

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 896



Introduced by REP. PRINCESS RIHAN M. SAKALURAN

RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION, THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND ALL APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO STRONGLY IMPLEMENT THE LAWS TO GIVE ALL STUDENTS ACCESS TO EDUCATION THROUGH DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION BY USING ALL AVAILABLE PLATFORMS SUCH AS THE INTERNET, TELEVISION, RADIO, MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DURING THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY BROUGHT ABOUT BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

WHEREAS, Art. XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “[t]he State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.”

WHEREAS, to maximize the use of technology in the education sector, Republic Act No. 10929 or the “Free Internet Access in Public Places Act” was enacted as a recognition of the vital role of information and communications technology in nation-building, and declares its policy to promote an environment for the development of structures that would ensure the availability and accessibility to reliable and secure internet access suitable to the needs and aspirations of the nation.

WHEREAS, the second paragraph of Section 2 of RA No. 10929 provides that “the State shall establish a program that will provide free access to internet service in public places throughout the country, to promote knowledge-building among citizens and enable them to participate and compete in the evolving information and communication age.

1
2 **WHEREAS**, Section 4 (b) and (c) of RA No. 10929 provides for public basic
3 education institutions, and state universities and colleges, and Technical
4 Education and Skills Development Authority technology institutions as some of
5 the public places covered by the law.
6

7 **WHEREAS**, highlighting the necessity of telecommunications, Republic
8 Act No. 7925 or the "Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines"
9 was enacted to "develop and maintain a viable, efficient, reliable and universal
10 telecommunication infrastructure using the best available and affordable
11 technologies, as a vital tool to nation building and development."
12

13 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Information and Communications
14 Technology was authorized to set the standards and qualifications in
15 determining the places to be included in the program, and shall be the lead
16 implementing agency under RA No. 10929.
17

18 **WHEREAS**, the overwhelming increase in the number of Coronavirus
19 Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has led to a declaration of a public health emergency
20 which led to weeks of enhanced community quarantine in the country and has
21 become an international concern.
22

23 **WHEREAS**, school administrators all over the country are now in a
24 quandary of opening the academic school year on time in an attempt to contain
25 the spread of the disease and are in fact entertaining the idea of distance
26 education through different platforms brought about by the advancement of
27 technology.
28

29 **WHEREAS**, the parents of these students particularly those who are most
30 vulnerable to the disease and are in disadvantaged communities are not keen on
31 enrolling children fearing that virus might infect and expose their children to
32 harm and danger.
33

34 **WHEREAS**, several health experts and members of the academe have
35 recommended to delay the opening of the next school year until there is an
36 assurance that the COVID-19 Pandemic has already been controlled and will not
37 further infect people.
38

39 **WHEREAS**, the uncertainties of not enrolling or delay in school opening
40 are impacting a good number of the members of the education sector for this
41 academic year;
42

43 **WHEREAS**, the introduction to Online and Distance Education are the
44 newest and most popular form of innovative education to date;
45

1 **WHEREAS**, Distance Learning has also its history in the Philippines with
2 the passage of Republic Act No. 10650 with aimed at institutionalizing Open
3 Distance Learning for tertiary education;
4

5 **WHEREAS**, Section 3 (a) of RA 10650 defines Distance Education as a
6 "mode of learning in which students and teachers are physically separated from
7 each other. It is student centered, guided independent study, making use of well-
8 studied teaching and learning pedagogies to deliver well-designed learning
9 materials in various media. It is also sometimes described as flexible learning
10 and distributed learning";
11

12 **WHEREAS**, even UNESCO in its website is supportive of countries
13 currently shifting to distance learning if only to mitigate the impact of COVID
14 19;
15

16 **WHEREAS**, appropriate agencies concerned are therefore urged to develop
17 online or distance learning method in order to respond to present realities under
18 pandemic emergencies;
19

20 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Information and Communication
21 Technology, National Telecommunication Commission, Department of
22 Education, the Commission on Higher Education, and the Technical Education
23 and Skills Development Authority are urged to lead and implement, formulate
24 and coordinate policies, plans, programs and projects in the areas of formal and
25 non-formal basic education in all elementary and secondary institutions, higher
26 education institutions, and technical education and skills schools.
27

28 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the House of
29 Representatives urges that the Department of Information and Communications
30 Technology as the lead agency together with the Department of Education, the
31 Commission on Higher Education, the Technical Education and Skills
32 Development Authority, and the National Telecommunications Commission and
33 other appropriate government agencies to strongly implement existing laws and
34 adopt in the interim the distance learning program availing of all the platforms
35 available such as but not limited to the INTERNET, TELEVISION, RADIO,
36 MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS to help these
37 students during the pandemic.
38

39 Adopted.
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43 **PRINCESS RIHAN M. SAKALURAN**
44 Representative
45 1st District, Sultan Kudarat