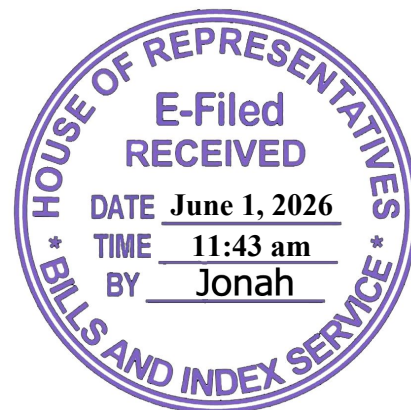


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9578



Introduced by

HON. ATTY. GERVILLE "JINKY BITRICS" R. LUISTRO

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE MAGNA CARTA OF THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH,
STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR THEIR
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL PROTECTION, AND REINTEGRATION,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and mandates the State to promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. Despite this constitutional guarantee, millions of Filipino children and youth remain out of school due to poverty, unemployment, family problems, early pregnancy, lack of access to educational opportunities, and other socio-economic barriers.

Recent data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and various government studies continue to show that a significant number of Filipino youth remain outside the formal education system. Many are forced to work at an early age to help their families survive, while others discontinue schooling because of financial hardship, displacement, mental health concerns, conflict, abuse, or lack of support systems. As a result, many out-of-school youth become vulnerable to exploitation, discrimination, criminality, trafficking, substance abuse, and long-term poverty.

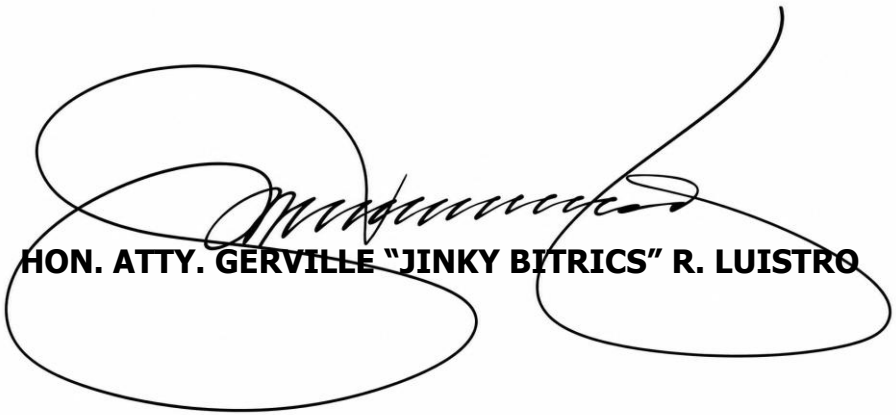
The problem of out-of-school youth is not merely an educational concern. It is a social justice issue, an economic issue, and a national development issue. Every Filipino youth who is denied the opportunity to study, develop skills, or secure decent employment represents lost human potential and a setback to national progress.

This measure seeks to institutionalize a comprehensive Magna Carta for the Out-of-School Youth that will recognize, protect, and promote their rights and welfare. It aims to strengthen the role of the government in ensuring accessible education, technical-vocational training, employment opportunities, social protection, mental health support, and reintegration programs for out-of-school youth across the country.

The bill likewise adopts a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach by directing national government agencies, local government units, educational institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations to coordinate and implement programs specifically designed for the needs of out-of-school youth. It further recognizes the need for stronger interventions for youth in especially difficult circumstances, including victims of abuse, trafficking, exploitation, armed conflict, teenage pregnancy, and extreme poverty.

Ultimately, this proposed measure seeks to empower out-of-school youth to become productive, self-sufficient, and active participants in nation-building by giving them genuine opportunities to complete their education, acquire skills, obtain decent work, and improve their quality of life.

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



HON. ATTY. GERVILLE "JINKY BITRICS" R. LUISTRO

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

3
4 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Magna Carta of
5 the Out-of-School Youth Act."

6
7 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** - The State recognizes the vital role of
8 the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral,
9 spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. Consistent with the Constitution, the State
10 shall ensure that out-of-school youth are afforded equal access to education, skills
11 development, employment opportunities, social protection, and government services
12 necessary for their development as productive members of society. The State shall
13 adopt a comprehensive, rights-based, gender-responsive, and inclusive approach in
14 addressing the concerns of out-of-school youth and shall remove barriers that prevent
15 young Filipinos from accessing quality education, livelihood, healthcare, and other
16 support systems essential to their growth and empowerment.

17

1 Towards this end, the State shall recognize and protect the rights and dignity
2 of out-of-school youth by ensuring their access to formal, non-formal, and alternative
3 education programs, technical-vocational training, livelihood opportunities,
4 employment facilitation, and responsive social protection and health services, while
5 promoting their active participation in nation-building and community development
6 and strengthening collaboration among government agencies, local government units,
7 civil society organizations, educational institutions, and the private sector in the
8 formulation and implementation of programs and interventions for out-of-school
9 youth.

10
11 **SECTION 3. Definition of terms.** - For purposes of this Act:

12
13 (a) "Alternative Learning System (ALS)" refers to a parallel learning system that
14 provides practical and flexible educational opportunities outside the formal school
15 system;

16
17 (b) "Out-of-School Youth (OSY)" refers to persons aged fifteen (15) to thirty
18 (30) years old who are not enrolled in school, are not gainfully employed, and have
19 not completed secondary or post-secondary education;

20
21 (c) "Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET)" refers to education
22 and skills training programs designed to equip learners with practical and technical
23 competencies for employment and entrepreneurship;

24
25 (d) "Social Protection" refers to policies and programs that reduce poverty and
26 vulnerability by providing livelihood opportunities, insurance, welfare services, and
27 social safety nets;

28
29 (e) "Children at Risk of Becoming Out-of-School Youth" refers to minors
30 vulnerable to dropping out due to poverty, abuse, family problems, early pregnancy,
31 displacement, disability, or similar circumstances; and

32
33 (f) "Especially Difficult Circumstances" refer to situations involving abuse,
34 exploitation, trafficking, armed conflict, abandonment, mental health conditions,
35 substance abuse, child labor, homelessness, or conflict with the law.

