

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5302



**Introduced by Representatives Anna Victoria Veloso-Tuazon
and Steve Chiongbian Solon**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Education is the foundation of national progress. Yet, our country is confronted with a worsening education crisis: a shortage of more than 165,000 classrooms nationwide, affecting an estimated 5.1 million students.

With the full implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program and the steady increase in student enrollment, the backlog of classrooms grows larger each year. Construction of new classrooms remains slow, with only 797 completed from 2022 to 2024, despite sufficient funding allocation (P5.95 billion in 2022, P23.41 billion in 2023, and P33.86 billion in 2024), with poor accomplishment rates reflected in the program's low budget utilization of 46.3% obligation rate and 25.4% disbursement rate, thus putting learners and teachers at a disadvantage, with classroom congestion and a marked decline in learning quality exacerbating learning outcomes.

Studies consistently affirm that adequate, safe, and conducive learning spaces are vital for effective teaching and meaningful learning. Well-designed classrooms, smaller class sizes, and improved facilities significantly boost academic performance, learner engagement, and student well-being. Without urgent and coordinated action, the persistent classroom shortage will continue to exacerbate learning losses, widen educational disparities, hinder human capital development, and threaten the nation's long-term competitiveness.

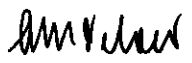
This bill therefore seeks to accelerate the construction, rehabilitation, and repair of classrooms, prioritizing underserved areas with high student-to-classroom ratios, and ensuring that all learning spaces meet global standards of safety and design while promoting a sustainable built environment. It also strengthens collaboration among the national government, local government units, and private sector stakeholders to maximize resources and results.

Cognizant of the opportunity that government has to move the needle through enhanced resource efficiency, and strategic and sustainable procurement that is mindful of environmental impact and able to shape the values and civic-mindedness of our learners in favor of sustainable consumption, environmental stewardship, and innovation and circularity in building design and construction, this bill authorizes the President to adopt temporary emergency measures to ensure the timely delivery of safe, adequate, and quality school infrastructure constituting a sustainable built environment. The term “classroom building” shall include any element, component, or fitting of the external and internal built environment that is commissioned, designed, constructed and managed for classroom use.

For enhanced resource efficiency and to encourage inclusive sourcing from local communities where the classrooms are built, the bill likewise gives due consideration given to sustainable, inclusive, and whole-of-life cycle strategic procurement of the materials to be used in classroom construction. This will guarantee value for money while minimizing social, economic, and environmental risks in addressing classroom shortage. Contractors with proven technical, financial, and legal capacity shall be engaged. Adequate measures shall also be instituted to enhance resource efficiency, safeguard public funds, and prevent any form of corruption, abuse, or misuse of authority and resources.

By addressing the classroom deficit through this measure, we aim not only to promote equitable access to quality education, but also to guarantee transparency, accountability, and sustainability in the use of public resources. Ultimately, this initiative aspires to better prepare Filipino learners for a knowledge-driven, globally competitive future.

For these reasons, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


ANNA VICTORIA VELOSO-TUAZON


STEVE CHIONGBIAN SOLON

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AN ACT
GRANTING THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
EMERGENCY POWERS TO EXPEDITE THE CONSTRUCTION,
REHABILITATION, AND REPAIR OF CLASSROOMS NATIONWIDE, PROVIDING
FOR SPECIAL PROCUREMENT MEASURES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Emergency Classroom Building Act".

SEC. 2. *State of National Emergency.* – The State recognizes that the Philippines is facing an unprecedented education crisis arising from persistently poor learning outcomes and the severe shortage of classrooms nationwide. In the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) among 79 participating countries, the Philippines ranked among the lowest globally. Similarly, in the 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the nation scored 297 in Mathematics and 249 in science, the lowest among 58 participating countries.

