

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session

SENATE
P.S. Res 622



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Introduced by Senator Poe

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY ON THE DECLINE IN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF FILIPINO STUDENTS IN THE LIGHT OF REPORTS OF NARROWING ADVANTAGE OF FILIPINO GRADUATES IN THE GLOBAL LANGUAGE, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ASSESSING PRESENT CURRICULA IN ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL AND ENCOURAGING TRAININGS AND OTHER LEARNING APPROACHES

WHEREAS, under the 1987 Constitution, the State "recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs" (Article II, Section 13);

WHEREAS, the State "recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation-building" (Article II, Section 17);

WHEREAS, 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" (Article II, Section 24);

WHEREAS, English is commonly referred to as the *lingua franca* or the commonly used language in the world, a testament to the fact that English is the language of diplomacy, business and education;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is regarded as one of the friendliest countries for English speakers and the favorite destination of those who want to learn English, such as Koreans¹ and Chinese, among others;

WHEREAS, the tremendous growth of the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry in the Philippines—the Southeast Asian nation’s economic lifeline—is mainly due to the fact that English is the preferred medium of communication in the workplace and medium of instruction in schools, making the country the top destination of call centers in the world;

WHEREAS, the wide use of English and excellent command of spoken English continue to be the biggest advantage the Philippines has, but a recent study showed that Filipino graduates’ English edge is seen narrowing²;

WHEREAS, according to results of a two-year study conducted by Hopkins International Partners, Filipino university graduates averaged 630 on English proficiency based on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), an outcome lower than the competency requirement for taxi drivers in Dubai, United Arab Emirates;

WHEREAS, Filipino graduates also averaged a Common European Framework of Reference of Language (CEFR) grade of B1, lower than the CEFR B2 proficiency target set for high school graduates in Thailand and Vietnam;

WHEREAS, the same report indicated that the Filipino university graduates’ median score was comparable to the proficiency of 5th and 6th grade students in native English speaking countries such as the US and the United Kingdom;

WHEREAS, the study said that BPO agents are expected to have a score of 850 in TOEIC;

WHEREAS, amid the dismal performance of the Filipino university graduates in the English proficiency metrics, the government is encouraged to adopt global English standards to improve citizens’ communication skills;

WHEREAS, the academe should review current curricula to improve teaching and learning of English, while the private sector, including non-government organizations, must step up efforts to improve the competitiveness of the Filipino labor pool;

¹ Hicap, Jonathan M. Koreans Flock to the Philippines to Learn English. Korea Times website. Retrieved from http://m.koreatimes.co.kr/phone/news/view.jsp?req_newsidx=51729

² Enerio, Dane Angelo M. (2018, February 9). BusinessWorld website. PHL graduates’ English edge seen narrowing Retrieved from <http://bworldonline.com/phl-graduates-english-edge-seen-narrowing/>

BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES, to direct the appropriate Senate committees to conduct an inquiry on the decline in English proficiency of Filipino students in the light of reports of narrowing advantage of Filipino graduates in the global language, with the end in view of assessing present curricula in elementary and high school and encouraging trainings and other learning approaches.

Adopted,


GRACE POE