

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8527



Introduced by Representative BEVERLY ROSE A. DIMACUHA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is not merely defined by its infrastructure or economic status, but by the memory it chooses to preserve and the narratives it chooses to pass on. Yet, the rich history of different cities and municipalities remains largely peripheral in both formal education and public consciousness. Students, and even adult citizens, continue to be predominantly exposed to stereotypical narratives and, to a limited extent, regional accounts, largely because these are embedded in the educational curriculum, particularly in subjects such as *Araling Panlipunan*. This leaves many residents unaware of the distinct events, cultural practices, and heritage that shape the identity of their own city or municipality.

This proposed measure seeks to address that gap by institutionalizing the systematic dissemination of knowledge concerning the history, culture, and heritage of each Local Government Unit, as applicable, in the country. Through the creation, publication, and distribution of a local heritage book in public libraries and educational institutions, and a digital repository in the national library and city websites, this bill aims to promote inclusive access to cultural education, ensuring students and all residents can learn about and participate in preserving heritage. For a community that understands its origins, cultivates a reinforced civic pride and a collective commitment to the preservation of the city and municipality's cultural identity.

This measure was a concept proposed by a group of students during the recently concluded BRADkada Youth Parliament¹ when asked about their

¹ Abrenica, RJ, Curameng, LS, Ramos, JMN, Bergantiños, AM, Lopez Jr., R (2026), LOCAL HERITAGE PROGRAM, BRADkada Youth Parliament

inputs on cultural or historical concerns. With such a very sound concept, this Representation could only agree with what former US President Barrack Obama stated, "The future belongs to young people with an education and the imagination to create" and decided to file this proposed measure.

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


BEVERLEY ROSE A. DIMACUHA

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**AN ACT MANDATING THE PUBLICATION, AND DISTRIBUTION, OF
OFFICIAL LOCAL HERITAGE BOOKS FOR ALL CITIES AND
MUNICIPALITIES; ESTABLISHING THE LOCAL HERITAGE
PUBLICATION PROGRAM**

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 "Local Heritage Publication and Distribution Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the declared the policy of this Act to:

- (a) Preserve, promote, and disseminate the cultural heritage, history, and identity of all local government units;
- (b) Ensure public access to validated and standardized heritage information through official publications;
- (c) Strengthen cultural education by providing reliable local heritage reference materials to schools, libraries, and communities;
- (d) Complement and operationalize the cultural documentation objectives of Republic Act No. 10066 and Republic Act No. 11961 by ensuring the conversion of cultural mapping outputs into accessible publications;
- (e) Ensure that heritage knowledge is transmitted across generations through formal and informal educational mechanisms;

SECTION 3. Scope and Coverage. - This Act shall apply to all Local Government Units (Local Government Units), throughout the Republic of the Philippines.

SECTION 4. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act:

- (a) *Cultural mapping* shall refer to the identification, recording, and use of cultural resources of communities. It is a systematic set of

activities and methodological processes for discovering, documenting, analyzing, interpreting, presenting, and sharing information related to people, communities, societies, places, and their material products, practices, and narratives;

- (b) *Local Government Unit (Local Government Unit)* refers to cities and municipalities.
- (c) *Local Heritage Book* refers to the official, validated, and government-recognized publication documenting the history, culture, traditions, heritage sites, and significant cultural assets of a city or municipality.
- (d) *National Cultural Agencies (NCAs)* refer to the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), National Library of the Philippines, and other relevant agencies.
- (e) *Program* refers to the Local Heritage Publication Program established under this Act.
- (f) *Publication* includes printed, digital, and accessible formats.

SECTION 5. *Establishment of the Local Heritage Publication Program.*

- There is hereby established a Local Heritage Publication Program in all cities and municipalities in the country.

