

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

5 AUG 23 P2:58

SENATE
S.B. No. 2096

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill was originally drafted by the interns of the Summer Sa Senado 2005 internship program, namely: Rosendo Agda Jr.; Raven Lester Garcia; Jason Omapas; Nel Salvacion; and Salie Siao.

The Constitution provides that:

Article 2, Section 17. The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.

Article 14, Section 2. The State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

Article 13, Section 3. The State shall afford full protection to labor.

In a society where the attainment of quality education remains a dream for the underprivileged, and where a vast number of them are forced to work at a very young age before completion of their tertiary, secondary – or even primary – education, these disadvantaged workers are vulnerable to the exploitation of unscrupulous employers. The State must provide protection to those who do not know their rights and privileges in the workplace. What better way to impart this protection than by educating high school and college students on labor laws?

This bill proposes to integrate a mandatory separate subject or course on workers' rights for high school and college students. It must be noted that not all high school and college students will end up as workers or employees; certainly, many of them will be businessmen or entrepreneurs requiring the services of workers and employees. This bill will have the dual function of educating the future employers of this country as well, making them sensitive to the rights and privileges of their subordinates. Thus, the mandatory study of labor laws will be beneficial for both employees and employers.


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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AN ACT
MANDATING A SEPARATE COURSE OR SUBJECT ON WORKERS' RIGHTS
FOR COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This act shall be known as “Workers’ Rights in School Curriculum Act of 2005.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* –

(a) The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

(a) “Workers’ Rights” - refer to the rights of workers as specified in the Labor Code of the Philippines;

(b) “DepEd” – refers to the Department of Education;

(c) “CHED” – refers to the Commission on Higher Education;

(d) “High school” – refers to secondary level from first year to fourth year;

(e) “College” – refers to all institutions of higher learning that offer a bachelor’s degree;

(f) "Civic courses" – refers to social science subjects.

SECTION 4. *Compulsory Teaching of Workers' Rights in School.* –The teaching of Workers' Rights shall be compulsory to all high school students to be incorporated in any civic course offered in the said institution. All colleges and universities, whether public or private, shall provide a compulsory 3-unit intensive Workers' Rights course for every degree program.

SECTION 5. *Workers' Rights Curriculum.* – The DepEd and the CHED shall develop a Workers' Rights Curriculum conducive for high school and college students which shall include, but not limited to, working conditions and rest periods, wages, health, safety, and social welfare benefits, etc.

Supplementary topics related to employment and labor issues may be added to further enhance the critical thinking skills and awareness of the students.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Agencies.* – The DepEd Secretary and the CHED Chairperson are hereby authorized and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the provisions of this Act. The DepEd and CHED shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate rules and regulations, including those of disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Educational Materials.* – It shall be obligatory on all secondary and tertiary schools and universities to keep in their libraries an adequate number of copies of the textbook, primer, and leaflet on Workers' Rights to be issued by the DepEd and CHED. The DepEd and CHED shall determine the adequacy of the number of books, depending upon the enrollment of the school, college or university.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* -This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,