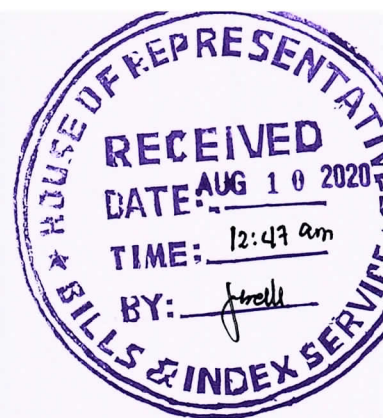


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 7330



Introduced by Representative EVELINA G. ESCUDERO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act 7743 declares as a national policy to promote the moral and intellectual well-being of the people and to recognize the vital role of knowledge and information in nation-building by establishing public libraries in every city and municipality, and reading centers in every barangay all over the country.

This policy recognizes the patent complementary relationship between education and the library. Formal instructions in schools are enriched by the varied materials available in the library. The library offers not only a wealth of resources but also of possibilities beyond what is offered in the four corners of the classroom.

C.V. Penna, in his UNESCO published book, wrote, "*As a communications center the library has a part to play in developing a teaching force capable of breaking with traditional methods which are inadequate at a time when both social concepts and the content of knowledge are changing so rapidly.*"¹ A statement which is even more relevant today with the rapid change in which the people access, consume and relay all forms of content. The library is indeed indispensable in reinforcing formal education.

Abroad as well as in some cities in the country, the library is also at the forefront of cultural endeavors. Cebu City's public library, the Rizal Memorial Library and Museum, showcases Cebuano arts in paintings, sculptures and plays. More importantly, it responded and adapted to the changing needs, preference and study

¹ C. V. Penna, *The Planning Of Library And Documentation Services*, UNESCO, 1970.


habits of the Cebuanos as it opened its services to the public for twenty-four hours everyday. Thousands of students and guests flock to the library to study and use its services and other facilities. It is now regarded as one of the important public institutions in the City and an example to other Local Government Units (LGUs) on how to run a facility that best serves the needs of the community.

At present there are two laws that prescribe the establishment of public libraries in the LGUs- Republic Act No. 7160, "*An Act Providing For A Local Government Code Of 1991*", and Republic Act No. 7743, "*An Act Providing For The Establishment Of Congressional, City And Municipal Libraries And Barangay Reading Centers Throughout The Philippines.*" However, these laws are silent as to the mandatory nature of the establishment of public libraries.

Thus, this bill seeks to firmly establish a public library in each city and municipality and a reading center in each barangay by mandating the LGUs to establish a library or a reading center, as the case maybe, as provided in R.A. 7160, and to provide the corresponding budget for the purpose. The budget source so proposed in this bill is ofcourse subject to further deliberations and amenable to any changes to ensure the financial capacity and equity viability of all stakeholders for the realization of the poilicy set forth in this bill.

This bill is in recognition of the vital role of libraries as an ally of education in helping the youth and the public to form the right attitudes, develop abilities and provide tools and practical skills for tackling economic and social problems² that aid in nation-building.

In view of the foregoing, consideration of this bill to address the intended purpose is respectfully requested.



EVELINA ESCUDERO

² Ibid.

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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC
LIBRARY IN ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AND A READING
CENTER IN ALL BARANGAYS, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7743

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

Section. 1. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared as a policy of the State, consistent with the constitutional provisions on education and national development, to promote the moral and intellectual well-being of the people and recognize the vital role of knowledge and information in nation-building by establishing a public library in every city and municipality, and a reading center in every barangay all over the country.

Sec 2. Title - This Act shall be known and referred to as the "*Mandatory Establishment of Public Libraries and Reading Centers Act of 2020.*"

Sec. 3. Establishment of Public Libraries and Barangay Reading Centers. - Within one (1) year from effectivity of this act, there shall be a mandatory establishment of a public library in each city and municipality, and a reading center in each barangay, by the local government unit (LGU), with the necessary budgetary appropriations covering the operating expenditures and capital outlays for the purpose, except in cities

or municipalities where there are existing public libraries or in barangays where there are existing reading centers.

Sec. 4. *Site.* - The establishment of the public libraries and reading centers shall be an integral part of the development plan of each local government unit: provided, that the each barangay shall provide the site for barangay reading center.

Sec. 5. *Public Library Office.* - There shall be a Public Library Office in each city and municipality which shall function as the public library of the city or municipality, and shall exercise administrative functions of an office.

Sec. 6. *Staffing Pattern.* - There should be a staffing pattern for the establishment of the public libraries and reading centers which shall be an integral part of the development plan of each local government unit.

Sec. 7. *Functions of the Public Libraries and Barangay Reading Centers.* - The public libraries and barangay reading centers shall have the following functions:

- a) Make available to the members of the community a varied selection of reading materials, including materials prescribed by the Department of Education (DepEd), national newspapers of general circulation, and other educational materials;
- b) Venue for community audio-visual presentations, exhibitions and other activities aimed at increasing literacy, cultural awareness, and civic responsibility among the constituents; and
- c) Offer such other related services in the furtherance of this Act.

Sec. 8. *Role of the National Library of the Philippines.*- The National Library of the Philippines (NLP) shall have the following functions:

- a.) Exercise general supervision over public libraries through an accreditation and evaluation scheme developed by the NLP;
- b.) Provide list of standard materials such as but not limited to encyclopedias, dictionaries, maps, globes and other materials necessary for the establishment of the libraries and reading centers;

- c.) Coordinate and organize seminars, workshops and other trainings for the professional benefit of the public librarians; and
- d.) Offer such other related services in the furtherance of this Act.

Sec. 9. Appropriations. - The funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be sourced from the national government and may be augmented by the concerned LGU. Funds for the sustainable management of public libraries and barangay reading centers shall be included in the regular budget of the LGU and those that may be provided by the national government, and from grants and donations.

Sec. 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd and the National Library in coordination with the local government leagues and the Department of the Interior and Local Government shall promulgate the rules and regulations to implement this Act.

Sec. 11. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, and rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 12. Separability Clause. - If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

Sect. 13. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,