



20 JAN 23 AIO 59

SENATE
S.B. No. 1292

REC'D

INTRODUCED BY **SENATOR VICENTE C. SOTTO III**

**AN ACT
PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH EDUCATION
AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN ORDER TO INCREASE SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY AMONG THE YOUTH, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Deforestation, frequent flooding, soil erosion, landslides, and pollution are environmental issues in the country that have been persisting for decades and passed on to many generations. The constant challenge to this day is arriving at feasible and long-term solutions in addressing their worsening effects.

In harmony with the Constitutional mandate to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology, this legislation seeks to provide a holistic approach that aims to bring about an eventual sustainable solution. First and foremost, environmental consciousness and literacy need reinforcement. Groundwork begins in schools. Environmental education must have as much weight as any other subjects included in every student's curriculum as it will lay the foundation and necessarily complement the existing positive efforts implemented over the years. As stewards of succeeding generations, it is essential to develop among the youth a deeper understanding of the environmental issues confronting us to effectively engage them today and enable them to take informed action in the future.

Another objective of this bill is to strengthen the sense of social responsibility and proactiveness among Filipino youth. Toward this end, schools and colleges must establish tree-seedling nurseries or "**Punlaan**" within their premises. It shall serve as a place where students from grade levels 1-11 and those enrolled in the National Service Training Program (NSTP) class can plant seedlings of native tree species and monitor its growth until such time it becomes suitable for permanent planting. These, then, will be planted by the

graduating students in specific areas, which will be recommended by the local government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Furthermore, this legislation aims to work in harmony with and ensure the implementation of existing environmental laws such as but not limited to Republic Act No. 10176, otherwise known as the "Arbor Day Act of 2012." It also seeks to encourage participation in the greening initiatives of the government, private sector, and civil society organizations in the country because it is by combining our efforts that we can achieve more.

Thus, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



VICENTE C. SOTTO III



SENATE
S.B. No. 1292

20 JAN 23 AIO :59

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VICENTE C. SOTTO III

AN ACT
PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH EDUCATION
AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN ORDER TO INCREASE SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY AMONG THE YOUTH, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

*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
2 “*Environmental Responsibility Act*”.

3 **SECTION 2. Statement of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to adopt
4 sustainable measures that will protect and advance the right of the people to a
5 balanced and healthful ecology. It also recognizes the vital role of Filipino youth
6 in this endeavor as stewards of nature for future generations. Thus, educational
7 institutions are mandated to intensify and ensure the integration of
8 environmental education in the curriculum they implement. Awareness,
9 coupled with actual engagement in greening activities, is the most effective
10 means to shape and ingrain in young minds a stronger sense of social
11 responsibility and proactiveness.

12 **SECTION 3. Integration of Environmental Education in the**
13 **Curriculum of All Students From Elementary to College Level.** –
14 Environmental studies shall form part of the regular Science curriculum for

1 students from elementary to high school level while it shall be incorporated in
2 the National Service Training Program (NSTP) of students in college level.

3 **SECTION 4. *Establishment of a Tree-seedling Nursery.*** – All schools
4 and colleges shall establish a seedling nursery hereinto referred as **“Punlaan”**.
5 It will be a place where tree seedlings of native species shall be grown until such
6 time it becomes ready for permanent planting.

7 **SECTION 5. *Planting of Seedlings by Grades 1-11 and College***
8 ***Students.*** – Each student from grade levels 1-11 and college students that are
9 taking up *National Service Training Program (NSTP)* shall be required to plant
10 and ensure the growth of at least two (2) tree-seedlings per year in the
11 established seedling nursery of their school or college.

12 **SECTION 8. *Tree-planting as a Mandatory Requirement for***
13 ***Graduation.*** – All graduating students from elementary, high school and
14 college shall be required to plant at least ten (10) trees as a mandatory
15 requirement for their graduation. For this activity, they shall utilize tree-
16 seedlings from the **“Punlaan”** which are ready for permanent planting. In case
17 the number of tree-seedling available at the time of planting is insufficient, the
18 school or college may source it from other government seedling banks.

19 As far as practicable, the time of tree planting shall coincide with the
20 designated Arbor Day of the particular province, city, or municipality that has
21 jurisdiction over the school or college, as mandated by Republic Act No. 10176,
22 otherwise known as the “Arbor Day Act of 2012.”

23 **SECTION 9. *Preference for Native Species.*** – The species to be planted
24 should be compatible with the location, climate and topography of the area with
25 preference for native species.

1 **SECTION 10. Location.** – Subject to the recommendation of the
2 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the trees to be
3 planted under this Act shall be located in any of the following areas:

- 4 a. Forestlands
- 5 b. Mangrove and protected areas
- 6 c. Ancestral domains
- 7 d. Civil and military reservations
- 8 e. Urban areas under the greening plan of the LGUs
- 9 f. Inactive and abandoned mine sites; and
- 10 g. Other suitable land

11 **SECTION 11. Management and Supervision of Tree-seedling Nursery.**
12 – **“Punlaan”** shall be under the overall management and supervision of the
13 particular school or college.

14 **SECTION 12. Harmonization with Other Greening Efforts.** – The
15 provisions of this Act shall be consistent with the existing greening efforts of the
16 government, private sector, and civil society organizations in the country.
17 Schools and colleges may work jointly and/or enter into a partnership
18 agreement with said agencies and organizations with the end to attain the
19 objectives of this Act.

20 **SECTION 13. Inter-agency Greening Committee.** – A greening
21 committee is hereby created consisting of an inter-agency body composed of the
22 following:

- 23 a. Secretaries of the Department of Education (DepEd) and the
24 Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as Co-Chairpersons;
- 25 b. Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
26 (DENR) as Vice-Chairperson;
- 27 c. Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) or its
28 duly authorized representative as Member;
- 29 d. Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government
30 (DILG) or its duly authorized representative as Member;

- 1 e. Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) or its
2 duly authorized representative as Member;
- 3 f. Secretary of the Department of Health or its duly authorized
4 representative as Member;
- 5 g. Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) or its duly
6 authorized representative as Member; and
- 7 h. Secretary of Department of Agriculture (DA) or its duly authorized
8 representative as Member.

9 The responsibilities of these agencies shall include the following:

- 10 1. Nursery establishment;
- 11 2. Seedling production and site preparation;
- 12 3. Site identification;
- 13 4. Monitoring and evaluation;
- 14 5. Provision of security, transportation, fire protection amenities and
15 medical support;
- 16 6. Technical support and extension services;
- 17 7. Other duties and responsibilities appurtenant to the proper
18 implementation of this Act.

19 **SECTION 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The DepEd,
20 CHED, DENR, DBM, DILG, DOST, DOH, DOTr, and DA shall formulate and
21 promulgate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) necessary to
22 implement this Act within sixty (60) days after approval.

23 **SECTION 15. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to carry out the
24 provisions of this Act shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations
25 Act.

26 **SECTION 16. *Separability Clause.*** – In case any provision of this
27 Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration shall have no
28 effect in the validity or constitutionality of the remaining provisions hereof.

1 **SECTION 17. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, rules and
2 regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed
3 or amended accordingly.

4 **SECTION 17. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
5 after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general
6 circulation.

Approved,