

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



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE  
S. No. 1039

RECORDED BY: *ja*

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution provides:

Article 2, Section 17. The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.

Article 14, Section 2. The State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

Article 13, Section 3. The State shall afford full protection to labor.

In a society where the attainment of quality education remains a dream for the underprivileged, and where a vast number of them are forced to work at a very young age before completion of their tertiary, secondary, or even primary education, these disadvantaged workers are vulnerable to the exploitation of unscrupulous employers. The State must provide protection to those who do not know their rights and privileges in the workplace. What better way to impart this protection than by educating secondary school and college students on labor laws?

This bill proposes to integrate a mandatory separate subject or course on workers' rights for secondary school and college students. It must be noted that not all secondary school and college students will end up as workers or employees; certainly, many of them will be entrepreneurs requiring the services of workers and employees. This bill will have the dual function of educating the future employers of this country as well as making them sensitive to

the rights and privileges of their subordinates. Thus, the mandatory study of labor laws will be beneficial for both employees and employers.<sup>1</sup>

*act.*  
*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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<sup>1</sup> This bill was originally drafted by the interns of the Summer sa Senado 2005 internship program, namely: Rosendo Agda Jr., Raven Lester Garcia, Jason Omapas, Nel Salvacion, and Salie Siao. This bill was originally filed during the Fourteenth Congress, First Regular Session.

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SENATE  
S. No. 1039

RECEIVED BY: *ji*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

1 AN ACT  
2 MANDATING A SEPARATE COURSE OR SUBJECT ON WORKERS' RIGHTS  
3 FOR COLLEGE AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

*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 “Workers’ Rights in School  
5 Curriculum Act.”

6 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* –

7 (a) The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights  
8 of workers and promote their welfare.

9 (b) The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation–building and shall promote  
10 and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well–being.

11 (c) The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and  
12 sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human  
13 liberation and development.

14 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

15 (a) “Workers’ Rights” – refer to the rights of workers as specified in the Labor Code of  
16 the Philippines;

17 (b) “DepEd” – refers to the Department of Education;

18 (c) “CHED” – refers to the Commission on Higher Education;

19 (d) “College” – refers to all institutions of higher learning that offer a bachelor’s degree;

1 (e) "Civic courses" – refers to social science subjects;

2 (f) "Secondary school" – refers to schools offering secondary education consisting of four  
3 (4) years of junior high school and two (2) years of senior high school education.

4 SECTION 4. *Compulsory Teaching of Workers' Rights in School.* – The teaching of  
5 Workers' Rights shall be compulsory to all secondary school students to be incorporated in any  
6 civic course offered in the said institution. All colleges and universities, whether public or  
7 private, shall provide a compulsory three (3) unit intensive Workers' Rights course for every  
8 degree program.

9 SECTION 5. *Workers' Rights Curriculum.* – The DepEd and the CHED shall develop a  
10 Workers' Rights Curriculum conducive for secondary school and college students which shall  
11 include, but not be limited to, working conditions and rest periods, wages, health, safety, and  
12 social welfare benefits. Supplementary topics related to employment and labor issues may be  
13 added to further enhance the critical thinking skills and awareness of the students.

14 SECTION 6. *Implementing Agencies.* – The Secretary of Education and the CHED  
15 Chairperson are hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the  
16 provisions of this Act. They shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act,  
17 promulgate the rules and regulations, including those of a disciplinary nature, to carry out and  
18 enforce the provisions of this Act.

19 SECTION 7. *Educational Materials.* – It shall be obligatory on all secondary and tertiary  
20 schools and universities to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the textbook,  
21 primer, and leaflet on Workers' Rights to be issued by the DepEd and CHED. The DepEd and  
22 CHED shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of  
23 the school, college, or university.

1           SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or  
2 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain  
3 valid and subsisting.

4           SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive  
5 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent  
6 with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

7           SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) after its  
8 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,