

SENATE
S. No. **1494**

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article XIV, Section 1, states that:

Section 1. The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all;

The Constitution, Article XIV, Section 2, paragraph 4, further states that:

Section 2. The State shall:

(4) Encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs;

In order to promote information dissemination and the availability of educational materials throughout the country, Congress passed on 17 June 1994 Republic Act No. 7743, "An Act Providing for the Establishment of Congressional, City and Municipal Libraries and Barangay Reading Centers Throughout the Philippines, Appropriating the Necessary Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes".

R. A. No. 7743, Section 2, provides that:

Section 2. Establishment of Public Libraries and Reading Centers. — The National Library in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall undertake the establishment of additional public libraries to serve all congressional districts cities and municipalities in the Philippines and reading centers in every barangay except in cities or municipalities where there are existing public libraries or in barangays where there are existing reading centers: Provided, That the establishment of such libraries and reading centers shall be based on the development program of the National Library, in coordination with the development council of each city or municipality and in the case of the barangay reading centers in coordination with the respective barangay councils: Provided further, That where these public libraries and reading centers already exist the National Library shall continue to upgrade the facilities thereof.

Considering the need to educate citizens about new knowledge and information, it is necessary to enact a law that will require the establishment of one (1) public library for every barangay. This will ensure that constituents from the most basic unit of society will have ready access to a wide array of information which is necessary for their education.

This Act aims to provide for the establishment of one public library for every barangay, based on the number of its constituents.*

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

* This bill was originally filed during the Thirteenth Congress, Second Regular Session.

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1 AN ACT
2 PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 FOR EVERY BARANGAY

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

4 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Barangay Public Library
5 Act.”

6 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is a policy of the State to enhance and promote
7 education and improvement of literacy among its citizens; to promote the moral and intellectual
8 well-being of the people; and recognize the vital role of education and information dissemination
9 in nation-building by establishing a public library in every barangay. Pursuant to this policy, the
10 State shall provide for the establishment of one public library for every barangay.

11 SECTION 3. *Establishment of a Public Library in Every Barangay.* – The chairman of
12 every barangay shall coordinate with the provincial or city officer of the Department of
13 Education (DepEd) to make a feasibility study for the establishment of one public library for
14 every barangay.

15 SECTION 4. *Role of the Department of Education.* – The local office of the DepEd
16 shall be responsible for providing the standard set of reference books and other materials such as
17 but not limited to encyclopedias, dictionaries, maps and globes to every barangay public library.
18 The DepEd shall to supply the public libraries with the other books, non-book materials,
19 equipment supplies and other appropriate and relevant reference and reading materials taking
20 into consideration the needs of the community concerned.

1 SECTION 5. *Role of Barangay Officials.* – The barangay officials shall designate one
2 (1) librarian to be responsible for the management of the barangay public librarian. The local
3 barangay officials shall also coordinate yearly with the local office of the DepEd for updating the
4 materials provided in the barangay public libraries.

5 SECTION 6. *Computers in Barangay Public Libraries.* – Aside from books and other
6 materials, every barangay public library shall have at least two (2) units of computer.

7 SECTION 7. *Site for Barangay Libraries.* – The barangay chairman shall ensure the
8 presence of a suitable location to be the site of the public library. As much as possible the public
9 library shall be situated at the centre of the barangay which is the place most accessible to the
10 public, especially to students.

11 SECTION 8. *Period of Implementation.* – Within one hundred twenty (120) days from
12 the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd and the local barangay officials, in coordination with the
13 Department of Public Works and Highways, shall prepare the feasibility studies for the
14 establishment of barangay public libraries.

15 SECTION 9. *Functions of the Barangay Public Libraries.* – The barangay public
16 libraries shall have the following functions:

17 (A) To make available to the members of the community reading materials of wide array
18 including reading materials prescribed by the DepEd and national newspapers of
19 general circulation and others;

20 (B) To make available to the members of the community copies of barangay ordinances;

21 (C) To be used as a venue for audio-visual presentations, seminars and lectures in the
22 community and other kinds of exhibitions and activities aimed at increasing the
23 literacy rate by government agencies, non-governmental organizations or private
24 entities in the dissemination of information of general interest; and

25 (D) To offer such other related services in the furtherance of this Act.

1 SECTION 10. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of
2 this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment
3 into law, the local government units shall undertake the maintenance of public libraries while the
4 DepEd shall continue to provide reading materials and supplies to the said libraries and reading
5 centers.

6 SECTION 11. *Rules and Regulations.* — Within sixty (60) days from the approval of
7 this Act, the DepEd, in coordination with the DILG and the Philippine Information Agency
8 (PIA), shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations.

9 SECTION 12. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision or part thereof, is held invalid or
10 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
11 valid and subsisting.

12 SECTION 13. *Repealing Clause.* — Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
13 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent
14 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

15 SECTION 14. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
16 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.