

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5651



Introduced by: Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list
Representative Iris Marie D. Montes

AN ACT
INTEGRATING VOTER EDUCATION IN THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution explicitly mandates that educational institutions instill in students the "rights and duties of citizenship." Fulfilling this crucial responsibility requires comprehensive voter education, which is important to nurture informed, engaged and responsible citizens.

This bill integrates voter education into junior and senior high school curricula to:

- (1) empower the youth by equipping them with necessary knowledge of the electoral and political processes;
- (2) encourage active participation in nation-building; and
- (3) ensure their understanding of their important role in forging the country's future.

By preparing a generation of politically mature and aware youth, this measure, which serves as a counterpart to Senate Bill No. 722 by Senator Francis Pangilinan, will be instrumental in significantly revitalizing Philippine democracy.

In view thereof, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


IRIS MARIE D. MONTES
Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan
at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the "Compulsory Voter Education Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to enlighten citizens on their right to vote and to inculcate in them the duty to preserve the integrity of the electoral process through the educational system.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Voter Education.* - As used in this Act, "Voter education" means dissemination of information, materials and programs designed to inform citizens about the specifics and mechanics of the voting process. It includes providing information on the right to suffrage, its importance, and the proper exercise thereof, as well as information on who is eligible to vote; where and how to register; how electors can check the voter lists to ensure they have been duly included; what type of elections are being held; where, when and how to vote; who the candidates are; and how to file complaints.

SEC. 4. *Integration of Voter Education in the Junior and Senior High School Curricula.* - Voter Education shall be integrated by the Department of Education (DepEd) in the junior and senior high school curricula, effective at the start of the school year immediately following one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act. The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) shall assist DepEd in preparing teachers during the one-year transition period by conducting seminars and trainings on the electoral system and process. COMELEC shall certify that the teacher, after attending such seminars and trainings, is qualified to teach topics relating to the electoral system and process.

SEC. 5. *Voter Education Syllabus.* -

A. Voter education. - The main syllabus shall include, but not limited to, the following thematic areas:

1. Suffrage. - This area introduces to students the right to vote accorded by the Constitution, and other rights enabling citizens to participate in the conduct of public affairs;

2. Electoral system and process. - This area deals with the general principles underlying the present electoral system, and legislation regulating all the phases of election namely, pre-election, election proper, and post-election. It discusses the proper conduct of elections including registration, casting of ballots, and counting of votes;

3. Educated voting. - This area focuses on the attitude and behavior a voter must adopt to ensure fair, free, and honest elections. It emphasizes the importance of participating in elections in a manner that shall stimulate and strengthen democracy.

B. Supplementary topics. - This curriculum should have additional topics and studies on the political system of the country, the contextual background of elections, current political, social, and economic issues affecting the elections, and the possible solutions to address them.

C. Other subject matters. - Other areas of voter education may be included in the syllabus.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Agency.* -The Secretary of Education is hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the provisions of this Act.

The Secretary of Education shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the rules and regulations, including those of a disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Educational Materials.* - It shall be obligatory on all schools offering secondary education to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the textbooks, primers, and leaflets on voter education to be issued by the DepEd. The DepEd shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of the school.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* -All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,