

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **7320**



Introduced by Honorable EULOGIO "LEO" R. RODRIGUEZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

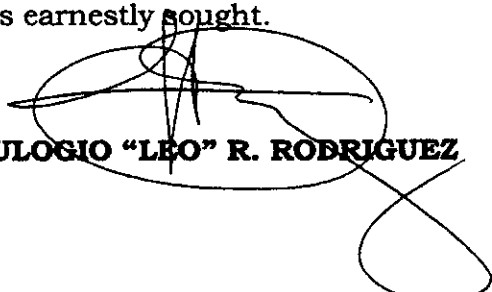
The Constitution mandates the inculcation of patriotism and nationalism among the youth, the promotion of Filipino culture and heritage, and the support of indigenous and culture-based industries as part of national development. Institutions of higher learning play a critical role in values formation and in cultivating pride in national identity, making them vital platforms for advancing these constitutional objectives.

At present, academic regalia used in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) largely follow Western designs and materials, with limited incorporation of Filipino cultural elements. This practice overlooks an important opportunity to show and affirm Philippine cultural identity and to promote locally produced textiles and traditional designs, including indigenous fibers such as abaca produced in the provinces like Catanduanes, the abaca capital and the leading abaca-producing province in the country.

This proposed measure institutionalizes the use of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles in the academic regalia of all SUCs and LUCs to promote cultural pride, support culture-based industries, and generate livelihood opportunities for local communities. To ensure quality, sustainability, and cultural integrity, this bill provides for the creation of the Philippine Academic Regalia Council and mandates coordination among concerned agencies and academic institutions.

Notably, the House of Representatives had already approved this bill seeking to prescribe the use of neo-ethnic textiles in academic regalia on Third and Final Reading during the 19th Congress. However, due to lack of material time, the Senate was unable to consider and approve the said measure. In this view, in promotion of national pride and in support of neo-ethnic Philippine textile producers, this representation has filed the same bill in the 20th Congress.

Hence, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


EULOGIO "LEO" R. RODRIGUEZ

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AN ACT
PRESCRIBING THE USE OF NEO-ETHNIC TEXTILES IN THE ACADEMIC
REGALIA OF ALL STATE AND LOCAL UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Academic Regalia Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to instill patriotism and nationalism among the youth whose academic preparation for adulthood and responsible citizenship include values formation on love of country and pride in the uniqueness of their cultural heritage. In this regard, opportunities for displaying these values shall be encouraged by the school system not only as part of values development, but to preserve Philippine culture and certain local traditions, and create avenues, such as the wearing of academic regalia that is based on Filipino ethnic and traditional design to promote the production of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles, boost the national effort to develop culture-based industries, and in the process create jobs in local communities.

Pursuant thereto, the use of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles in the academic regalia of all state universities and colleges (SUCs) and local universities and colleges (LUCs) is therefore prescribed.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act:

(a) *Academic regalia* refers to the official garb worn by university officials, faculty, graduates, and awardees during graduation, commencement exercises, and other academic functions; and

(b) *Neo-ethnic Philippine textiles* refer to textile made of or containing natural or indigenous materials, sourced, and produced in the Philippines using updated, relevant, and green, scientific, and technological approaches and innovations, while integrating and retaining traditional patterns, designs, icons, motifs, and approaches.

SEC. 4. Creation of the Philippine Academic Regalia Council. – There is hereby created a Philippine Academic Regalia Council, hereinafter referred to as the

“Council,” which shall be chaired and co-chaired by the Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Director of the Philippine Textile Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST-PTRI), respectively. The Council shall have the following members:

- (a) Representative from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA);
- (b) Representative from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP);
- (c) Representative from the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC);
- (d) Representative from the University of the Philippines (UP) System;
- (e) Representative from the Association of Local College and Universities (ALCU); and
- (f) Representative from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

SEC. 5. Powers and Functions of the Council. – The Council shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) Formulate the National Academic Regalia Policy;
- (b) Review, standardize, and adopt the academic regalia for graduates, administrators, faculty, and awardees of SUCs and LUCs;
- (c) Ensure sustainability, quality control, and availability of yarns, dyes, and loom parts;
- (d) Propose ways to incorporate neo-ethnic textiles in the academic regalia;
- (e) Prepare and publish a handbook containing information on the academic regalia and its proper use, protection, trade, and management; and
- (f) Protect the intellectual property rights as regards designs, silhouettes, textile pattern, color, and textile specification for the academic regalia.

SEC. 6. Mandatory Coordination with the Council. – Pursuant to the provisions of this Act, all SUCs and LUCs shall be required to coordinate with the Council to ensure that neo-ethnic Philippine textiles shall be prescribed in their academic regalia, specifically in the hood, robe or gown worn by students in important occasions, such as hooding ceremony or graduation from either bachelor’s, master’s or doctorate degree, as well as the faculty and other members of the academic community, and may be incorporated in the headgear (mortarboard cap or tam), mortarboard tassel, stole, and cord, among others.

SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall, in consultation with the DOST-PTRI, NCCA, UP, PASUC, ALCU, DTI, and other relevant stakeholders, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 8. Appropriations. – The amount necessary for the effective implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. Separability Clause. – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, letter of instruction, administrative rules and regulation or parts thereof, which are contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,