

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5971



Introduced by Representative ANTOLIN “LENLEN” A. ORETA III

AN ACT
REQUIRING THE FREE DIGITAL PROVISION OF TEXTBOOK USED IN
BASIC EDUCATION, ENCOURAGING OPEN EDUCATIONAL
RESOURCES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The right to quality education is guaranteed by the Constitution and serves as a vital foundation for national progress. Yet, millions of Filipino learners continue to face barriers in accessing textbooks due to high costs, limited supply, and outdated content. In today’s digital age, wherein technology plays an increasingly integral role in shaping educational experiences, it is of paramount importance to advance inclusive and forward-thinking policies that ensure equitable access to high-quality learning resources for all.

This proposed measure requires that all textbooks approved by the Department of Education (DepEd) for use in basic education be made available in digital format, free of charge. Authors and publishers shall submit these digital versions to DepEd, which shall ensure their distribution through official platforms or other authorized channels. This provision affirms the State’s commitment to equity, innovation, and inclusive education.

The bill also promotes the development and use of Open Educational Resources (OER)—teaching, learning, and research materials that are either in the public domain or released under an open license, allowing free access, use, adaptation, and redistribution.

By mandating free digital versions of textbooks and supporting the growth of OER, this measure:

- Expands access to flexible and alternative learning modes, especially during emergencies or disruptions;
- Aligns textbook policies with the realities of 21st-century digital learning; and
- Strengthens the resilience, inclusivity, and accessibility of the education system.

This legislative measure envisions a learner-centered educational framework in which access to knowledge is no longer constrained by financial barriers or resource limitations. It endeavors to utilize technology as a strategic mechanism for broadening

equitable access to educational opportunities, serving as a bridge to opportunity for all and promoting inclusive academic development.

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


ANTOLIN "LENLEN" A. ORETA III
Lone District of Malabon City

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5971

Introduced by Representative ANTOLIN “LENLEN” A. ORETA III

AN ACT
REQUIRING THE FREE DIGITAL PROVISION OF TEXTBOOK USED IN
BASIC EDUCATION, ENCOURAGING OPEN EDUCATIONAL
RESOURCES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the "E-Textbook Para Sa Lahat Act."

2 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the policy of the State to promote accessible, inclusive,
3 and equitable education for all. Recognizing the transformative potential of digital learning tools,
4 the State shall ensure that essential educational resources, including textbooks, are accessible in
5 both print and digital formats at no cost to learners. The State shall also encourage the creation,
6 adaptation, and use of open educational resources (OER) to foster collaboration, innovation, and
7 equity in education.

8 **SEC. 3. *Coverage.*** - This Act shall apply to all textbooks and instructional materials used in
9 basic education, whether for public or private schools, and approved or recognized by the
10 Department of Education (DepEd) pursuant to existing laws, policies, and regulations.

11 **SEC. 4. *Mandatory Free Digital Format and Condition for DepEd Approval.*** - All authors,
12 publishers, or copyright holders of textbooks and instructional materials intended for use in basic
13 education and submitted for DepEd approval or procurement shall:

14 a) Provide an electronic or digital version of the material in a format accessible on
15 standard digital devices (PDF or EPUB);

16 b) Make such digital versions available to the DepEd free of charge; and

17 c) Authorize the DepEd to distribute or make accessible such digital copies, at no cost,
18 to learners, teachers, and schools via DepEd-authorized platforms.

19 *Provided, That compliance with the foregoing shall be a prerequisite for the approval,*
20 *endorsement, procurement, or inclusion of such materials in the official list of textbooks and*

learning resources of the DepEd.

SEC. 5. *Promotion of Open Educational Resources.* - To further enhance access to quality education, the DepEd shall encourage the development, use, and adaptation of Open Educational Resources (OER), freely accessible, openly licensed educational materials that can be used, shared, adapted, and redistributed. DepEd shall include in its policies incentives and support mechanisms for schools, educators, and authors that develop OER for use in the K to 12 curriculum.

SEC. 6. *Non-Compliance.* - Failure to comply with the requirements under this Act shall disqualify the textbook or learning material from consideration for DepEd approval, endorsement, or procurement. Additional sanctions may be imposed in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The DepEd shall issue the necessary rules and regulations within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act. Such regulations shall include, but not be limited to:

- a) Technical standards for digital formats;
- b) Guidelines for access and distribution;
- c) Provisions to ensure the digital version is identical in content to the approved print version;
- d) Measures to ensure accessibility for learners with disabilities;
- e) Data privacy and copyright safeguards.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any part or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

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

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,