

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

SENATE



Senate
Office of the Secretary

Senate Bill No. 636

'19 JUL 22 A9:06

Introduced by Senator FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN

AN ACT
INTEGRATING VOTER EDUCATION IN THE JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL CURRICULA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 3(2), Article XIV of the Constitution provides that all educational institutions "shall inculcate patriotism and nationalism, foster love of humanity, respect for human rights, appreciation of the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country, teach the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline, encourage critical and creative thinking, broaden scientific and technological knowledge, and promote vocational efficiency."

There is a need to institute political and electoral reforms to ensure the broadest and most effective participation of Filipino citizens in the political and electoral processes. One of these key reforms is to integrate voter education in the curricula of junior and senior high school students to develop politically mature youth who are conversant with the processes and to ultimately prepare them to actively and maturely participate in nation building.

This bill aims to empower the youth by integrating voter education in the junior and senior high school curricula to deepen their understanding of the political and electoral processes and lay the foundation for revitalizing Philippine democracy.

The approval of this bill is, hence, earnestly sought.

FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "*Compulsory Voter*
2 *Education Act of 2019.*"

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to enlighten citizens on
4 their right to vote and to inculcate in them the duty to preserve the integrity of the
5 electoral process through the educational system.

6 **SEC. 3. Definition of Voter Education.** - As used in this Act, "*Voter education*" means
7 dissemination of information, materials and programs designed to inform citizens about
8 the specifics and mechanics of the voting process. It includes providing information on
9 the right to suffrage, its importance, and the proper exercise thereof, as well as
10 information on who is eligible to vote; where and how to register; how electors can check
11 the voter lists to ensure they have been duly included; what type of elections are being
12 held; where, when and how to vote; who the candidates are; and how to file complaints.

13 **SEC. 4. Integration of Voter Education in the Junior and Senior High School**
14 **Curricula.** - Voter Education shall be integrated by the Department of Education (DepEd)
15 in the junior and senior high school curricula, effective at the start of the school year
16 immediately following one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act. The Commission on

1 Elections (COMELEC) shall assist DepEd in preparing teachers during the one-year
2 transition period by conducting seminars and trainings on the electoral system and
3 process. COMELEC shall certify that the teacher, after attending such seminars and
4 trainings, is qualified to teach topics relating to the electoral system and process.

5 **SEC. 5. *Voter Education Syllabus.* -**

6 A. Voter education. - The main syllabus shall include, but not limited to, the
7 following thematic areas:

8 1. Suffrage. - This area introduces to students the right to vote accorded
9 by the Constitution, and other rights enabling citizens to participate in
10 the conduct of public affairs;

11 2. Electoral system and process. - This area deals with the general
12 principles underlying the present electoral system, and legislation
13 regulating all the phases of election namely, pre-election, election
14 proper, and post-election. It discusses the proper conduct of elections
15 including registration, casting of ballots, and counting of votes;

16 3. Educated voting. - This area focuses on the attitude and behavior a voter
17 must adopt to ensure fair, free, and honest elections. It emphasizes the
18 importance of participating in elections in a manner that shall stimulate
19 and strengthen democracy.

20 B. Supplementary topics. - This curriculum should have additional topics and
21 studies on the political system of the country, the contextual background of
22 elections, current political, social, and economic issues affecting the elections,
23 and the possible solutions to address them.

24 C. Other subject matters. - Other areas of voter education may be included in the
25 syllabus.

26 **SEC. 6. *Implementing Agency.* -** The Secretary of Education is hereby authorized
27 and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the provisions of this Act. The

1 Secretary of Education shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act,
2 promulgate the rules and regulations, including those of a disciplinary nature, to carry
3 out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

4 **SEC. 7. *Educational Materials.*** - It shall be obligatory on all schools offering
5 secondary education to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the
6 textbooks, primers, and leaflets on voter education to be issued by the DepEd. The DepEd
7 shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of
8 the school.

9 **SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or
10 unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full
11 force and effect.

12 **SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and
13 rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended
14 accordingly.

15 **SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
16 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general
17 circulation.

Approved,