriations of the Senate and the House of
12 Representatives. Thereafter, the amount necessary for its continuous implementation, including
13 any deficiency in the current year, shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act
14 subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations.

15 **SECTION 13. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
16 unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall continue to be in full force and effect.

17 **SECTION 14. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
18 administrative orders, rules and regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with or
19 contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

20 **SECTION 16. *Effectivity.***- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
21 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

22 Approved,