These international findings are further corroborated by the results of the National Achievement Test (NAT) for Grade 6 (SY 2020-2021), with students exhibiting near proficiency in Filipino and low proficiency in other key learning areas such as Mathematics, Science, and English. Aggravating the learning crisis is the severe shortage of classrooms nationwide. Based on data from the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOMII), the nation currently lacks around 165,000 classrooms, leaving an estimated 5.1 million students classified as "aisle learners," or those forced to study in overcrowded classrooms far beyond their intended capacity. At the present pace of construction, it would take 30 to 55 years to fully resolve this backlog.

Studies consistently prove that adequate, safe, and conducive classrooms are critical to effective teaching and learning, with research showing that proper classroom design, reduced class sizes, and improved facilities directly enhance academic performance, learner engagement, and overall well-being. Without immediate intervention, the classroom shortage will further compound learning loss, deepen educational inequity, undermine human capital development, and jeopardize the nation's long-term competitiveness. Accordingly, a state of national emergency is hereby declared due to the magnitude and urgency of the classroom shortage and its direct impact on the quality of education.

SEC. 3. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and to take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Cognizant of the critical role that adequate, safe, functional, and innovative school infrastructure plays in ensuring the effective delivery of basic education and promoting a sustainable built environment, the State hereby recognizes the urgent necessity of adopting extraordinary, immediate, and comprehensive measures to address the longstanding and worsening classroom shortage nationwide.

Towards this end, the President shall be granted emergency powers to adopt innovative, flexible, and results-oriented approaches in the planning, procurement, and implementation of school infrastructure projects, free from undue bureaucratic constraints and existing procedural limitations, provided that the exercise of such powers shall be strictly confined to measures necessary to ensure the timely and efficient completion of classrooms, with due regard to transparency, accountability, fiscal responsibility, enhanced resource efficiency, and faithful adherence to the Constitution and principles of good governance, sustainability, and environmental responsibility.

SEC. 4. *Authorized Powers.* – Pursuant to Article VI, Section 23 (2) of the Constitution, the President is hereby authorized to exercise powers that are necessary and proper to carry out the declared national policy. The President shall have the power to adopt the following temporary emergency measures to ensure the timely delivery of safe, adequate, and quality school infrastructure constituting a sustainable built environment, which includes any element, component, or fitting of the external and internal built environment that is commissioned, designed, constructed and managed for classroom use:

- a. Establish and employ the most expedient, efficient, and practicable modes of procurement for the sustainable construction, rehabilitation, and repair of classrooms nationwide, notwithstanding the procedures and requirements prescribed under existing laws, rules and regulations.
- b. Directly negotiate and enter into contracts with suppliers, contractors, or project implementers who have been duly determined to possess the proven technical, financial, and legal capacity to deliver safe, adequate, and quality classrooms within the shortest possible time, at a just and reasonable cost and with due consideration to sustainable, inclusive, and whole-of-lifecycle

procurement from acquisition to disposal that will ensure value for money, and minimal social, economic, and environmental risks.

c. Reallocate and realign funds from any available appropriations, savings, or special purpose funds of the National Government to finance the construction, rehabilitation, and repair of classrooms, subject to constitutional limitations and applicable auditing rules and regulations.

d. Create and constitute a task force which shall be composed of representatives from the Department of Education, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Economy, Planning and Development, Commission on Audit, and such other agencies as the President may deem necessary, to oversee, coordinate, and ensure the efficient, transparent, and accountable implementation of the programs and projects authorized under this Act.

SEC. 5. *Exemption from Republic Act No. 12009.* – The procurement for the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of classrooms under this Act shall be exempt from the provisions of Republic Act No. 12009, or the “New Government Procurement Act.” However, the President shall ensure that (i) due diligence, sustainability, and price reasonableness are strictly observed, with due consideration given to sustainable, inclusive, and whole-of-life cycle strategic procurement that will ensure value for money, and minimal social, economic, and environmental risks; (ii) only contractors with proven technical, financial, and legal capacity are engaged; and (iii) that adequate measures are instituted to enhance resource efficiency, safeguard public funds, and prevent any form of corruption, abuse, or misuse of authority and resources.

