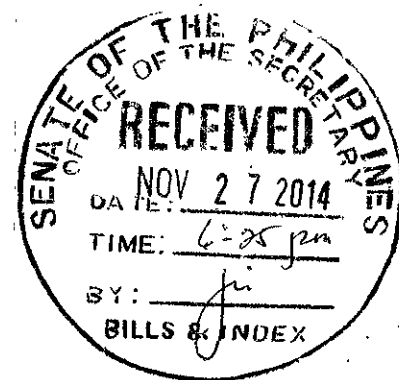


16<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )



SENATE

Senate Bill No. 2474

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Introduced by SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY STUDY OF BANGSAMORO HISTORY,**  
**CULTURE AND IDENTITY IN THE CURRICULA OF ALL LEVELS OF SCHOOLS IN**  
**THE COUNTRY**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The roots of the Christian-Muslim conflict in the Philippines can be traced to as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, where Spanish colonizers were successful in using Christianity as a tool of conquest and reducing the once-proud Muslim group to a national minority. Some contend that this part of our history was where the seeds were planted for relentless biases against Muslim-Filipinos.

Sadly, these biases persist today. Mutual apprehension and insecurities among people remain strong and alive and continue to erupt in armed conflict across Mindanao. As such, there has yet to be a complete period of healing and restoration.

According to the Asian Center for the Progress of the People (ACPP)<sup>1</sup>, many efforts have been launch to bring about peace in Mindanao. However, conflicts are still persistent and remain barriers to lasting peace and economic development in the region.

Peace roots from an understanding of the multi-cultural nature of Mindanaoans — of Christians, Muslims and Lumads alike. Improving such understanding of each other's historical, social and cultural values lays the foundation for mutual respect and unity in Mindanao.

In this way, education is crucial to the peace process in Mindanao. Such a grassroots approach is effective in instilling consciousness and understanding of the Muslim culture, especially for the Christian majority of our country — to possibly eradicate certain biases instilled in the minds of individuals.

The 1987 Constitution stipulates that “[T]he State shall promote social justice in all phases of national development” and that “[T]he State shall give priority to education,

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.iipeace.org/Philippines%20Causes%20of%20Conflict%20between%20Christians%20and%20Muslims.htm>

science and technology, arts, culture and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development”.

Education is a very powerful tool in shaping minds and opinions of the youth. It is an effective tool in building and promoting a culture of peace that recognizes the value of interdependence among cultures.

This bill therefore mandates the inclusion of Bangsamoro history, culture and identity in the curricula of all levels of education and training in all schools in the country, starting in Mindanao. By including such subjects in the education system, further understanding is instilled in the minds of the youth at an early age. Such a curriculum ought to recall and highlight the positive relations among the Muslims, Christians, Lumads and other indigenous peoples in Mindanao, as well as their common origins and other points of commonality. It is our hope that through these efforts, long-lasting peace will be fully sought.

We therefore earnestly seek support for and approval of this bill.



**SEN. SONNY ANGARA**



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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 2474

RECEIVED BY: *[Signature]*

Introduced by SENATOR SONNY ANGARA

**AN ACT  
PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY STUDY OF BANGSAMORO HISTORY,  
CULTURE AND IDENTITY IN THE CURRICULA OF ALL LEVELS OF SCHOOLS IN  
THE COUNTRY**

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

1 SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Bangsamoro History,  
2 Culture and Identity Studies Act."  
3

4 SECTION 2. Inclusion in Curricula. - The Department of Education (DepEd) and  
5 the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall include the study and understanding  
6 of Bangsamoro history, culture and identity in the curricula of all levels of education and  
7 training in all schools in the country, starting in Mindanao, adapting the scope and  
8 treatment of the subjects or courses to the respective educational levels. The DepEd  
9 and CHED shall likewise initiate and maintain regular programs and special projects to  
10 provide venues for information and discussion of Bangsamoro history, culture and  
11 identity, including the utilization of informal education and other means to stress the  
12 importance of respect therefor.  
13

14 The DepEd and CHED shall allow and authorize the teaching of Arabic language  
15 as an elective course.  
16

17 SECTION 3. Key Content. - In the formulation and creation of courses or  
18 subjects on Bangsamoro history, culture and identity to be included in the school  
19 curricula or other educational or training programs to implement and carry out the  
20 directives herein, including the writing, printing and publication of textbooks and other  
21 reading materials relative thereto, the agencies concerned shall consult recognized  
22 experts on Bangsamoro history, culture and identity as well as recognized resource  
23 persons on the Mindanao peace process and Muslim-Christian dialogue, and shall at all  
24 times emphasize the following key points and areas:  
25

26 a. An understanding of the "Mindanao problem" and the "Bangsamoro problem"  
27 as well as the roots of the conflict there and its impact on the rest of the country, with  
28 appropriate attention to the history of the Muslims in the Philippines.  
29

30 b. The specific character of Mindanao as an island shared by the Muslims,  
31 Christians and Lumads and thus the ideal of their equality, co-existence and unity,  
32 including the peculiarities of the different Bangsamoro and Lumad ethno-linguistic  
33 groups.  
34

1 c. The positive relations and remembrances in history among the Christian  
2 settlers and their descendants, the Bangsamoros or Muslims, and the Lumad or  
3 indigenous highlander tribes.

4  
5 d. The identification of the common origins of the peoples of Mindanao and of the  
6 Philippines as well as other points of commonalities, including the positive presentation  
7 of these peoples before the arrival of Islam and Christianity.

8  
9 e. The appreciation of the various cultures and ethnic identities.

10  
11 f. Support for the broader Mindanao peace process which address both the  
12 structural roots of the Mindanao conflict and the deep social, cultural and religious  
13 cleavages there, and which consists not only of peace negotiations with rebel groups  
14 but also people-to-people peace processes such as promotion of Muslim-Christian  
15 dialogue and a culture of peace.

16  
17 g. Fostering of the attitudes and values of peace an dialogue such as esteem,  
18 respect, honestly, sincerity, patience, generosity, graciousness, sensitivity, trust,  
19 prudence, and love.

20  
21 SECTION 4. Funds and Appropriations. – The amount as may be necessary for  
22 the initial implementation of this Act shall be taken from the discretionary funds of the  
23 Office of the President, the DepEd and the CHED and/or from the latter two agencies'  
24 appropriations for policy formulation, program planning, standards development and  
25 instructional materials development. Thereafter, such amounts such as may be  
26 necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the General  
27 Appropriations Act.

28  
29 SECTION 5. Repealing Clause. – Any provision of law or regulation inconsistent  
30 herewith is hereby repealed, revoked or modified accordingly.

31  
32 SECTION 6. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared  
33 unconstitutional or inoperative, the other provisions shall remain in force and effect.

34  
35 SECTION 7. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect immediately upon  
36 approval.

37  
38 Approved,