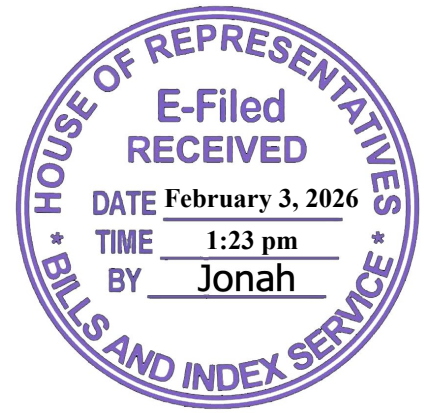


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7577



Introduced by: **REP. TOBIAS “TOBY” M. TIANGCO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed deep gaps in digital access and teacher preparedness within the Philippine education system. Millions of learners were unable to fully participate in distance and blended learning due to lack of reliable internet connectivity, insufficient access to digital devices, and limited community-based learning facilities. At the same time, many teachers were compelled to rapidly shift to online and blended teaching modalities without adequate training, technical support, or standardized digital education frameworks.

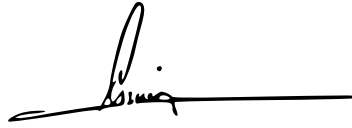
Even as face-to-face classes have resumed, digital education has become a permanent and indispensable component of learning, supporting work-from-home arrangements, online and blended instruction, skills development, and lifelong learning. Access to quality digital education is now critical not only for academic continuity but also for national competitiveness, workforce readiness, and inclusive economic growth.

This proposed measure seeks to institutionalize government support for digital education by expanding access to internet connectivity and digital learning devices for public school students, particularly those from low-income households and geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. It also aims to strengthen teacher capacity through continuous and accredited digital skills training, ensuring that educators are equipped to effectively deliver online and blended learning.

The bill further mandates the establishment of national digital education standards, promotes public-private partnerships to optimize resources, and ensures transparency and accountability through regular reporting and congressional oversight.

By strengthening digital education access and teacher capacity-building, this measure endeavors to make the Philippine education system more resilient, inclusive, and responsive to the demands of a rapidly evolving digital economy.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Toby Tiangco', is written over a solid horizontal line.

TOBIAS “TOBY” M. TIANGCO
Representative
Lone District, Navotas City

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7577

Introduced by: **REP. TOBIAS “TOBY” M. TIANGCO**

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING DIGITAL EDUCATION ACCESS AND
INSTITUTIONALIZING TEACHER DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING IN PUBLIC
SCHOOLS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 “*Digital Education Access and Teacher Capacity-Building Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all and to promote lifelong learning opportunities. The State recognizes that digital access and teacher competency in digital and blended learning are essential to modern education, economic competitiveness, and social development. The State shall therefore adopt measures to expand digital education access and strengthen the digital teaching capacity of educators in public schools.

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

(a) “Digital Education” refers to learning delivered through online, blended, or technology-enabled platforms.

(b) “Public Schools” refer to public elementary and secondary schools under the Department of Education (DepEd), public higher education institutions under the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and public technical-vocational institutions under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

(c) “Teachers” refer to public school teachers, instructors, and trainers employed by DepEd, CHED-supervised institutions, and TESDA.

(d) “GIDA Areas” refer to geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas as defined by law and relevant government agencies.

SEC. 4. *Digital Access for Students.* – The Department of Education, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), local government units (LGUs), and relevant agencies, shall:

- (a) Provide free or subsidized internet connectivity for public school students, prioritizing those from low-income households and GIDA areas;
- (b) Implement programs for the provision of appropriate digital learning devices such as tablets or laptops to public school students, subject to availability of funds;
- (c) Establish community Digital Learning Hubs in public libraries, barangay halls, and schools to provide shared access to internet-enabled learning facilities.

SEC. 5. *Institutionalized Teacher Digital Skills Training.* – The DepEd, CHED, and TESDA shall jointly design and implement a continuous digital skills training program for public school teachers, which shall include:

- (a) Digital pedagogy and online classroom management;
- (b) Development and use of digital and blended learning materials;
- (c) Cybersecurity, data privacy, and responsible use of educational technologies;
- (d) Optional training on emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence-assisted teaching tools. Participation in such programs shall be credited as part of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.

SEC. 6. *National Digital Education Standards.* – The DepEd, CHED, and TESDA, in consultation with DICT and other stakeholders, shall establish minimum national standards for digital education, including:

- (a) Approved learning management systems and platforms;
- (b) Data privacy and cybersecurity safeguards;
- (c) Quality assurance mechanisms for online and blended learning.

SEC. 7. *Public-Private Partnerships.* – The implementing agencies are authorized to enter into public-private partnerships with telecommunications companies, technology providers, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to support connectivity, devices, software, and teacher training programs, consistent with existing laws and regulations.

SEC. 8. *Funding.* – The amounts necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the implementing agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act. A Digital Education Fund may be created, subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules.

SEC. 9. *Monitoring and Oversight.* – The implementing agencies shall submit an annual report to Congress detailing the status of digital access coverage, teacher training completion rates, and learning outcomes. All funds utilized under this Act shall be subject to audit by the Commission on Audit.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, CHED, TESDA, and DICT shall jointly promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 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,