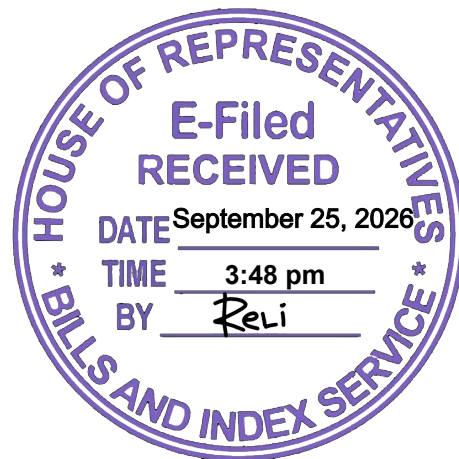


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 11483

Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY
PROGRAM, STRENGTHENING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, AND PREVENTING SCHOOL VIOLENCE,
ACTIVE ASSAILANT INCIDENTS, AND OTHER SAFETY AND SECURITY
THREATS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Schools must always remain places of learning, formation, and safety. Recent successive incidents and threats involving bullying and cyberbullying, bomb scares, deadly weapons, online threats, and other acts of violence have haunted our places of learning and peace. They have also exposed the evolving risks faced by learners, teachers, and school personnel.

In response, the Department of Education has strengthened its policies on weapons and bomb threats and introduced school safety audits, active-threat preparedness exercises, confidential reporting mechanisms, and mental-health interventions. Existing laws address particular aspects of school safety, including bullying, mental health, and disaster risk reduction. Nevertheless, there remains a need for a unified and permanent framework covering the prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery measures necessary to address both natural hazards and intentional acts of violence across educational institutions.

This bill therefore establishes a National Comprehensive School Safety Program. It mandates school-specific safety and vulnerability assessments, emergency plans and drills, reasonable security infrastructure, weapons-control measures, violence-prevention and mental-health programs, confidential reporting and threat assessment mechanisms, inter-agency coordination, and post-incident recovery and continuity-of-learning measures.

Through this measure, school safety shall no longer depend on isolated or reactive interventions but shall become a coordinated, preventive, and adequately supported national responsibility.

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



HON. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO

Representative
1st District, Sorsogon

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be known as the “National
2 Comprehensive School Safety Act”.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is hereby declared the policy of the State
5 to protect and promote the right of every learner, teacher, and school personnel to
6 study and work in a safe, secure, and resilient educational environment.

7
8 The State shall protect children and youth from violence, criminal acts,
9 terrorism, armed attacks, disasters, emergencies, and other threats that may disrupt
10 education or endanger life, health, and safety. Towards this end, the State shall
11 institutionalize a comprehensive framework for the prevention of, preparedness for,
12 response to, and recovery from school safety and security incidents and emergencies.

13
14 **SEC. 3. National Comprehensive School Safety Program.** The National
15 School Security Program is hereby established to be jointly implemented by the
16 Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED),
17 in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG),
18 Department of Health (DOH), Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire
19 Protection (BFP), National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA), National Bureau
20 of Investigation (NBI), local government units (LGUs), and such other government
21 agencies and instrumentalities as may be necessary for its effective implementation.

22
23 **SEC. 4. School Security Risk Assessments.** Every educational institution
24 shall periodically conduct a site-specific and evidence-based assessment of existing

