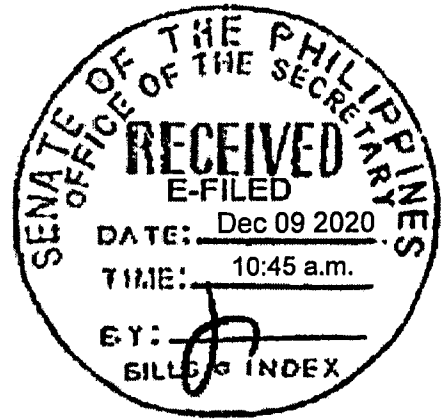


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 590

Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO ASSESS THE PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND POLICIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION IN THE COUNTRY, FOCUSING ON FUNCTIONAL LITERACY SKILLS, WITH THE END-VIEW OF CRAFTING NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES AND GAPS IN THE BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

1 WHEREAS, the enactment of Republic Act No. 10533 otherwise known as the
2 "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013" or the K to 12 Law, emphasized the State's
3 commitment to have a functional basic education in the country that will develop
4 productive and responsible Filipino citizens equipped with the essential
5 competencies, skills and values for both life-long learning and employment;

6 WHEREAS, the DepEd being the main government agency responsible in
7 ensuring access to and quality of basic education has partnered with international
8 organizations and issued several policy guidelines to improve functional literacy in
9 the country including Department Order No. 12 s. 2015 to strengthen the "Every
10 Child a Reader Program" (ECARP), which was further strengthened under Bawat
11 Bata Bumabasa (3Bs) reading program under Memorandum No. 173 s. 2019 to
12 improve the reading and numeracy skills of learners, and, Department Order No. 14
13 s. 2018 which implemented the Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory
14 assessment to learners, a classroom-based assessment tool that measures and
15 describes the learner's reading performance in both English and Filipino languages in
16 oral reading, silent reading and listening comprehension;

17 WHEREAS, despite the reforms in basic education to improve the functional
18 literacy rate, Filipino learners have fared dismally in several assessments and surveys
19 conducted whether internally – National Achievement Test, third party evaluation of
20 teacher quality, and employer feedback on their hiring difficulties, or those by
21 international organizations including the 2018 Program for International Student

1 Assessment (PISA) and the recently released 2019 United Nations Children’s Fund
2 (UNICEF)-supported Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM).

3 WHEREAS, to leverage on the insights from PISA and our national
4 assessments, the DepEd launched the *Sulong EduKalidad* which sought to
5 strengthen education reforms through the review and update of the K-12 curriculum,
6 improvement of the learning environment, upskilling and reskilling of teachers, and,
7 engagement of stakeholders for support and collaboration;

8 WHEREAS, in December 2019, the UNICEF reported that although more than
9 90% of primary school age children are enrolled in school in Southeast Asia, about
10 one in three, or 70 million children in East and Southeast Asia, fail to achieve
11 minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics and leave school without the
12 foundational skills needed for higher learning and participation in 21st century
13 economies;

14 WHEREAS, in response to the learning crisis in the Southeast Asia, the
15 UNICEF-supported Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM), anchored on
16 UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 4 which seeks to ensure inclusive and
17 equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning, was launched to assess
18 the learning performance of Grade 5 students from Cambodia, Lao People’s
19 Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines, in three
20 learning domain: reading, writing and mathematics;

21 WHEREAS, the SEA-PLM Report revealed that majority of Filipino Grade 5
22 students had a reading proficiency level comparative to those in the first years of
23 primary school, with 27% still at the level where they can only match single words to
24 an image of a familiar object or concept and 29% are at the level where they can
25 only read simple narratives and personal opinions and begin to engage with its
26 meanings;

27 WHEREAS, the SEA-PLM Report also showed that in terms of writing, only 1%
28 of Grade 5 learners in the Philippines achieved “higher levels” of proficiency – or the
29 ability to write cohesive texts with detailed ideas and a good range of appropriate
30 vocabulary – while almost half or 45% of Grade 5 learners in the Philippines were
31 assessed to have limited ability to present ideas in writing;

32 WHEREAS, for mathematical literacy, the SEA-PLM Report indicated that a
33 modest percentage of Grade 5 learners have achieved the mathematical literacy
34 skills expected at the end of primary school, while the majority are still working
35 towards mastering fundamental mathematical skills;

1 WHEREAS, the SEA-PLM Report showed that the percentage of Grade 5
2 Filipino students who achieved minimum proficiency in reading, writing and
3 mathematics was significantly lower than Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia, but
4 performed slightly better than those in Lao People’s Democratic Republic and
5 Myanmar;

6 WHEREAS, if ranked according to the percentage performing at or above the
7 SDG indicator by country, the Philippines is the second-worst performer with 10%,
8 following Lao People’s Democratic Republic with only 2%;

9 WHEREAS, among the policy recommendations in the SEA-PLM study are: (a)
10 the prioritization of early learning, (b) ensuring on-time enrolment for all students,
11 and, (c) implementation of progressive learning standards in the basic education
12 curriculum;

13 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the
14 Senate of the Philippines, to direct the appropriate Senate committees to assess the
15 programs, projects and policies of the Department of Education on improving the
16 quality of basic education in the country, taking into consideration the Southeast
17 Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 2019 results, with the end-view of crafting
18 the needed legislative interventions to address the issues and gaps in our basic
19 education system.

Approved,


SONNY ANGARA