

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION )

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SENATE

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S. B. No. 1018

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

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### EXPLANATORY

The Philippines, being an archipelago, has developed a wide variation of what we call "Filipinos". Influence by distinct environments, different political and cultural heritage, and disparity in economic conditions, the Filipino is usually a subjective representative of the limited space of his island of origin or locality.

As result, the Filipino is oftentimes quick to commit the error of judging others and results to misunderstanding by his brothers and sisters from other islands and/or regions. This attitude has seemingly divided the Filipinos as a people. Parochialism still pervades in our culture and values, not because it is necessary the Filipinos is yet to discover what *unity* stands for.

Furthermore, the Filipino's lack of appreciation for his own history and culture has made him "a stranger in his own country," alienated from the nation's rich cultural heritage.

This bill seeks to promote a "Balik-Aral Program" in the country with the end in view of educating the Filipino youth to discover his nation's history and culture. The proposed Program will hopefully replicate the success of other youth exchange programs in other countries where national cohesion, mutual respect, and voluntary community service are the noble goals.

It is also hoped that, with this kind of program, domestic tourism will be encouraged and promoted in the country.

  
JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA  
Senator

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AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING A BALIK-ARAL PROGRAM FOR REGIONAL YOUTH LEADERS  
THEREBY PROMOTING DOMESTIC TOURISM IN THE COUNTRY  
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

*Be enacted by the Senate and the House of Representative of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. **Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Balik-Aral Program of 2004”.

SECTION 2. **Declaration of Policies.** –

- a) The state shall nurture unity, friendship and brotherhood among the Filipino youth being indispensable to national renewal, unity and peace.
- b) The State shall inculcate in the Filipino youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.
- c) The State shall give priority to the youth’s advancement in education, arts, culture and environment causes. It shall harness the youth’s idealism in the attainment of a progressive nation and in the preservation of its democratic principles.
- d) The State shall encourage domestic tourism as a vehicle to nation-building and economic development.

SECTION 3. **Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act, the term:

Sangguniang Kabataan, at all levels, public schools/ state colleges and universities, and all other youth organizations registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

- d) Consult with the National Youth Commission in integrating program content in the over-all design of the Balik aral program, replacing the success of other youth exchange programs in other countries.
- e) Designate program implementors on specific tasks, and monitor the progress of all planned and on-going- projects and/or activities within the scope of the Balik Aral Program.
- f) Organize the composition of the National Organization Committee (NOC) which includes all participating government agencies and instrumentality's, local government units, voluntary youth organizations and participating units.
- g) Provide the necessary and appropriate funding support services to the National Organizing Committee (NOC) tasked to directly implement the said Program.
- h) Develop and implement specific policies encouraging the participation in the program of the private sector, non-government organizations, community-based youth groups and reputable international youth organization.
- i) Propose and recommend incentives necessary and appropriate to institutions, organizations, and other participating units in the activities and projects in line with the Balik Aral Program; and
- j) Perform such other functions necessary to achieve the objectives of this Act.

**SECTION 5. Program Concept.** – The Balik-Aral Program shall consist of, but not limited to the following:

- a) **Activities on Board the Ship.** – Introduction of each region, discussion, club activities, Solid Group activities and presentation, sports and other recreational activities, studies for a safe voyage and other activities, as approved by COC.

- b) **Activities in Municipality/City/Province/Region Visited.** – Courtesy calls and receptions, homestays, visit to various institutions, lectures, participation on volunteer and/or community work, area tour and/or eco-tourism, and other relevant activities, as approved by the NOC.
- c) **Working Language.** – Filipino is the working language during the course of the program, however, English can be used as a secondary medium of communication.
- d) **Ship.** – The National Organizing Committee (NOC) shall charter a reputable shipping liner for the program proper.
- e) **Organization On Board Ship.** – There be an Administration and Administrative Staff (AAS) consisting of an official from DOT, NYC, three (3) from NOC, five any participating government agency and/or department, and two (2) from the participating youth organization at the national level. It shall manage the conduct of the day affairs on board the Ship.

**SECTION 6. *Responsibilities of the National Organizing Committee (NOC).* –**

- a) Formulate criteria in the selection of four (4) regional youth participants, which consists of two (2) males and two (2) females, and one (1) RL for the regional delegation.
- b) Determine and approve the schedule and route of the Program.
- c) Designate in rotation one (1) host city or municipalities in Metro-Manila representing the National Capital Region and one (1) municipality/province/city/region among the three (3) major island: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao as the places to visit.
- d) Coordinate the activities and schedule with the host municipality/city/province/region for proper implementation.
- e) Provide the necessary support services and assistance to the needs of the host municipality/city/province/region.

- f) Provide support for the requirements of the participating youth and national leader.
- g) Approve proposals and recommendations made by the host municipality/city/province/region, participating youth organizations, participating units, and other relevant matters, which concerns the Program.
- h) Create and organize a national and/or regional screening committee (NSC and/or RSC) that will select and recommend the finalists who shall be eligible for the Program. The NSC shall consist of the following, namely: an official representative from DOT, an official from the National Youth Commission, an official from the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, an official from a SEC-registered national youth organization and one from the private sector. The RSC shall be basically the same composition as the NSC except that the private sector shall be represented by a locally-based youth organization.
- i) Organize a National Secretariat (MS) to provide logistical support, secretarial services, and other relevant support to the NOC.

SECTION 7. **Composition.** – The NOC shall be composed of the following, namely:

- a) One (1) Chairperson, headed by the Secretary of the Department of Tourism,
- b) Two (2) Vice-Chairpersons, headed by the Chairperson of the National Youth Commission and one from the private sector,
- c) One (1) Member, headed by the participating national youth organization, and,
- d) One (1) Member from each of the three (3) participating major island groups

SECTION 8. **Responsibilities of Participating Youth Organizations.** –

- a) Provide the back-up support for the NOC, NS, host municipality/city/province/regions for specific objectives, which include,

among others, the following: homestay, volunteer and/or community work, and other related activities as defined under this Act.

- b) Propose and recommend institutions to visit, discussion themes, sports and recreation activities, club activities, and any other pertinent activities on board the ship.
- c) Participate in the selection of youth participants and leaders in the regions.

**SECTION 9. *Information Management Role of the DOT and Other Participating Government Agencies.* –**

- a) A nation-wide information campaign shall be initiated by the DOT in coordination with the Philippine Information Agency and shall be supported by the participating government agencies.
- b) There shall be two official publication in one newspaper of general circulation about the Program: one is the opening of application which includes, among others, period, criteria, deadline, and other relevant information; and, the profile of the successful participating youths and youth leaders from the regions including the program schedule.

**SECTION 10. *Incentives to Participating Private Organizations/Companies.***

– The following incentives shall be provided for by the NOC to the participating organization:

- a) Invitation from NOC to send an observer for the entire duration of the Program.
- b) Other benefits and/or incentives which the NOC may deem necessary.

**SECTION 11. *Appropriations.*** – The funds necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged to the appropriation of the DOT under the current General Appropriation Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 12. **Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,