1 and emerging threats, hazards, and vulnerabilities within and in the immediate vicinity
2 of its premises. The assessment shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- 3
- 4 a) Perimeter security, access control, visitor management, and unauthorized
- 5 entry or exit points;
- 6 b) Physical, structural, operational, and technological vulnerabilities in school
- 7 premises and facilities;
- 8 c) Bullying, hazing, violence, kidnapping, gang-related activities, and other
- 9 criminal acts affecting learners and school personnel;
- 10 d) Unauthorized possession or use of firearms, bladed weapons, explosives,
- 11 illegal drugs, and other dangerous or prohibited items;
- 12 e) Terrorism, violent extremism, armed attacks, hostage-taking, active
- 13 assailant incidents, bomb threats, and other related security threats;
- 14 f) Cybersecurity threats, online threats of violence, false information intended
- 15 to cause panic, and unauthorized access to school information systems;
- 16 g) The adequacy of emergency communication, warning, surveillance, alarm,
- 17 and incident-reporting systems;
- 18 h) Security risks during school entry and dismissal, transportation, educational
- 19 trips, and other school-authorized activities;
- 20 i) Fires, earthquakes, typhoons, floods, landslides, extreme heat, public health
- 21 emergencies, utility failures, and other natural or human-induced hazards;
- 22 and
- 23 j) Such other threats, hazards, or vulnerabilities as may be identified by the
- 24 appropriate authorities.
- 25

26 **SEC. 5. School Emergency Operations Plan.** Every educational institution
27 shall maintain an Emergency Operations Plan that shall include:

- 28
- 29 a) Lockdown and access-control procedures;
- 30 b) Shelter-in-place protocols;
- 31 c) Evacuation procedures and designated evacuation areas;
- 32 d) Reunification procedures for learners and their families;
- 33 e) Coordination with law enforcement, fire, health, and other emergency
- 34 responders;
- 35 f) Medical emergency and first-aid response protocols;
- 36 g) Emergency notification, crisis communication, and information-
- 37 management procedures; and
- 38 h) Post-incident recovery, psychosocial support, and continuity-of-learning
- 39 measures.
- 40

41 **SEC. 6. Active Assailant Preparedness Training.** All schools shall conduct
42 annual training programs for school personnel on:

- 43
- 44 a) Active assailant response;
- 45 b) Lockdown procedures;
- 46 c) Emergency communications;
- 47 d) Trauma-informed response;
- 48 (e) First aid and casualty care;

- (f) Incident command protocols; and
- (g) Evacuation procedures.

SEC. 7. Emergency Drills. All schools shall conduct at least two (2) active-threat, active assailant or armed-intrusion preparedness exercises per school year, in addition to fire, earthquake, and other emergency drills required under existing laws and regulations. Additional exercises may be conducted when warranted by the school safety and security assessment. Such exercises shall be age-appropriate, trauma-informed, accessible to learners with disabilities, and designed to prevent unnecessary fear or psychological harm.

Learners, school personnel, and parents or guardians shall be given appropriate prior notice. The use of actual or imitation firearms, simulated gunfire, masked assailants, fake blood or injuries, and other realistic depictions of violence during learner-participated exercises shall be prohibited. Every exercise shall be followed by a debriefing and evaluation to identify operational deficiencies and provide psychosocial support when necessary.

SEC. 8. School Security Infrastructure. Subject to the availability of funds and the results of the school safety and security assessment, schools shall progressively establish:

- a) Controlled entry points;
- b) Emergency alarm systems;
- c) Security cameras in appropriate common areas, subject to Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012," and applicable rules of the National Privacy Commission;
- d) Emergency communications equipment;
- e) Adequate exterior lighting;
- f) Accessible evacuation routes, emergency exits, and designated assembly and reunification areas; and
- g) Other reasonable security measures.

SEC. 9. Firearms and Weapons Prohibition. No firearms, explosive, deadly weapon, or similar instrument shall be brought into school premises except by duly authorized law enforcement personnel acting within the scope of official duties.

SEC. 10. Mental Health and Violence Prevention Programs. Schools shall implement programs promoting mental health, conflict resolution, anti-bullying initiatives, violence prevention, and early intervention for at-risk individuals.

SEC. 11. Local School Safety Coordination Committee. A School Safety Coordination Committee shall be constituted under the appropriate Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, in coordination with the Local Council for the Protection of Children. The Committee shall include representatives from the DepEd, CHED, TESDA, DOH, DSWD, LGU, PNP, BFP, public and private schools, parent associations, youth organizations, and such other agencies or sectors as may be necessary. It shall coordinate local threat assessments, emergency response plans,

1 referral pathways, training, resource mobilization, and information-sharing, subject to
2 applicable confidentiality and data-privacy laws.

