



20 JAN 21 A8 52

SENATE

S. B. NO. 1282

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by **SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**

AN ACT INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (SHS) CURRICULUM

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Waste disposal problems, water and air pollution, deforestation, biodiversity loss, climate change, and countless other environment issues plague the Philippines. The poor¹ and those whose livelihoods depend on agriculture, coastal ecosystems, food systems feel most intensely the impact of such problems.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), environmental problems caused around 25% of all deaths worldwide in 2012, and across regions, the highest number of related deaths was recorded in the Southeast Asia (3.8 million deaths).² Deaths due to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as stroke, heart diseases, and cancers are largely attributable to air pollution, while other deaths such as those due to malaria and diarrhea are attributable to poor sanitation and waste management.³

From a climate standpoint, the Philippines is among the countries that stand to lose the largest, almost double the global average loss.⁴ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change points that due to the unique geography and climatology, low per capita incomes, and urbanization patterns of Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand, they are estimated to lose 6.7% of their combined Gross Domestic Product in 2100 if the current trend in environmental degradation continues.⁵

In this light, this bill seeks to integrate environmental education in the Senior High School curriculum. This is in recognition of the fact that educational attainment

¹ Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016.

² 2016, March 15. "An estimated 12.6 million deaths each year are attributable to unhealthy environments." Available at <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/15-03-2016-an-estimated-12-6-million-deaths-each-year-are-attributable-to-unhealthy-environments> (date last accessed: January 8, 2020).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Sovacool, Benjamin K. Environmental Issues, Climate Changes, Energy Security in Developing Asia. Asian Development Bank Economics Working Paper Series, June 2014. Available at <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/42604/ewp-399.pdf> (date last accessed: January 8, 2020).

⁵ Ibid.

is considered by a number of studies as the single strongest determinant of public awareness of environmental issues such as climate change.

Environmental education seeks to enhance awareness and sensitivity of students on global and local environmental issues and engages them into taking actions to sustain and advance the quality of our environment. This measure is also in line with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 2030 vision of reducing environmental risks and increasing resilience of societies and the environmental as a whole.

Indeed, better understanding of the environment is seen to improve participation of citizens in active environmental protection and thereby contribute to the reduction of the country's vulnerabilities to impacts of environmental degradation.

Thus, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


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IN THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (SHS) CURRICULUM**

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

1 **SEC. 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Environmental Education in
2 Senior High School Act.”
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – The Constitution provides that the State shall
5 protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in
6 accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. Pursuant to this, State shall formulate
7 and institutionalize environmental policies that protect the environment against
8 degradation and deterioration, and shall ensure that such policies are widely
9 disseminated to all its citizens.
10

11 **SEC. 3. Integration of Environmental Education in Senior High School (SHS)**
12 **Curriculum.** – All public and private senior high schools (SHS) are mandated to
13 integrate Environmental Education in the core SHS subjects (i) Disaster Readiness
14 and Risk Reduction and (ii) Earth Science for those under the STEM Strand, or (i)
15 Earth and Life Science and (ii) Physical Science for those under the other SHS
16 tracks; *Provided*, That in the event that there shall be an amendment to the K-12
17 curriculum and the list of core subjects taken up by SHS students, the Department of
18 Education (DepEd) shall ensure that Environmental Education is integrated in
19 another core subject.
20

21 Environmental Education shall increase students’ understanding, awareness, and
22 sensitivity to the environment and environmental challenges, and improve the
23 attitudes and motivation towards maintaining environmental quality. It shall include,
24 but not be limited, to the teaching of the following:
25

- 1 (i) how natural environments function and how human activities increase
2 hazards to disasters, environmental degradation, and resource depletion,
3 among others;
4
5 (ii) relevant national and local environmental laws;
6
7 (iii) pressing global and local environmental issues; and
8
9 (iv) measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of climate change.

10
11 **SEC. 4. Implementing Rules and Guidelines.** – Within sixty (60) days from the
12 effectivity of this Act, DepEd, in consultation with appropriate government agencies
13 and other relevant stakeholders, shall formulate the rules and regulations to
14 effectively implement the provisions of this Act.
15

16 **SEC. 5. Separability Clause.** – Any portion or provisions of this Act that may be
17 declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not have the effect of nullifying other
18 portions and provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions or provisions can
19 still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.
20

21 **SEC. 6. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations and
22 administrative regulations, or any parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this
23 Act are hereby revoked, repealed or modified accordingly.
24

25 **SEC. 7. Effectivity Clause.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
26 publication in at least two (2) national papers of general circulation or in the *Official*
27 *Gazette*.
28

29
30 **Approved,**