SEC. 6. *Reports to Congress and Creation of an Oversight Committee.* – The President, within ten (10) days from the issuance of any of the executive acts, order, rules and regulations promulgated and issued under the powers herein granted shall report to Congress the issuance thereof and the justification therefor: Provided, That within the first ten (10) days of every month, the President shall likewise submit a monthly report to Congress of all acts performed, including all the contracts entered into under this Act, the contract price, amounts disbursed, and the status of classroom projects. For this purpose, the Congress shall establish a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee composed of five (5) members, each from the Senate and the House of Representatives, with the Chairperson on Basic Education of both Houses as Co-Chairperson. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate the other members of the JCOC, one (1) member of which shall be from the minority.

SEC. 7. *Penalties.* — In addition to acts or omissions already penalized by existing laws, the following offenses shall be punished either with a fine or imprisonment, or both, at the discretion of the court, as follows:

For Private Contracted Entities:

OFFENSE	PERSON/S INVOLVED	FINE	IMPRISONMENT AND OTHER PENALTIES
(a) Refusing or failing to post the performance security within the prescribed time.	Corporation	Not less than Two hundred thousand pesos (200,000.00) and not more than Eight hundred thousand pesos (800,000.00).	Suspension for two (2) years from acquiring or bidding on other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than One hundred thousand pesos (100,000.00) and not more than Five hundred	Imprisonment for not less than one (1) month and one (1) day but not more than two (2) months.

		thousand pesos (500,000.00).	
(b) Refusing or failing to enter into contract, without justifiable cause, after the same has been agreed upon by the contracting party and the President or his task force	Corporation	Not less than One hundred thousand pesos (100,000.00) and not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (500,000.00).	Suspension for two (2) years from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than Two hundred thousand pesos (200,000.00) but not more than One million pesos (1,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than two (2) months and one (1) day but not more than six (6) months.

(c) Causing the delay, without justifiable cause, of the delivery of the classrooms	Corporation	Not less than One million pesos (1,000,000.00) but not more than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00)	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than Five hundred thousand pesos, but not more than Two million pesos (2,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) months and one (1) day, but not more than two (2) years and four (4) months.
(d) Delivering classrooms of unsatisfactory or inferior quality as may be provided in the contract	Corporation	Not less than Two million pesos (2,000,000.00) but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than One million pesos (1,000,000.00), but not more than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) months and one (1) day, but not more than six (6) years.
(e) Rendering poor performance or unsatisfactory quality and/or	Corporation	Not less than Two million pesos (2,000,000.00) but not more than Ten	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.

progress of work by the contracted entity. Poor performance shall be as follows: (1) Defective design resulting in		million pesos (10,000,000.00)	
	Individual	Not less than One million pesos (1,000,000.00), but not more than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) months and one (1) day, but not more than six (6) years.

substantial corrective works in design and/or construction, rehabilitation, or repair; (2) Failure to deliver critical output due; (3) Using materials which are inappropriate, substandard, or way above acceptable standards causing inflation in the price; (4) Defective workmanship or works; (5) Negative slippage of the project due entirely to the fault or negligence of the contracted entity			
(f) Using force, fraudulent machinations, coercion, undue influence, or pressure upon the	Corporation	Not less than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00) but not more than Twenty million pesos (20,000,000.00)	Perpetual disqualification from acquiring or bidding other government projects

