

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



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. **1869**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Southeast Asia holds more diverse flora and fauna than Europe, but it is in danger of losing its biodiversity. It has natural habitats of up to 40 percent of all species existing on the planet. A single small tropical-forest patch anywhere in this region, covering just a couple of hundred hectares, might support more bird and mammal species than there are in the whole of the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany combined.

However, the flora and fauna of the region are increasingly under threat. Annually, ASEAN loses one percent of its forest cover, a figure four times higher than the world average. There are more than 150 endangered species in the Philippines alone. Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia were among the world's top megadiverse countries. At the same time, the three Asean nations were also among 25 biodiversity hotspots or places at risk of species loss.

The region's continued biodiversity loss is due to extensive deforestation and habitat loss, widespread conversion of land for agriculture or urban and industrial development, and the continuing rapid population growth. Southeast Asia could have three-fourths less forest cover and 42 percent less biodiversity by 2010 at the current rate of logging, forest fires and problematic land use, among others. Today, more trees are being felled due to shifting agricultural practices, illegal lumber trade and large-scale mining. Further, global warming and climate change are environmental phenomena intertwined with the world's decreasing biodiversity. The loss of biodiversity is making climate change more complicated which poses threat on the planet's marine and plant life.

This bill seeks to address the problem of biodiversity loss by requiring every student to plant ten (10) trees every year. To date, there are 2.4 million tertiary students, six million in the secondary level, and 13 million in the primary level. Hence, in just a year, an additional 214,000,000.00 trees would be planted.

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


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

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AN ACT
TO REQUIRE EVERY STUDENT TO PLANT TREES EVERY YEAR

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

Section 1. Declaration of Policy. – It is the declared policy of the state to protect and preserve biodiversity in the country.

Section 2. Requirement of Planting Ten (10) Trees Every Year. To protect and preserve biodiversity in the country, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education shall require every student to plant ten (10) trees every year.

Section. 3. Appropriations. The necessary budget to implement this Act shall be included in the budget of the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education.

Section 4. Rules and Regulations. — The Department of Education and The Commission on Higher Education shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the effective enforcement of the provisions of this Act

Section 5. Separability Clause. – Should any provision of this Act or any part thereof be declared invalid, the other provisions, so far as they are separable from the invalid ones, shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 6. Repealing Clause. - All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,