

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



Senate
Office of the Secretary

13 AUG 15 P3:17

SENATE
S. No. 1317

RECEIVED BY: *ju*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 17 provides that:

SEC. 17. The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.

Education is always a priority among the Filipino families. The major part of families' budget goes to education. However, with poverty, more and more children drop out from school and fail to get the basic education that they need to do well in life. As a result, there is an increasing concern about the growing number of illiterate Filipinos.

To help solve this problem, there are many nongovernment organizations that provide basic education to those who cannot afford it. Many of them have spearheaded invaluable initiatives to ensure that everyone will have the necessary skills to be productive members of society. In order to maximize these efforts, we should establish a national coordinating organization that will allow the sharing of knowledge, experience, and resources among different organizations.

This bill seeks to establish a National Institute of Literacy, whose task include research and formulation and implementation of literacy programs that will ensure that nationwide efforts are properly coordinated and the best practices are uniformly implemented.*

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
as

* This bill was originally filed in the Fourteenth Congress, Second Regular Session.



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1 AN ACT
2 CREATING THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY

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

3 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “National Institute for Literacy
4 Act.”

5 SECTION 2. *Purpose.* – The purpose of this Act is to establish a National Institute for
6 Literacy that provides a national policy on literacy; coordinates literacy services and policy; and
7 serves as a national resource for literacy programs by providing the best and most current
8 information available in the area of phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and
9 reading comprehension to all educational institutions that provides literacy development
10 program.

11 SECTION 3. *Establishment.* – There is established the National Institute for Literacy
12 (hereinafter referred to as the “Institute”).

13 The Institute shall be administered under the terms of an interagency agreement entered
14 into by the Secretary of Education with the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health
15 (hereinafter referred to as the “Interagency Group”). The Interagency Group may include in the
16 Institute any research and development center, institute, or clearinghouse established within the
17 Department of Education, the Department of Labor, or the Department of Health the purpose of
18 which is determined by the Interagency Group to be related to the purpose of the Institute.

1 SECTION 4. *Offices.* – The Institute shall have offices separate from the offices of the
2 Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health.

3 SECTION 5. *Duties.* - In order to provide leadership for the improvement and expansion
4 of the system for delivery of literacy services, the Institute is authorized—

5 A. To establish a national electronic data base of information that disseminates
6 information to the broadest possible audience within the literacy and basic skills field, and that
7 includes—

8 1. effective practices in the provision of literacy and basic skills instruction,
9 including instruction in phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and
10 reading comprehension, and the integration of literacy and basic skills
11 instruction with occupational skills training;

12 2. public and private literacy and basic skills programs, and national, and local
13 policies, affecting the provision of literacy services at the national, and local
14 levels;

15 3. opportunities for technical assistance, meetings, conferences, and other
16 opportunities that lead to the improvement of literacy and basic skills services;
17 and

18 4. a communication network for literacy programs, providers, social service
19 agencies, and students;

20 B. To coordinate support for the provision of literacy and basic skills services across
21 government agencies and at the national and local levels;

22 C. To coordinate the support of reliable and replicable research and development on
23 literacy and basic skills in families across government agencies and to carry out basic and
24 applied research and development on topics that are not being investigated by other
25 organizations or agencies, such as the special literacy needs of individuals with learning
26 disabilities;

1 D. To collect and disseminate information on methods of advancing literacy that
2 show great promise, including phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading
3 comprehension;

4 E. To provide policy and technical assistance to national and local entities for the
5 improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy;

6 F. To fund a network of literacy resource centers to assist national and local public
7 and private nonprofit efforts to improve literacy by—

- 8 1. encouraging the coordination of literacy services;
- 9 2. enhancing the capacity of national and local organizations to provide literacy
10 services; and
- 11 3. serving as a link between the Institute and providers of literacy activities for
12 the purpose of sharing information, data, research, expertise, and literacy
13 resources;

14 G. To coordinate and share information with national organizations and associations
15 that are interested in literacy and workforce investment activities;

16 H. To advise the legislative and executive departments and agencies regarding the
17 development of policy with respect to literacy and basic skills; and

18 I. To undertake other activities that lead to the improvement of the country's literacy
19 delivery system and that complement other such efforts being undertaken by public and private
20 agencies and organizations.