President or his task force in order to acquire the contract	Individual	Not less than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00), but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) years and one (1) day, but not more than twelve (12) years.
(g) Using the name of another for purposes of contracting	Corporation	Not less than Two million pesos (2,000,000.00) but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than One million pesos (1,000,000.00), but not more than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) months and one (1) day, but not more than six (6) years.
(h) Submitting eligibility requirements containing false information or falsified documents or the concealment of such information that will materially alter the outcome of eligibility screening	Corporation	Not less than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00) but not more than Twenty million pesos (20,000,000.00)	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00), but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) years and one (1) day, but not more than twelve (12) years.
(i) Submission of beneficial ownership information containing false entries	Corporation	Not less than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00) but not more than Twenty million pesos (20,000,000.00)	Perpetual disqualification from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than Five	Imprisonment for not

		million pesos (5,000,000.00), but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	less than six (6) years and one (1) day, but not more than twelve (12) years.
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(j) Failing to faithfully disclose its relationship, regardless of the time of discovery, with the President or the members of his task force, or any elected or appointed government official by consanguinity or affinity up to the third civil degree	Corporation	Not less than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00) but not more than Twenty million pesos (20,000,000.00)	Perpetual disqualification from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00), but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) years and one (1) day, but not more than twelve (12) years.
(k) Terminating the contract due to the default or unlawful acts of the contracted entity	Corporation	Not less than Two million pesos (2,000,000.00) but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than One million pesos (1,000,000.00), but not more than Five million pesos	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) months and one (1) day, but not more than six (6) years.

		(5,000,000.00)	
(l) Engaging in any documented unsolicited attempt to unduly influence the decision of the President or his task force	Corporation	Not less than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00) but not more than Twenty million pesos (20,000,000.00)	Perpetual disqualification from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00), but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) years and one (1) day, but not more than twelve (12) years.
(m) Assigning or subcontracting the contract or any part thereof, or substituting key personnel named	Corporation	Not less than Two million pesos (2,000,000.00) but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.

in the contract without prior written approval by the President or his task force	Individual	Not less than One million pesos (1,000,000.00), but not more than Five million pesos (5,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) months and one (1) day, but not more than six (6) years.
(n) Willful or deliberate abandonment or non-performance of the contract, resulting in substantial breach thereof without lawful and/or just cause	Corporation	Not less than Two million pesos (2,000,000.00) but not more than Ten million pesos (10,000,000.00)	Blacklisted from acquiring or bidding other government projects.
	Individual	Not less than One million pesos (1,000,000.00), but not more than Five million pesos	Imprisonment for not less than six (6) months and one (1) day, but not more than six (6) years.

		(5,000,000.00)	
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Moreover, the performance security posted by the contracted entity shall be forfeited in favor of the Government, and the contracted entity may be blacklisted and disqualified from participating in any and all future government procurement activities.

For Public Officials and Employees:

OFFENSE	FINE	IMPRISONMENT AND OTHER PENALTIES
(a) Recommending suppliers, contractors, or project implementers while having the knowledge that it has previously engaged in unlawful deeds and behaviors relative to contract acquisition and implementation.	Not less than One hundred thousand pesos (100,000.00) and not more than five hundred thousand pesos (500,000.00).	Imprisonment for not less than six months and one day but not more than two years.
(b) Commission of any corrupt practice as defined under Section 3 of R.A. 3019 or the "Anti- Graft and Corrupt Practices Act" in relation	Not less than two hundred thousand pesos (200,000.00) but not more than One million pesos (1,000,000.00)	Imprisonment for not less than six years and one month nor more than fifteen years, and dismissal from the public post and perpetual
to awarding of contracts under this Act.		disqualification from public office.

All wealth, proceeds, and gains derived or obtained from the commission of any of the aforementioned punishable acts shall be subject to forfeiture and confiscation in favor of the Government.

SEC. 8. Construction and Interpretation. – Nothing herein shall be construed as an impairment, restriction, or modification of the provisions of the Constitution. In case the exercise of the powers herein granted conflicts with other statutes, orders, rules or regulations, the provisions of this Act shall prevail.

SEC. 9. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not otherwise affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. Repealing clause. — All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause. — This Act shall take effect immediately upon its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*, and shall be in full force and effect for only two (2) years or until the required classrooms have been completed, whichever is earlier: Provided, that the powers granted under this Act may be withdrawn sooner by means of a concurrent resolution of Congress.

Approved,