


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

7 JUN 30 P4:11

SENATE
S.B. No. 228

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish assistance to and improve the state of the madrasah system in the country today.

Section 2, paragraph 2 of Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution states that "the State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society. Pursuant to this, the State has a responsibility to strengthen and develop the Philippine madrasah system. Today, Madrasah institutions have evolved into three types:

1. *Traditional or Weekend Madrasah* - classes are held on weekends (Saturdays and Sundays) only or on days agreed upon by the teachers and students. There is no formal curriculum, hence it is non-graded and may have multi-age groupings. The hiring of teachers requires simple qualification like graduates of a Madrasah or an Imam (Muslim religious leader). The students on this type of Madrasah are also likely the students enrolled in public schools.
2. *Developmental or Formal Madrasah* - offers hierarchically structured education and sequential learning generally attuned with the formal education system. They offer kindergarten, primary, and secondary education.
3. *Integrated Madrasah* - offers the public school curriculum and Arabic literacy, as well as, Islamic religious subjects.

According to International Religious Freedom Report 2003 released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor of the United States, there are at least 1,569 Islamic schools (madrasahs) across the Philippines. Of these, 53 percent are located in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

The said Report likewise reveal that there are 1,140 madrasahs seeking financial assistance from local and foreign donors that are registered with the Office on Muslim Affairs, while only 35 are registered with the Department of Education. This situation is due primarily to the inability of the madrasahs to meet the Department of Education's accreditation standards for curricula and adequate facilities.

That is why this bill mandates the Department of Education (DepEd), in close coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Office of Muslim

Affairs (OMA), and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), to provide mechanisms to improve the quality of Madrasah education as well as open the opportunity for more Muslim students to benefit from said educational system by maximizing the use of existing resources of private education.

Moreover, this proposed measure also aims to provide financial assistance to madrasah systems in the form of: 1.) Madrasah infrastructure development fund; 2.) Programs and assistance to students and teachers in madrasah schools; 3.) Nutrition and feeding program for young children; 4.) Classroom facilities; 5.) Textbook assistance fund; 6.) In-service training fund for teachers; and 7.) Scholarship grants to children of teachers.

To allow the local madrasah system to take full advantage of these development opportunities will provide more educational opportunities for Muslim Filipinos.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



LOREN LEGARDA

Senator

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

7 JUN 30 P4:31

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S.B. No. 228

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

AN ACT
PROVIDING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE TO MADRASAH EDUCATION
SYSTEM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 the "Fund Assistance to Madrasah Education Act of 2007."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. It is a declared policy of the State in conformity with the mandate of the Constitution, to promote and make quality education accessible to all Filipino citizens regardless of cultural origin, conviction, creed or belief. The State also recognizes the complementary roles of public and private educational institutions in the country's educational system and the invaluable contribution of private educational institutions to educate its citizenry, and this includes the Madrasah School in Muslim Mindanao and other areas in the country where Muslim population abounds.

The State shall also, as a matter of policy, establish a fund for Madrasah Infrastructure Development apart from maintaining a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, teacher development program, subsidies and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students especially to the underprivileged. Further, the State shall encourage non-formal, informal and indigenous learning systems as well as self-learning, particularly those that respond to community needs.

For this purpose, the State mandates the Department of Education (DepEd), in close coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA), and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), to provide mechanisms to improve the quality of Madrasah education as well as open the opportunity for more Muslim students to benefit from said educational system by maximizing the use of existing resources of public and private education.

Sec. 3. Madrasah Curriculum. The Madrasah curriculum shall be enriched and harmonized to make it compatible with the curriculum of the Philippine formal education system. Equivalency, learning accreditation, experience-based learning and

other innovative education approaches shall be utilized in order to make possible the smooth transition of learners from the Madrasah education system to the formal education system and vice-versa.

Sec. 4. Criteria for Assistance. The programs for assistance shall be based on a set of criteria which include, among others, tuition fees charged by the schools, the socio-economic needs of the students giving priority to those who come from the poorest sector of society, overall performance of the schools, the academic qualifications and the financial needs of both students and teachers.

In addition to the aforementioned criteria, students who may qualify for scholarship assistance in Madrasah schools can continue to study in higher education institution; *Provided*, that, they pass the minimum requirement of said program.

Sec. 5. Forms of Assistance. For purposes of this Act, apart from infrastructure development fund and a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, teacher development program, subsidies and other incentives, programs and assistance to students and teachers in Madrasah schools consist of the following:

1. Nutrition and feeding Program for Young Children;
2. Classroom Facilities such as desks, tables, chalkboards and other basic classroom needs;
3. Textbook Assistance Fund;
4. Scholarship Grants to deserving students;
5. Education Loan Fund;
6. In-Service training Fund for Teachers;
7. Scholarship Grants to children of teachers.

Sec. 6. Funding. The funds necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be provided in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) in the amount of P500,000,000.00 and shall be charged under the current appropriations of the Department of Education.

Sec. 7. Implementing Rules and Guidelines. The Secretary of Education, in close coordination with the Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education, Office of Muslim Affairs and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, shall issue rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

Sec. 8. Repealing Clause. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, presidential proclamation, rules and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Sec. 9. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not effect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

Sec. 10. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,