21 SECTION 6. *Priority.* – The Institute shall give priority to adults and individuals with
22 disabilities in the performance of its duties as provided in this Act.

23 SECTION 7. *Grants, Contracts, and Cooperative agreements.* – The Institute may award
24 grants to, or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, individuals, public or private
25 institutions, agencies, organizations, or consortia of such institutions, agencies, or organizations
26 to carry out the activities of the Institute.

1 SECTION 8. *National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board.* – There shall be a National
2 Institute for Literacy Advisory Board (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”), which shall consist
3 of ten (10) individuals appointed by the President.

4 SECTION 9. *Composition.* – The Board shall be comprised of individuals who are not
5 otherwise public officers or employees and who are representative of entities such as—

- 6 A. Literacy organizations and providers of literacy services, including nonprofit
7 providers, providers of English literacy programs and services, social service organizations, and
8 eligible providers receiving assistance under this subtitle;
- 9 B. Businesses that have demonstrated interest in literacy programs;
- 10 C. Literacy students, including literacy students with disabilities;
- 11 D. Experts in the area of literacy research;
- 12 E. Local governments; and
- 13 F. Representatives of employees, including representatives of labor organizations.

14 SECTION 10. *Duties of the Board.* – The Board shall –

- 15 A. make recommendations concerning the appointment of the Director of the
16 Institute;
- 17 B. provide independent advice on the operation of the Institute; and
- 18 C. receive reports from the Interagency Group and the Director.

19 SECTION 11. *Recommendations.* – The Interagency Group shall consider the
20 recommendations of the Board in planning the goals of the Institute and in the implementation of
21 any programs to achieve the goals. If the Board’s recommendations are not followed, the
22 Interagency Group shall provide a written explanation to the Board concerning actions the
23 Interagency Group takes that are inconsistent with the Board’s recommendations, including the
24 reasons for not following the Board’s recommendations with respect to the actions. The Board
25 may also request a meeting of the Interagency Group to discuss the Board’s recommendations.

1 SECTION 12. *Literacy Leadership.* – The Institute, in consultation with the Board, may
2 award fellowships, with such stipends and allowances that the Director considers necessary, to
3 outstanding individuals pursuing careers in literacy in the areas of instruction, management,
4 research, or innovation.

5 Fellowships awarded under this section shall be used, under the auspices of the Institute,
6 to engage in research, education, training, technical assistance, or other activities to advance the
7 field of literacy, including the training of volunteer literacy providers at the national or local
8 level.

9 SECTION 13. *Interns and volunteers.* – The Institute, in consultation with the Board,
10 may award paid and unpaid internships to individuals seeking to assist the Institute in carrying
11 out its mission. Subject to applicable labor laws, the Institute may accept and use voluntary and
12 uncompensated services as the Institute determines necessary.

13 SECTION 14. *Gifts, Bequests and Devices.* – The Institute may accept, administer, and
14 use gifts or donations of services, money, or property, whether real or personal, tangible or
15 intangible.

16 The Board shall establish written rules setting forth the criteria to be used by the Institute
17 in determining whether the acceptance of contributions of services, money, or property whether
18 real or personal, tangible or intangible, would reflect unfavorably upon the ability of the Institute
19 or any employee to carry out the responsibilities of the Institute or employee, or official duties, in
20 a fair and objective manner, or would compromise the integrity or the appearance of the
21 integrity of the Institute's programs or any official involved in those programs.

22 SECTION 15. *Report.* – The Institute shall submit a report annually to the appropriate
23 committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each report submitted under this
24 section shall include—

1 A. a comprehensive and detailed description of the Institute's operations, activities,
2 financial condition, and accomplishments in the field of literacy for the period covered by the
3 report; and

4 B. a description of how plans for the operation of the Institute for the succeeding
5 fiscal year will facilitate achievement of the goals of the Institute and the goals of the literacy
6 programs within the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of
7 Health.

8 SECTION 16. *Appropriations.* –The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
9 this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Education under the
10 current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for its full
11 implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act as a distinct and
12 separate item.

13 SECTION 17. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
14 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
15 valid and subsisting.

16 SECTION 18. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
17 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent
18 with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

19 SECTION 19. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
20 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,