

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE PHILIPPINES  
*First Regular Session*



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

13 JUL -1 P5:11

**SENATE**

S. No. 243

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Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

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### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Everyday left handed people struggle in a right handed world. There are many different factors in the environment that may pose problems for left handed people. The problem is that the majority of people are right handed and various products and tools are often made for right handed individuals without any thought being put into whether or not it will work for a left handed person. Being a left handed person can sometimes be difficult because almost all hand-held devices and tools are designed for right-handed individuals. In fact, most right-handed people don't even recognize that things have been made preferentially for them.

There are roughly 500 million left-handed people in the world. More than one out of ten people have been found to be left-handed with the incidence slowly rising annually.

Among the most affected left handed people are students. Left handed students are faced with many obstacles in school. Some of these problems include using a right handed desk, using scissors, using a ruler; even notebooks are made for the right handed person. Left handed students also have a hard time when it comes to sitting at a table with right handed students because they constantly bump elbows with them. Even writing poses a problem for left handed individuals because the orientation of writing pages causes them to move their hand across texts that have just been written thereby smudging the ink.

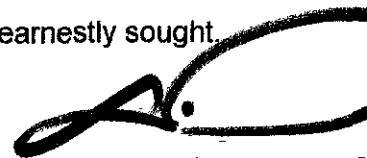
Right-sided arm school desks represent an obstacle to learning for left-handed students from pre-school through to university. Yet this is a problem that may be easily solved by better informed parents, students, teachers, school administrators, classroom designers, and staff designated to purchase furniture.

In many instances, the educational system not only fails left-handed students by inflicting a right-handed education upon them, but also by not stimulating the potentials inherent in a left-handed individual. Some studies have shown that handedness may reflect a difference in brain structure and thus may be related to differences in capacities or skills. Forcing a left-handed person to switch from the left to the right hand may bring about learning handicaps. Also, improper or inapplicable instructions on how to position paper and pencil/pen can lead to awkward, uncomfortable, and/or slow writing. Research studies indicate that there is a significant gap in teachers' knowledge relating to their left-handed pupils. Far too few teachers are aware of their left-handed students' needs and do not know how easily these needs can be met.

Indeed, there is an urgent need to provide teachers with the proper training and information so that they can address the major concerns of left-handed students. Left-handedness need never be a problem for students if teachers can guide them in the techniques appropriate for as a left-handed individual.

This humble measure is being proposed with the hope that this intervention will address the variety of concerns faced by our left-handed school children who have to struggle and face difficulties in a right-handed oriented school system.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this measure is earnestly sought.

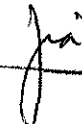
A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping 'M' followed by a horizontal line and a small dot.

**MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID**  
*Senator*

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**SENATE**

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**AN ACT**  
**INSTITUTING A COMPREHENSIVE AND HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK AND**  
**PROGRAMS FOR LEFT-HANDERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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  
2        **"Comprehensive Handedness Act of 2013".**

3  
4        **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is hereby declared the policy of the  
5        State to promote the right to education and to promote total and holistic human  
6        development. In this light, the State shall institutionalize a holistic handedness  
7        education program in the country that will be sensitive to the needs of all students,  
8        regardless of handedness.

9        Towards this end, the State shall provide comprehensive mechanisms to update  
10       and improve scientific knowledge on issues concerning handedness with the purpose of  
11       promoting better education to our students.

12  
13       **SEC. 3. Philippine Handedness Research and Training Institute**  
14       **(PHRTI).** - There is hereby established a Philippine Handedness Research and  
15       Training Institute (PHRTI), hereinafter referred to as the "Institute". The Institute shall  
16       be established as an attached agency of the Department of Science and Technology  
17       (DOST). The purpose of the Institute is to advance the scientific understanding and  
18       knowledge of handedness (left-handed and right-handed) and to help alleviate the  
19       social and educational discrimination of left-handers nationwide through research,  
20       information, education and advocacy.

21       The objective of the Philippine Handedness Research Institute (PHRTI) is to  
22       contribute to the scholarly and social understanding of the human condition of a majority

1 of right-handed individuals co-existing with left-handed ones. Towards this end, the  
2 Institute shall perform the following functions:

3 1. To facilitate and support interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and  
4 international research and training activities to advance our knowledge and  
5 understanding on the issues concerning handedness (right handedness and left  
6 handedness);

7 2. To disseminate scientifically validated and verified educational resources  
8 to the country on the issues concerning right-handed and left-handed students;

9 3. To raise the awareness on issues related to handedness;

10 4. To provide a communication forum for researchers, professionals, policy  
11 makers, school administrators, the general public, and various stakeholders to  
12 exchange information and knowledge concerning the issues on handedness (right  
13 handedness and left handedness);

14 5. To provide fora and avenues for discussion of educational and up-to-date  
15 techniques and methods in relation to the problems encountered by left-handed  
16 students;

17 6. To promote a continuing training program for teachers through  
18 information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns in order for them to be  
19 sensitized and be sensitive to the needs of the left-handed students;

20 7. To serve as an authoritative source of information regarding issues  
21 concerning handedness;

22 8. To publish and disseminate information, education, communication and  
23 training materials concerning the issues handedness, most specially the concerns of the  
24 left-handers. These materials shall include, among others, the following: Parents' Guide  
25 to Left-Handers, Teachers' Guide to Left-Handers, Employers' Guide to Left-Handers,  
26 Students' Guide to Left-Handers, the Development of Handedness in Children,  
27 Handedness & Personal Health & Safety, and Handedness & Brain Lateralization; and

28 9. To perform such other functions as mandated for under this Act.  
29

30 **SEC. 4. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign**  
31 **for Left-Handers.** – The Institute, in coordination with the Department of Education  
32 (DepEd), Commission on Higher Educations (CHED), Philippine Council for the Welfare  
33 of Children (PCWC), and Philippine Information Agency (PIA), shall conduct a year-  
34 round information, education, and communication (IEC) campaign to inform and  
35 educate teachers, school administrators, policy makers and various stakeholders  
36 involved in the education of our children.

