

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

17th CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **3961**



Introduced by **Representative Wes Gatchalian**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

As one great jurist says, "the purpose of the Bill of Rights is to withdraw certain subjects from the vicissitudes of political controversy, to place them beyond the reach of majorities and officials, and to *establish them as legal principles to be applied by the courts*. One's rights to life, liberty and property, to free speech, or free press, freedom of worship and assembly, and other fundamental rights may not be submitted to a vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections." In other words the Bill of Rights are meant to be protections of the citizens such that not even the most powerful instrument of the state can take them away or impinge upon them. They are recognitions to the human dignity that every individual is entitled to regardless of their social standing, gender, race, or creed. They are inalienable such that regardless of any benefit which will redound to the state if they be curtailed, such option is nonetheless off the table. As such, it is only proper that every individual be apprised and trained with sufficient knowledge of how these rights protect them. It is therefore the proposal of this bill that a subject on this topic be mandated and compulsorily taught in the secondary level of education both in the private and public schools.

Aside from the obvious protection which having the knowledge of the Bill of Rights provide to the citizens, it is further submitted that a study of this subject will also redound to the citizens a sense of justice and human dignity which is often overlooked due to the travails of human life. Such consciousness, it is submitted, is necessary and essential in the formation of upstanding citizens who abide by the rule of law and treats their fellows with equal respect.


HON. WES GATCHALIAN
Representative
1st District, Valenzuela City

Republic of the Philippines
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17th CONGRESS
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House Bill No. 3981

Introduced by Representative Wes Gatchalian

AN ACT
MANDATING THAT "THE BILL OF RIGHTS"
BE A COMPULSORY SUBJECT FOR ALL STUDENTS
IN THE SECONDARY LEVEL
IN ALL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Section 1. *Statement of Policy.* - It is the policy of the state that each of its citizens be armed with knowledge of their constitutionally protected rights, such knowledge being a first-line defense against infringements upon these solemn protections. It is therefore mandated that each student must have a basic training as to what having these constitutional rights entail.

Section 2. *Coverage.* - The education on "The Bill of Rights" shall be a mandatory subject for all students enrolled in the secondary level, both in private and in public schools. The subject shall be a part of the curriculum of the students in their graduating year.

Section 3. *Course design.* - The University of the Philippines Law Center together with the Department of Education, are hereby mandated to develop a standard module which will be the course uniformly followed throughout the country, in the teaching of the subject.

There shall be a mandatory review of the module, for the purpose of updating and improving the course, in two (2) - year cycles following its implementation. A national achievement exam of the students shall be annually employed for this purpose.

Section 4. *Funding.* - The funds for the establishment, development of modules, and training of course instructors, shall be provided for in the general appropriations act of the Department of Education.

Section 5. *Transitory Provision.* - The course shall be integrated in the current curriculum after two (2) years following the approval of this Act. During the interim, the Department of Education, pursuant to Section 3 of this Act, shall

undertake the development of the course module, and the training of the teaching staff charged with the handling of the course. For this purpose, the Department of Education shall provide trainings, free of charge, for teachers both in the private and the public sector.

Section 6. *Repealing Clause.* - All other laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, rules and regulations inconsistent with any provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 7. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,