36
37 **SECTION 4. Rights of Out-of-School Youth.** - Out-of-school youth shall
38 enjoy all rights guaranteed under the Constitution and existing laws without
39 discrimination based on socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, disability,
40 ethnicity, religion, pregnancy, parenthood, or previous educational status.

41
42 They shall have the right to equal access to education, training, employment,
43 healthcare, social services, and government programs intended for youth development
44 and empowerment.

45
46 **SECTION 5. Protection Against Discrimination and Exploitation.** - The
47 State shall protect out-of-school youth from all forms of discrimination, violence,

1 exploitation, trafficking, abuse, harassment, forced labor, and other acts that
2 undermine their dignity and welfare.

3
4 Government agencies shall ensure that all programs and interventions under
5 this Act are gender-responsive, inclusive, trauma-informed, and rights-based.

6
7 **SECTION 6. Right to Decent Work.** - Out-of-school youth shall be entitled
8 to fair and decent working conditions consistent with labor standards and existing
9 labor laws. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), in coordination with
10 TESDA and other agencies, shall facilitate employment opportunities, skills matching,
11 apprenticeships, and job placement programs for qualified out-of-school youth.

12
13 **SECTION 7. Education and Skills Development.** - The Department of
14 Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Technical
15 Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) shall establish and strengthen
16 programs that ensure accessible and affordable educational opportunities for out-of-
17 school youth.

18
19 Alternative Learning System programs, bridging programs, technical-vocational
20 education, digital literacy training, and community-based learning opportunities shall
21 be expanded nationwide, particularly in underserved and geographically isolated
22 areas.

23 TESDA shall provide free technical-vocational training, including assessment
24 and certification fees, and may provide transportation allowance, training materials,
25 starter toolkits, and other forms of educational support.

26
27 **SECTION 8. Scholarship and Educational Assistance.** - At least ten
28 percent (10%) of scholarship slots administered by CHED and other national
29 scholarship programs shall be allocated to qualified out-of-school youth applicants,
30 subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.

31
32 Local government units are likewise encouraged to allocate scholarship grants
33 and educational assistance programs specifically for out-of-school youth in their
34 respective localities.

35
36 **SECTION 9. Health and Mental Health Services.** - The Department of
37 Health (DOH), in coordination with local government units and relevant agencies, shall
38 establish a comprehensive health program for out-of-school youth that includes
39 physical health services, mental health support, psychosocial interventions,
40 reproductive health education, substance abuse prevention, and counseling services.

41
42 **SECTION 10. Social Protection and Reintegration.** - The Department of
43 Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall develop reintegration and social
44 protection programs for out-of-school youth, including case management, temporary
45 shelter, family support interventions, financial assistance, after-care services, and
46 community reintegration programs.

47

1 Special attention shall be given to out-of-school youth in especially difficult
2 circumstances.

3
4 **SECTION 11. Employment Facilitation.** - The DOLE, Public Employment
5 Service Offices (PESOs), TESDA, and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
6 shall establish employment facilitation and workforce development programs
7 specifically for out-of-school youth.

8
9 These programs shall include career counseling, job fairs, skills matching,
10 apprenticeships, digital employment opportunities, and entrepreneurship support.

11
12 **SECTION 12. Entrepreneurial Development.** - The DTI, in coordination
13 with TESDA and relevant agencies, shall provide entrepreneurship training, mentoring,
14 startup assistance, market linkage programs, and financial literacy seminars for out-
15 of-school youth interested in establishing small businesses or community enterprises.

16
17 **SECTION 13. Duties of Local Government Units.** - Local government units
18 shall integrate programs for out-of-school youth into their local development plans
19 and youth development programs.

20 LGUs shall establish local databases of out-of-school youth, coordinate with
21 national agencies for service delivery, conduct community-based interventions, and
22 support barangay-level initiatives aimed at preventing school dropout and assisting
23 reintegration into formal or alternative education systems.

24
25 **SECTION 14. Inter-Agency Coordinating Council.** - An Inter-Agency
26 Coordinating Council on Out-of-School Youth is hereby created to ensure the effective
27 implementation of this Act. The Council shall be composed of representatives from the
28 DepEd, DOLE, TESDA, CHED, DSWD, DOH, DILG, NYC, DTI, and other relevant
29 agencies. Representatives from youth organizations and civil society groups may
30 likewise be included. The Council shall formulate a national action plan, monitor
31 implementation, establish a centralized database, recommend policies, and submit
32 annual reports to Congress.

33
34 **SECTION 15. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary for the initial
35 implementation of this Act shall be charged against available appropriations of
36 concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in
37 the annual General Appropriations Act.

38
39 **SECTION 16. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - Within ninety (90)
40 days from the effectivity of this Act, the Inter-Agency Coordinating Council shall
41 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its implementation.

42
43 **SECTION 17. Separability Clause.** - If any provision of this Act is declared
44 unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

45
46 **SECTION 18. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and
47 regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1
2 **SECTION 19. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
3 its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
4

5 Approved,