



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5522



Introduced by Representative Nelson S. Legacion
Third Congressional District, Camarines Sur

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine guarantees every citizen's right to quality education and mandates the State to make it accessible to all. Public libraries are crucial for fulfilling this duty, serving as inclusive spaces for reading, research, and lifelong learning. This vision was formalized by Republic Act No. 7743, also known as "*An Act Providing for the Establishment of Congressional, City, and Municipal Libraries and Barangay Reading Centers Throughout the Philippines, Appropriating the Necessary Funds Therefore and For Other Purposes*," which provided for the nationwide establishment of these facilities.

Over the past three decades, the needs of Filipino learners have significantly evolved. In today's highly urbanized and digitally-driven environment, students often resort to commercial establishments like 24-hour coffee shops and fast-food chains to find a place to study or access the internet. These spaces can be unsafe, inaccessible, and financially burdensome, exposing students to late-night risks.

To address these challenges, this bill proposes to modernize the country's library system by institutionalizing Late-Night Learning Hubs within public libraries. These hubs would operate beyond regular hours—with some in key cities open 24/7—and would be equipped with essential amenities like reliable Wi-Fi, charging stations, study desks, proper lighting, and clean restrooms. The measure also promotes accessibility by mandating that these facilities be easily reachable via public and active transport, such as through bike racks and pedestrian pathways.

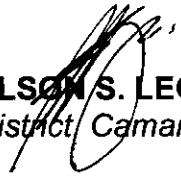
This initiative is part of a broader legislative effort by this author to future-proof and digitize the nation's educational infrastructure. Other filed bills include "An Act Digitizing All Books Necessary for Public Education, Establishing the Philippine Online Library, and Appropriating Funds Therefor," which aims to create a national online library, and "An Act Establishing a Barangay Digital Resource Center and E-Library in Camarines Sur, and Providing Funds Therefor," focused on creating digital resource centers in the Third Congressional District of

Camarines Sur. Collectively, these measures aim to transform public libraries into dynamic, digitally connected, and accessible learning centers.

To ensure sustainability, the bill encourages green building design, incorporating features like energy-efficient lighting, solar panels, and water conservation systems. The Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the National Library of the Philippines (NLP) are tasked with providing the technical and digital support necessary for effective implementation.

This bill is also aligned with legislative effort in the Senate, including a similar bill filed by Senator Loren Legarda this 20th Congress. This parallel advocacy highlights the widespread recognition of the need for dedicated and safe public study spaces. The Late-Night Learning Hubs Act therefore affirms the State's commitment to educational access, safety, and sustainability.

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


NELSON S. LEGACION
Representative, Third District, Camarines Sur



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AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LATE-NIGHT LEARNING HUBS IN ALL CITIES IN THE COUNTRY TO PROVIDE SAFE, SUSTAINABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC STUDY SPACES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 "*Late-Night Learning Hubs Act.*"

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to promote inclusive access to education and safe learning environments, particularly in highly urbanized and densely populated areas. To support students who study during late hours and reduce their dependence on commercial establishments, the State shall institutionalize the establishment of public libraries that are accessible, well-equipped, environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, and conducive to academic use.

SECTION 3. *Mandatory Establishment of 24/7 Public Libraries or Study Hubs.* - All cities in the country shall establish and operate at least one (1) public library or study hub that remains open and operational twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

These facilities must be well-lit and equipped with essential amenities, including broadband internet, charging stations, study desks, and clean restroom facilities.

SECTION 4. *Green and Climate-Resilient Infrastructure.* To promote sustainability and resilience, local government units (LGUs) are strongly encouraged to design, retrofit, and operate these hubs in accordance with green building principles. This may include the use of energy-efficient lighting, passive

cooling systems, solar energy, water-saving technologies, and disaster-resilient design, particularly in flood- or earthquake-prone areas.

LGUs are further encouraged to adopt culturally and environmentally responsive procurement practices. This includes prioritizing locally sourced, renewable, or recycled materials—such as sustainably harvested bamboo, rattan, abaca, and other indigenous materials—for furniture, furnishings, and finishes.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), in coordination with the Climate Change Commission (CCC), the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), shall develop supplemental guidelines or incentive programs to support local governments in adopting sustainable and culturally respectful standards.

SECTION 5. *Social Inclusion and Accessibility.* No person shall be denied access to Late-Night Learning Hubs on the basis of age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (SOGIE), or socioeconomic status.

All facilities shall adopt gender-responsive and disability-inclusive designs, including but not limited to:

- Separate and secure restrooms for all genders.
- Ramps, tactile surfaces, and assistive technology for persons with disabilities.
- Well-lit, safe premises with trained security personnel and surveillance systems.

The design and operation of these facilities shall be coordinated with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

SECTION 6. *Safe Spaces and Anti-Harassment Protocols.* The Late-Night Learning Hubs shall implement safety measures in accordance with Republic Act No. 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act. Library staff and security personnel shall undergo gender sensitivity and anti-sexual harassment training. Each facility shall post clear safe space guidelines and provide accessible mechanisms for reporting and addressing violations.

SECTION 7. *Community Participation and Feedback Mechanisms.* LGUs shall ensure meaningful community engagement in the planning and operation of these hubs. Youth groups, student organizations, women's and PWD organizations, and civil society shall be consulted. Each facility shall maintain an anonymous feedback system, both onsite and online, to continuously monitor safety, accessibility, and service delivery.

SECTION 8. *Support from National Agencies.* The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd), the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the National Library of the Philippines (NLP), shall assist LGUs in the planning, technical

implementation, staffing, and sustainability of these facilities.

SECTION 9. *Implementation Plan and Reporting.* Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, covered LGUs shall submit to the DILG a library development and operations plan that includes site identification, facility design, sustainability components, budget allocation, and staffing arrangements for overnight operations.

The DILG shall consolidate and submit an annual progress report to Congress on the status of implementation, challenges encountered, and best practices for a period of five (5) years.

SECTION 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DILG, in coordination with all relevant agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SECTION 11. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the concerned local government units. Thereafter, such amounts necessary for the continued implementation shall be included in the annual budgets of the concerned LGUs.

SECTION 12. *Repealing and Separability Clauses.* All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly. If any provision is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 13. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,