37 Among the activities and programs to be undertaken in the IEC Campaign shall  
38 include the following:

1           1.     The Institute shall provide scholarly information on issues related to  
2 handedness (left-handedness and right-handedness). The information, education and  
3 communication (IEC) campaign of the Institute will focus on eradicating three global  
4 educational problems faced by left-handed persons, namely: the forced switching of left-  
5 handed children's hand preference; the improper teaching of left-handed writing; and  
6 the use of biased school desks and arm chairs;

7           2.     The Institute shall publish additional resources which will include series of  
8 topical articles on handedness, educational materials, and educational posters. The  
9 Institute shall also provide translations into various local dialects and easy-to-print  
10 formats to help students and individuals obtain accurate and scientific information on  
11 the proper handling of the concerns of the left-handers and to make information easily  
12 accessible to every school and parent in the country;

13          3.     The Institute shall publish the latest information, teaching aids, school equipment,  
14 and advice for helping left-handed school children in all aspects of the curriculum. The aim of  
15 the information campaign is to ensure that these children have a learning experience  
16 equal to that of their right-handed counterparts;

17          4.     The IEC will include the preparation of educational training manuals for  
18 teachers for them to easily detect left-handed students so as not to discriminate against  
19 this group of students; and

20          5.     The IEC campaigns shall ensure that left-handed children will have an  
21 equal right to receive the correct basic training as well as equipment that will enable  
22 them to reach their full potential.

23                 Recognizing the value of two-way communication for researchers, professionals,  
24 and the public and promoting such avenues of communication, the Institute shall invite  
25 comments, ideas, and suggestions regarding issues related to handedness.

26  
27                 **SEC. 5.     National Handedness Awareness Week.**     - In order to  
28 mainstream the issues and concerns of left-handed persons, the first week of  
29 September of every year is hereby declared as the "Handedness Awareness Week".  
30 This week will be celebrated nationwide so that left-handed persons all over the nation  
31 can celebrate and increase public awareness on the advantages and disadvantages of  
32 being left-handed. Said week-long activity will be spearheaded by the Philippine  
33 Handedness Research and Training Institute (PHRTI), in coordination with the  
34 Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the  
35 Philippine Information Agency (PIA).

36                 All educational institutions throughout the country are hereby enjoined to give  
37 their support to the celebration of the National Handedness Awareness Week by

1 conducting their respective activities with the active participation of all their students,  
2 faculties and staff.

3 **SEC. 6. Provision on Left-Handed Educational Materials and Facilities.**

4 -- The DepEd, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), shall  
5 formulate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to ensure that schools all  
6 over the country shall provide left-handed desks and educational materials in relation to  
7 the percentage of left-handed people in the student population and to ensure that  
8 school policies, regulations and activities are non-discriminatory to the needs of left-  
9 handed students. These school materials should include sports materials that are  
10 sensitive and fitted to be used by left-handed students during sports activities and  
11 school events. These materials should also cover equipments in music, sports, arts, and  
12 all facets of education and training.

13 Moreover, the relevant professional regulatory bodies of the government,  
14 including the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC), are hereby mandated to  
15 provide the appropriate arm chairs, desks, and educational materials for left-handed  
16 students particularly during professional board examinations so that left-handed  
17 examinees will be given equal learning experience and opportunities with that of their  
18 right-handed contemporaries.

19 **SEC. 7. Annual Conference on Handedness.** -- The Philippine  
20 Handedness Research and Training Institute (PHRTI), in coordination with the  
21 Department of Education (DepEd), Philippine Council for the Welfare of Children  
22 (PCWC), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), is hereby mandated to conduct an  
23 Annual Handedness National Conference which will be participated by school  
24 administrators, teachers, policy makers, academic researchers, and experts in the field  
25 of handedness in order to promote awareness and information exchange on the issues  
26 concerning handedness.

27 The Annual Handedness National Conference is envisioned to be an avenue  
28 where experts of various academic disciplines will share their knowledge on the issues  
29 faced by left-handers and identify ways and means in order to address said issues.

30 The National Conference will discuss and review various research and  
31 development efforts of various multidisciplinary institutions in the mainstreaming of the  
32 issues faced by left-handers. The Institute shall provide opportunities for international  
33 experts from across disciplines to address specific research topics related to  
34 handedness.

1           The proceedings of the Institute's Annual Research Conferences will be  
2 published and be made available to the public.

3  
4           **SEC. 8.       *Appropriation.*** – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions  
5 of this Act shall be included and incorporated in the annual general appropriations of the  
6 Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

7  
8           **SEC. 9.       *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).*** - Within six (6)  
9 months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DOST shall promulgate the necessary  
10 implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

11  
12           **SEC. 10.     *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and  
13 regulations, or parts thereof not consistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby  
14 repealed or modified accordingly.

15  
16           **SEC. 11.     *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision or part of this Act, or the  
17 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid, the  
18 other provisions of this Act not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

19  
20           **SEC. 12.     *Effectivity Clause.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days  
21 from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers  
22 of general circulation.

***Approved,***