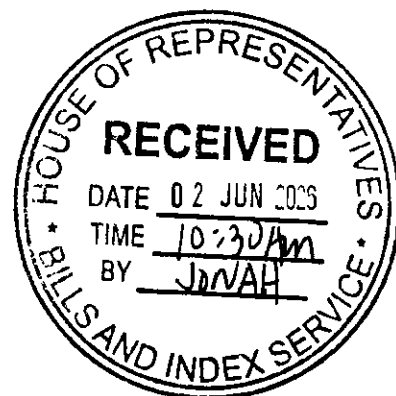


REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9623



Introduced by
KABATAAN Party-list Rep. RENEE LOUISE M. CO,
Gabriela Women's Party Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO, and
ACT Teachers Party-list Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO

AN ACT
DEMOCRATIZING THE USE OF LEARNING SPACES IN ALL ACADEMIC
INSTITUTIONS FOR ALL STUDENT-LED FORMATIONS, INCLUDING
COUNCILS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PUBLICATIONS THROUGHOUT THE
PHILIPPINES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Educational facilities, especially classrooms, are a pillar for facilitating education. It is the literal space for knowledge to foster the development of a student. However, the reality is that non-traditional academic learning is still not recognized for the use of these facilities. A holistic view of education is yet to be truly implemented. Even if the 1987 Philippine Constitution recognizes informal education through Section 2 of Article 14, which provides that the State shall encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study programs, traditional learning is still prioritized in the use of all learning spaces.

Currently, there is no prevailing, all-encompassing legislation on the usage of classrooms and other educational facilities for all institutions of learning in the Philippines besides the DepEd 2010 *Educational Facilities Manual*, which only covers basic education.¹ Other policies and guidelines similar to the DepEd manual for higher education are localized to individual schools and universities. However, in practice, trends in these localized policies are often characterized as 'overly bureaucratic' or 'restrictive', where students are burdened by mountains of paperwork just to schedule and acquire a venue for the activity, not including the expense they may incur for using the said venue.

¹ Department of Education. *Educational Facilities Manual* (2010)

The Department of Education (DepED) stressed in their 2010 *Educational Facilities Manual* that "Educational facilities are considered indispensable to a school; they do not only provide housing for the school but also serve as facilitating agents for all the educational activities that take place in a school." Without dedicated educational spaces, we cannot imagine education that is conducive and appropriate for every student.

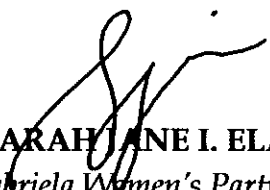
Often, the need to find conducive spaces for students' organizations/formations' activities, such as holding meetings, forums, or simply existing within their academic institution, is saddled to the students due to a lack of spaces dedicated for activities outside of the traditional academic setup. Very few organizations, like the student council and publications, get to have an office that they may use for their daily activities, but most have to brave through the process or settle for spaces outside their campuses.

The Democratic Learning Spaces Usage bill aims to address the longstanding inaccessibility of available learning spaces for all student organizations in the Philippines, enabling students to access facilities within their rights for extracurricular and non-traditional activities, harnessing a holistic type of education.

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



REP. RENEE LOUISE M. CO
KABATAAN Party-list



REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Gabriela Women's Party



REP. ANTONIO L. TINIO
ACT Teachers Party-list

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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 “Democratic Learning Spaces Usage Act.”

SECTION 2. *Democratic Learning Spaces Usage.* — Democratic Learning Spaces Usage democratizes the use of learning spaces beyond traditional academic use, recognizing extracurricular and organizational activities as part of the holistic development of a student.

SECTION 3. *Learning Spaces.* — All the physical properties of a school, consisting of the grounds, buildings, and the various facilities within the school grounds and inside the school buildings.

SECTION 4. *Democratic Access.* — All student-led organizations/formations shall have democratic access to all available learning spaces inside their respective academic institutions. Existing administrative processes regarding the use of these learning spaces shall not impede on its use.

Expenses incurred from the use of learning spaces, such as electricity and maintenance, shall not be shouldered by the students.

SECTION 6. *Student-led Organizations.* — Student-led Organizations are unions, formations, or organizations that are made by and made for students, recognized or pending recognition of the respective educational institution. These include, but are not limited to, the following: Student unions, student councils, student academic organizations, student publications, and/or writing organizations.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — The College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP) as the oldest, broadest and only-existing alliance of tertiary student publication in the Asia-Pacific region and the National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP) as a nation-wide alliance of student councils/governments/unions committed to the advancement of the students' democratic rights and welfare, and both are Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)-registered national formation of student councils and government, in coordination with youth groups and organizations, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to enforce the objectives of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* — Should any part of this Act be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 8. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,