

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 4356

Introduced by Rep. CARMELO G. LAZATIN, JR.

AN ACT

MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE ONLINE LIBRARY AND THE DIGITIZATION OF ALL PRESCRIBED REFERENCES FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution of the Philippines under Article II, Section 17 provides that the State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.

Further, under Article XIV, Section 1 states that the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.

In the Philippines, there are about 27.6 million enrollees in basic education as per projection of the Department of Education for the school year 2025- 2026. However, in the report of EDCOM (Congressional Commission on Education) II, it showed that from 2012 to 2022, only Grade 5 and 6 have complete textbooks. As such, it may be deemed that for the past decade, the education system in the country has been struggling as young learners in public schools have been sharing textbooks.

With the digital technology that is available, the lack of sufficient textbooks may now be addressed with the digitization of all necessary references and instructional materials for all grade levels.

The establishment of a virtual library that is accessible to the public is envisioned as a means to bridge the gap in the learning resources/ references whereby young learners may now

access a whole range of materials in their own spaces or in the comfort of their homes. This set-up may also improve their academic performance as learners nowadays are gradually growing familiar with various online applications.

In fact, the COVID 19 pandemic has drastically shifted learning methodologies from the face-to-face relying on printed textbooks to virtual classrooms with online references. It is high time that the educational system explores a new avenue that is relevant and convenient for the young learners of this generation.

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


CARMELO G. LAZATIN, JR.



Republic of the Philippines

House of Representatives

Quezon City, Metro Manila

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PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1.** *Title*-This Act shall be known as the “*Establishing the Philippine Online*
2 *Library and Digitization of Public School References Act*”

3 **SECTION 2.** *Declaration of Policy*- it is hereby declared that the State shall give priority
4 to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism,
5 accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.

6 Further, the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at
7 all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.

1 To this end, the State shall endeavor to establish the Philippine Online Library which shall
2 be made accessible to all learners particularly those enrolled in public schools. Likewise, the
3 Department of Education in coordination with the Department of Information and
4 Communications Technology and the National Library shall facilitate the digitization of all
5 prescribed textbooks and reference materials which may be accessed by all learners with internet
6 connectivity.

7 With this measure, it is hoped that public school learners may be aided in their education
8 through the utilization and optimization of the benefits of emerging technologies and digital
9 connectivity.

10 **SECTION 3.** *The Philippine Online Library*-The Department of Education in coordination
11 with the National Library of the Philippines shall be responsible in the creation of digitized copies
12 of all prescribed textbooks and reference materials for each year level which they deem are
13 essential for the comprehensive understanding of elementary and secondary students.

14 Once the digitized copies of textbooks and reference materials generated, a Philippine
15 Online Library shall be established and managed jointly with the National Library of the
16 Philippines and the DICT.

17 The Philippine Online Library shall be accessible to the public, free of charge, through an
18 online platform that may be accessed by students with internet access.

19 **SECTION 4.** *Recycling of Computers from National Government Offices (NGAs),*
20 *Government Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCCs), Government Financial Institutions*
21 *(GFIs) and Local Government Units.* -The DepEd shall procure additional computer devices for
22 the initial launching of the online library. However, to facilitate accessibility of the Philippine
23 Online Library especially for public elementary and secondary students and to augment the limited
24 number of computers, the National Government Offices (NGAs), Government Owned and
25 Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) and Government Financial Institutions (GFIs) that have
26 approved capital outlay allocations shall be required to endorse their old units to DepEd Central
27 Office to be used by schools and students.

28 Representatives of the DICT shall inspect all endorsed used computers from NGAs,
29 GOCCs and GFIs to ensure serviceability before turning them over to public elementary and
30 secondary schools.

31 On the other hand, used computers from all Local Government units that are still
32 serviceable shall be endorsed to local schools within their jurisdiction.

33 Schools with the least number of computer devices shall be prioritized in the distribution
34 of computers from the DepEd Central Office.

35 **SECTION 5.** *Additional Online Educational Materials* - The DepEd shall coordinate with
36 the National Library of the Philippines to supplement the Philippine Online Library's stored

1 digitized textbooks and references with additional educational materials that would further broaden
2 the understanding of the Filipino students of the country's culture and literature.

3 **SECTION 6.** *Custody of the Digitized Textbooks and Reference Materials-* The DepEd
4 and the National Library of the Philippines shall have joint custody of the digitized copies of the
5 textbooks and reference materials. The DICT shall ensure the maintenance, security and
6 technological management of the digital repository of the Philippine Online Library.

7 **SECTION 7.** *Appropriations.* – To facilitate the implementation of this Act, an initial
8 amount of Five Hundred Million (Php 500,000,000.00) shall be allocated and shall be managed
9 jointly by the Department of Education and the Department of Information and Communications
10 Technology. Thereafter, a budget of One Hundred Million annually shall be included in the annual
11 budget of DepEd to cover the maintenance and operating expenses of the Philippine Online
12 Library, and for digitization should there be a need for additional references materials or new
13 editions of textbooks used in public schools.

14
15 **SECTION 8.** *Separability Clause.* - If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid
16 or unconstitutional, the other parts hereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

17
18 **SECTION 9.** *Repealing Clause-* All laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders,
19 administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this
20 Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

21
22 **SECTION 10.** *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen [15) days after its
23 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

24 Approved,