3
4 **SEC. 12. School Threat Assessment, Reporting, Incident Response,**
5 **and Information System.** Every school shall establish a multidisciplinary School
6 Safety and Threat Assessment Team or designate an existing school body capable of
7 performing its functions. The Team shall be composed, as appropriate, of the school
8 head, school safety or disaster risk reduction focal person, guidance counselor or
9 mental-health professional, child protection representative, school health personnel,
10 and other qualified personnel.

11 The Team shall:

- 12 a) Receive, assess, and act upon reports of violence, self-harm, bullying,
13 hazing, abuse, harassment, prohibited weapons, bomb threats, suspicious
14 packages, online threats, and other serious safety concerns;
- 15 b) Determine whether a reported threat is credible, imminent, or requires
16 safety, referral, psychosocial, disciplinary, or law-enforcement intervention;
- 17 c) Coordinate, when necessary, with parents or guardians, social welfare
18 officers, mental-health professionals, law-enforcement authorities,
19 emergency responders, and other concerned agencies; and
- 20 d) Maintain confidential records in accordance with applicable child-protection
21 and data-privacy laws.

22
23 Every school shall establish accessible, confidential, and anonymous reporting
24 mechanisms, including hotlines, websites, mobile applications, or other appropriate
25 means, through which learners, teachers and other school personnel, parents or
26 guardians, and members of the community may report violence, threats, self-harm,
27 bullying, hazing, abuse, harassment, prohibited weapons, bomb threats, suspicious
28 packages, online threats, and other serious safety concerns. Reports involving an
29 imminent threat shall be immediately referred to the appropriate law-enforcement or
30 emergency authority. Persons who make reports in good faith shall be protected from
31 retaliation, intimidation, discrimination, or disciplinary action. False or malicious
32 reports shall be dealt with in accordance with applicable laws and school regulations,
33 subject to due process and child-sensitive intervention.

34
35 Threat assessment shall be based on observable conduct, credible information,
36 and relevant circumstances and shall not, by itself, constitute criminal profiling or
37 disciplinary punishment.

38
39 Following a serious school safety or security incident, the school shall:

- 40
41 a) Provide immediate medical, psychological, and psychosocial assistance to
42 affected persons;
- 43 b) Notify parents or guardians, subject to applicable confidentiality and child-
44 protection requirements;
- 45 c) Preserve relevant evidence and coordinate with the proper authorities;
- 46 d) Implement temporary learning arrangements and continuity-of-education
47 measures, when necessary;

- 1 e) Provide post-incident counseling and support to learners and school
2 personnel; and
3 f) Conduct an after-action review to evaluate the response, address identified
4 deficiencies and revise the school safety plan.
5

6 The identity and personal information of minors, victims, witnesses, reporting
7 persons, and other affected individuals shall be protected from unauthorized
8 access or disclosure.
9

10 The DepEd, CHED, and TESDA shall establish a standardized system for the
11 reporting, consolidation, and analysis of school safety and security incidents.
12 Information collected under the system shall be used for policy development, resource
13 allocation, risk reduction, program evaluation, and the improvement of school safety
14 measures.
15

16 Publicly released information shall be aggregated or de-identified and shall
17 comply with applicable child-protection and data-privacy laws. The concerned
18 agencies shall submit to Congress an annual report on the implementation of this Act,
19 including reported incidents, identified risks, compliance levels, funding requirements,
20 and recommended legislative or administrative measures.
21

22 **SEC. 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** Within one hundred
23 twenty (120) days from effectivity, DepEd, CHED, DILG, PNP, NBI, and other
24 concerned agencies shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations.
25

26 **SEC. 14. Appropriations.** The amount necessary for the implementation of
27 this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.
28

29 **SEC. 15. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
30 publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,