SECTION 6. *Mandate of Local Government Units.* - All Cities and Municipalities shall:

- (a) Prepare, validate, and publish an official Local Heritage Book within three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act;
- (b) Ensure that such publication is based on validated cultural mapping data, where available;
- (c) Establish a Local Heritage Publication Council;
- (d) Ensure periodic updating of the publication every ten (10) years;
- (e) Provide both physical and digital formats;
- (f) Ensure accessibility for persons, including accessible digital formats where practicable.

SECTION 7. *Local Heritage Publication Council.* - Each Local Government Unit shall establish a Local Heritage Publication Committee composed of:

Chairperson: Local Chief Executive

Members:

- (a) Local Cultural Affairs Officer
- (b) Local Tourism Officer
- (c) Local Planning Officer
- (d) Representative from the Schools Division Office under the Department of Education
- (e) Local historian or academic expert
- (f) Representative from an accredited cultural organization

- (g) (g) Representative from the local library

The LHPC shall observe the following functions:

- (a) Oversee development and publication;
- (b) Ensure historical accuracy and integrity;
- (c) Coordinate with National Cultural Agencies;
- (d) Ensure compliance with national standards;
- (e) Conduct public consultations.

SECTION 8. Content Requirements. - Each Local Heritage Book shall include, where available:

- (a) Local historical narrative;
- (b) Cultural mapping summary;
- (c) Heritage sites and landmarks;
- (d) Traditions and cultural practices;
- (e) Biographies of significant figures;
- (f) Oral histories and folklore;
- (g) Cultural photographs and documentation;
- (h) Verified archival materials.

SECTION 9. Distribution and Public Access Requirements. - Local Government Units (LGUs) shall ensure the proper distribution and public accessibility of the Local Heritage Books in both printed and digital formats.

- (a) Printed copies shall be distributed to:
 1. Public and private schools within the jurisdiction;
 2. Public libraries;
 3. Local government offices;
 4. Cultural centers;
 5. Local museums and all other institutions that may contain, preserve, and distribute local heritage books; and
 6. The National Library of the Philippines (NLP).

(b) Digital copies shall be made publicly accessible through the following measures:

1. Submission to the National Library of the Philippines for inclusion in a publicly accessible National Digital Platform for all Local Heritage Books, where materials shall be available for free viewing and reading by the general public;
2. Mandatory publication across official Local Government Unit (LGU) digital platforms, including but not limited to the official website and verified social media pages;
3. Maintenance of a functional digital copy within local public libraries, museums, learning hubs, or other common public spaces, with appropriate facilities for public viewing or access; and

4. Installation of Quick Response (QR) codes in conspicuous and strategic public locations within the city or municipality, including but not limited to public transport terminals, city or municipal halls, public plazas, and other high-foot-traffic areas, directly linking to the official digital copy of the Local Heritage Book.

SECTION 10. *Integration with Education.* - The Department of Education shall include the Local Heritage Books as instructional materials for Araling Panlipunan subjects, consistent with national curriculum standards.

SECTION 11. *Monitoring and Compliance.* - The National Commission of Culture and Arts (NCCA) shall monitor the compliance of the Local Government Units, specifically the Local Heritage Publication Councils to the provisions of this Act. The LHPCs shall submit progress reports annually to the NCCA. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Status of the development, revision, or updating of the Local Heritage Books;
- b. Number of copies printed and distributed to schools, libraries, and public institutions;
- c. List of educational institutions utilizing the Heritage Book as reference material;
- d. Digital access statistics, including downloads, website visits, and QR code scans, where applicable;
- e. Financial report detailing the utilization of funds appropriated; and
- f. Issues encountered and recommendations for improvement.

SECTION 12. *Use of the Special Education Fund (SEF).* All LGUs shall be granted authority to use the SEF for the publication of the Local Heritage Book.

SECTION 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the National Commission on Culture and Arts, the Department of Education and the Department of Local Government (DILG) and other relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 14. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to ensure the effective implementation of this Act, shall be appropriated in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 15. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 16. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 17. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after *Official Gazette* Publication or in any newspaper of general circulation.