

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

75 MAR 11 A9:15

SENATE
S.B. No. 2685

RECEIVED BY: *f*

Introduced by SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA

AN ACT
MANDATING THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION TO
INCLUDE A SUBJECT OF MORO HISTORY, CULTURE AND IDENTITY AS
AN ELECTIVE IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Comprising of thirteen (13) Islamized ethnolinguistic groups in Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan, the Moro or Bangsamoro people together with the Lumad in Mindanao refers to the indigenous population residing on the islands long before the start of the Spanish colonial period. With more than five hundred (500) years of political and cultural heritage, the term "Moro" was the identity given to them by Spaniards following their first encounter at Manila in 1570 and patterned after the Moors which conquered Spain for 785 years. Nowadays however, the term "Bangsamoro people" is also now increasingly being used by the national government and the Organization of Islamic Countries to refer to the Muslims in the Philippines.

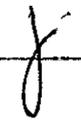
There is a clear need to require the Commission on Higher Education to develop an elective on Moro history, culture and identity as part of our long-standing efforts to promote greater appreciation of their centuries-long rich historical and cultural heritage among majority of Filipinos. It has been said that the history of the Bangsamoro people forms part of the backbone of the historical development of the country. It is about time that we recognize the rightful place of the history and identity of the Bangsamoro in the fabric of our national history.

In light of the above-mentioned reasons, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


LOREN LEGARDA

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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 "Moro History, Culture and
2 Identity Studies Act of 2015."
3

4 SECTION 2. *Definition of Term.* - As used in this Act:
5

6 (a) *Higher Education Curriculum* shall refer to the general education curriculum
7 designed for students taking up courses leading to a degree.
8

9 SECTION 3. *Inclusion of the subject of "Moro History, Culture and Identity Studies"*
10 *as an Elective in the Higher Education Curriculum.* - Pursuant to its mandate under
11 Republic Act NO. 7722, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994", the
12 Commission on Higher Education (CHED), is hereby mandated to develop a course of
13 "Moro History, Culture and Identity Studies" as an elective in the higher education
14 curriculum.
15

16 SECTION 4. *Key Content.* In the formulation and creation of the Moro History,
17 Culture and Identity Course, including the writing, printing and publication of
18 textbooks and other reading materials relative thereto, the agencies concerned shall
19 consult recognized experts on Moro History, culture and identity as well as recognized
20 resource persons on the Mindanao peace process and Muslim-Christian dialogue, and
21 shall at all times emphasize the following key points and areas:

- 1 a) An understanding of the “Mindanao problem” and the “Moro problem” as
2 well as the roots of the conflict there and its impact on the rest of the country,
3 with appropriate attention to the history of the Muslims in the Philippines.
4
5 b) The specific character of Mindanao as an island shared by these tri-peoples
6 and thus the ideal of their equality, co-existence and unity, including the
7 peculiarities of the different Moro and Lumad ethno-linguistic groups.
8
9 c) The positive relations and remembrances in history among the tri-peoples of
10 Mindanao: the Christian settlers and their descendants, the Moros or
11 Muslims, and the Lumad or indigenous highlander tribes;
12
13 d) The identification of the common origins of the people of Mindanao and of
14 the Philippines as well as other points of commonalities, including the
15 positive presentation of these peoples before the arrival of Islam and
16 Christianity.
17
18 e) The appreciation of the various cultures and ethnic identities.
19
20 f) Support for the broader Mindanao peace process which address both the
21 structural roots of the Mindanao conflict and the deep social, cultural and
22 religious cleavages there, and which consists not only of peace negotiations
23 with rebel groups but also people- to- people peace processes such as
24 promotion of Muslim-Christian dialogue and a culture of peace.
25
26 g) Fostering of the attitudes and values of peace and dialogue such as esteem,
27 respect, honesty, sincerity, patience, generosity, graciousness, sensitivity,
28 trust, prudence, and love.
29

30 **SEC. 5. *Repealing Clause.*** Any provision of law or regulation inconsistent herewith is
31 hereby repealed, revoked or modified accordingly.
32

33 **SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional
34 or inoperative, the other provisions shall remain in force and effect.
35

36 **SEC. 7. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
37 the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.
38

39 Approved,