

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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S E N A T E

S. No. 297

Introduced by Senator S. R. Osmeña III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIV Section 2(2) of the 1986 Constitution mandates that "The State shall establish and maintain a system of free public education in the elementary and high school levels. Without limiting the natural right of parents to rear their children, elementary education is compulsory for all children of school age; xxx".

To ensure the implementation of the above provision, Sec. 20 of the Transitory Provisions of the 1986 Constitution mandated the First Congress to "give priority to the determination of the period for the full implementation of free public secondary education." More importantly, Section 5(5) of Article XIV provides that "The State shall assign the highest budgetary priority to education..."

On June 10, 1987, President Corazon C. Aquino through E.O. 189 nationalized public secondary school teachers and placed them under the supervision and control of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, in an effort to address the problems affecting secondary education.

Today, out of the existing 1,532 municipalities, there remain hundreds with no public high schools. With children travelling an average of 50 to 70 kilometers to reach the nearest high school, expenses can be prohibitive to a rural family subsisting on farm incomes.

To fully implement the mandate of free secondary education to all, this bill proposes the compulsory establishment of a public high school in every municipality of the country. No doubt this mandate will entail a gargantuan budget outlay. However this is a challenge that the government must address to be true to the clear constitutional mandate of universal access to education.

It is one of the paradoxes of the present era that physical assets have ceased to become the main sources of wealth. Countries whose citizenry display a high intelligence quotient in terms of levels of literacy and proficiency in the sciences, technology and management have ended up reaping a large proportion of economic rewards worldwide. Our aspiration to rank equal to

such countries as these needs that our policymakers should never neglect nor underestimate the importance of investments in the human capital of the country.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



SERGIO OSMEÑA III

Senator

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S E N A T E

S. No. 297

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AN ACT
MANDATING THE IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC HIGH
SCHOOL IN EVERY MUNICIPALITY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. There shall be a public high school in every municipality
2 immediately beginning the school year following the approval of this Act.

3 SEC. 2. Priority in the admission to the municipal public high school shall
4 be given to students whose parents or guardians do not receive an annual
5 income of more than Twenty-four thousand pesos (P24,000.00).

6 SECTION. 3. All the expenses necessary to operate a public high school
7 in every municipality like the school site and building, including the salaries of
8 teachers and other school personnel, books, laboratory instruments and similar
9 things shall be for the account of the National Government.

10 However, the establishment of the municipal high school and the
11 construction of the necessary buildings and facilities shall be prioritized in favor
12 of those municipalities where no high school exists whether public or private and
13 those municipalities where no public high school exists.

14 SEC. 4. For the immediate implementation of this Act, any municipality, if
15 financially able, may advance the necessary fund to own or lease a school site

1 and building to be used as public high school or to acquire such necessary
2 school furniture's and fixtures, subject to reimbursement by the National
3 Government.

4 SEC. 5. Immediately upon the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of
5 Education, Culture and Sports shall submit to the Department of Budget and
6 Management the plantilla of positions for teachers and personnel and the
7 proposed annual budget for each municipal public high school.

8 SEC. 6. The Department of Budget and Management and the
9 Department of Education, Culture and Sports shall issue their respective rules
10 and regulations necessary to implement this Act.

11 The Secretary of Education, Culture and Sports is hereby authorized to
12 contract and negotiate with owners of private schools who wish to withdraw their
13 investments in the said schools in order to convert them to public high schools.

14 SEC. 7. The amount necessary to fund the establishment of a municipal
15 public high school in every municipality as provided in this Act is hereby
16 appropriated: *Provided*, That the corresponding amount needed to implement
17 this Act in subsequent years shall be included in the annual General
18 Appropriations Act for the Department of Education, Culture and Sports Budget.

19 SEC. 8. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,