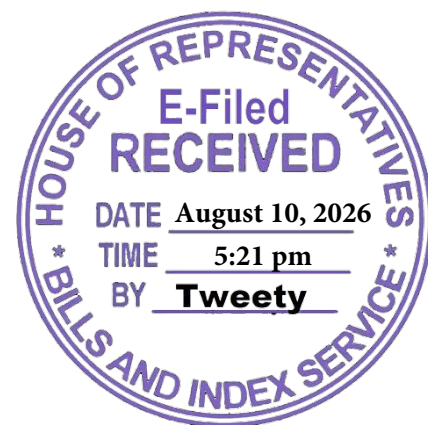


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10691



Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution is explicit that the State must protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.

The extraordinary disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic in the early 2020s first forced the country to reckon with the fragility of its traditional, classroom-bound model of instruction. Nearly six years on, however, the more pressing threat to continuous learning is no longer a single pandemic, but a recurring pattern of climate-driven disruption that has become a permanent feature of the school calendar.

According to the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II), disasters forces frequent face-to-face class suspensions nationwide between, disrupting school days leading to substantial loss of schooling time to typhoons, flooding, and extreme heat.¹ Some localities have fared far worse. Just this year, the Department of Education has begun drafting an executive framework for automatic class suspensions once the heat index reaches 40°C or hazard thresholds for typhoons and poor air quality are met, an acknowledgment that disruption is no longer the exception but the expectation.²

Unlike the pandemic, these disruptions are typically localized and short-lived, but the response to them remains improvised. When classes are suspended, the fallback is routinely for schools to shift to what DepEd terms an Alternative Delivery Mode, yet whether this materializes as an online class, a printed module, or an outright loss of instructional time still depends almost entirely on whether a school or student has reliable internet access.

¹ EDCOM2: The Second Congressional Commission on Education, "Turning Point: A Decade of Necessary Reform (2026-2035)," 2026, available at: <https://edcom2.gov.ph/>

² Jan Escosio, "DepEd leads consultations on class suspension, resumption rules," July 29, 2026, Inquirer, available at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2273856/depeds-leads-consultations-on-class-suspension-resumption-rules>

That dependency remains the weakest link in the chain. As of 2024, only 48.8 percent of Filipino households had stable broadband access³, meaning generally available internet for use by all members of the household at any time, regardless of whether it is actually used, still far behind regional peers such as Vietnam and Thailand, and internet penetration among the poorest households remains a fraction of that among the wealthiest.

While more than 78% of public schools nationwide now have internet connectivity, this still leaves out 12,000 schools nationwide, mostly in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs), without internet connection.⁴ Government efforts to close this gap, including the National Fiber Backbone and the Department of Education's push to connect all public schools by the end of 2025, are meaningful but partial, and they leave open the question of what happens the moment those connections go down, whether from a typhoon, a fiber cut, or a simple lack of coverage in a remote barangay.

Hence the need for this Act. Rather than treating connectivity as a stopgap measure for a single crisis, it seeks to institutionalize a standing, multimodal learning framework that allows instruction to continue seamlessly across online, offline, and blended formats whenever physical schooling becomes unsafe or impossible, whether due to a public health emergency, a typhoon, extreme heat, or any other climate-related hazard. It shall mobilize the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) to identify priority areas for the establishment of reliable cyber infrastructure and to work with the Department of Education toward the goal of universal, comprehensive, and reliable internet connectivity for all learners, so that the continuity of education no longer depends on how quickly the weather clears.

It is for the foregoing premises that the approval of this Bill is earnestly sought.



ALFRED C. DELOS SANTOS

Representative, Ang Probinsyano Party-List

³ Philippine Statistics Authority, "Percentage of Households with Internet Connection Increased to 48.8 percent in 2024; Two in Every Three Individuals Aged 10 Years and Over Used the Internet," July 21, 2025, available at: <https://psa.gov.ph/content/percentage-households-internet-connection-increased-488-percent-2024-two-every-three>

⁴ Joann Villanueva, "78% of public schools have internet connectivity: DICT chief," Philippine News Agency, August 20, 2025, available at: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1257030>

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10691

Introduced by **ANG PROBINSYANO**
Party-List Representative Alfred Delos Santos

**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A MULTIMODAL LEARNING
FRAMEWORK THROUGH THE PROVISION OF UNIVERSAL INTERNET
ACCESS TO ENSURE THE CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION DURING
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES, NATURAL DISASTERS, AND OTHER
CLIMATE-RELATED DISRUPTIONS, MOBILIZING THE NATIONAL
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE PURPOSE, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

*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 “Universal
Wireless Internet Connection Act of 2026.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – In recognition of the vital role of
information and communications technology in nation-building, the State
declares its policy to promote an environment for the development of
infrastructure that would ensure the availability and accessibility to reliable
and secure internet access suitable to the needs and aspirations of the nation.
The State shall therefore institutionalize the delivery of education digitally by
providing universal, comprehensive, reliable, and wireless internet connection
for all.

SECTION 3. *Minimum Internet Speed Requirement.* – The National
Telecommunications Commission (NTC) shall set the minimum standards of
internet speed for compliance of all internet service providers (ISPs) in the
country.

SECTION 4. *Universal Wireless Internet Connection Access.* – The NTC
shall identify key areas where reliable cyber infrastructure shall be
established. Such key areas shall be strategic locations which must be able
to maximize internet connectivity reach throughout the country, especially in
the rural areas where there is little to no cyber infrastructure available and
accessible, so as to cater to the demands of the digital age.

SECTION 5. *Mechanisms for Free Student Internet Access.* – The NTC, in consultation with DepEd, sectoral organizations, non-government organizations, research institutions, people’s organizations, and the private sector, shall come up with a mechanism that will provide students free, fast, and reliable internet access.

SECTION 6. *Appropriations.* – The funds necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Department of Education (DepEd), and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Thereafter, funding shall be included in the budgets of the DICT, DepEd, and CHED under the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within thirty (30) days after this Act takes effect, the DICT, through the NTC, DepEd, and CHED, in consultation and coordination with appropriate government agencies, representatives from the private sector, and other stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts unaffected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees or issuances, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,