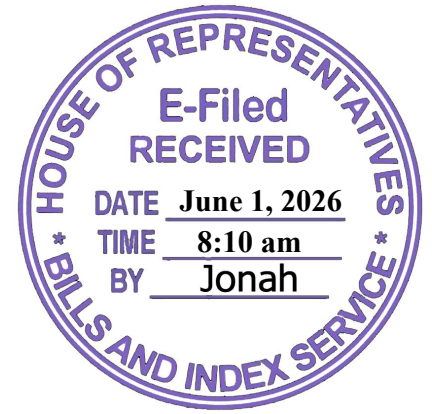


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9557



Introduced by: **REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

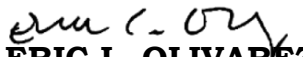
The Constitution recognizes education as a fundamental right and mandates the State to make quality education accessible to all.

Access to educational resources is essential to ensuring quality and inclusive higher education. However, many students in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), particularly those in underserved and remote areas, continue to face difficulties in obtaining learning materials and reliable internet connectivity necessary for academic study and research.

This measure seeks to establish a National Academic Content Repository (NACR) that will provide SUC students and faculty with free access to digital textbooks, open educational resources, lecture materials, and other academic content. It likewise aims to expand campus-wide internet connectivity through the provision of free Wi-Fi services in SUCs, thereby supporting digital learning, research, and innovation.

By harnessing information and communications technology to improve access to knowledge and educational opportunities, this bill promotes academic excellence, digital inclusion, and equitable access to higher education for all Filipino students.

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


ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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House Bill No. 9557

Introduced by: **REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ**

**“AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL ACADEMIC CONTENT
REPOSITORY AND PROVIDING DIGITAL LEARNING
RESOURCES AND FREE INTERNET ACCESS IN STATE
UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”**

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 “*Universal Access to Learning Resources Act*”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to promote quality, accessible, and inclusive higher education through the use of information and communications technology, digital learning resources, and reliable internet connectivity. Toward this end, the State shall support the development and dissemination of academic content and expand access to digital learning opportunities in State Universities and Colleges.

SECTION 3. Objectives – This Act aims to:

- a. Provide free and equitable access to academic learning resources for students enrolled in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs).
- b. Establish a National Academic Content Repository (NACR) containing government-funded, institutionally developed, licensed, and openly accessible educational resources.
- c. Ensure Free High-speed Wi-Fi access in all SUC campuses to facilitate digital learning and research.
- d. Support the development, digitization, and sharing of locally produced academic content.

SECTION 4. National Academic Content Repository (NACR) – There is hereby established a National Academic Content Repository (NACR) to be managed

by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in partnership with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs). The NACR shall:

- a. Store and disseminate digital textbooks, lecture videos, syllabi, research papers, and open educational resources (OERs) across disciplines.
- b. Provide free online access to all SUC students and faculty nationwide.
- c. Ensure content is quality-assured, accessible, inclusive, and culturally relevant.
- d. Encourage faculty-generated content, with appropriate academic recognition and attribution.

The acquisition, digitization, reproduction, storage, dissemination, and use of educational materials under this Act shall be undertaken in accordance with applicable intellectual property laws, licensing agreements, and other pertinent laws, rules, and regulations. The NACR and all related digital platforms shall likewise comply with existing laws and standards on data privacy, cybersecurity, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and digital inclusion.

SECTION 5. *Digital Content Development and Acquisition* – To populate the NACR, CHED shall:

- a. Acquire licenses for digital textbooks and resources used in SUC courses.
- b. Promote the creation of localized and open educational content through grants to SUCs and faculty members.
- c. Enter into agreements with local and international publishers, academic institutions, and educational content providers to secure affordable licensing, subscription, or open-access arrangements.
- d. Establish content review panels to ensure academic quality and accuracy.
- e. Ensure that all content included in the NACR is accessible, inclusive, culturally relevant, and, whenever practicable, available in formats suitable for persons with disabilities and learners in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas.

SECTION 6. *Free Wi-Fi Access in SUCs* – The DICT, in partnership with SUCs, shall implement campus-wide high-speed Wi-Fi access that is:

- a. Free of charge to all enrolled SUC students and faculty.
- b. Secure and administered in accordance with applicable data privacy and cybersecurity laws to protect users and prevent unauthorized access, misuse, or security breaches.
- c. Designed to support access to the NACR and other academic services.

Priority shall be given to rural and under-resourced campuses during initial implementation.

SECTION 7. *Responsibilities of SUCs* – Each SUC shall:

- a. Designate an existing office, unit, library, or responsible officer to coordinate with CHED and DICT in the implementation of this Act.
- b. Encourage faculty to contribute, adapt, and use digital content from the NACR.
- c. Support students in digital literacy and responsible use of online academic resources.
- d. Integrate NACR content into library services and course delivery.

SECTION 8. *Capacity Building and Incentives* – The CHED shall offer:

- a. Training and workshops for faculty on creating digital materials and OERs;
- b. Recognition and lawful incentive programs, subject to existing civil service, budgeting, compensation, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations, for academic content creators whose work is utilized nationally;
- c. Technical assistance to SUCs for Wi-Fi installation, server setup, and NACR access; and
- d. Capacity-building programs on intellectual property rights, open educational resources, digital accessibility, data privacy, and cybersecurity for faculty members and relevant personnel.

SECTION 9. Appropriations. - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the CHED and the DICT. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act, subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations.

Implementation of this Act shall be subject to the availability of funds and existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, CHED and DICT, in coordination with SUCs and other stakeholders, shall issue the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 11. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. Repealing Clause. – All laws, executive orders or issuances or any part thereof, which are inconsistent herewith, are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 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.

