

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5209



INTRODUCED BY REP. ALFRED VARGAS

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE YOUTH LEGISLATORS PROGRAM

EXPLANATORY NOTE


The youth has always been a potent force for nation-building. The 1987 Philippine Constitution acknowledges the importance of this sector in developing a strong Filipino Nation. Article II, Section 13 states:

The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

Aside from the Constitution, youth participation is also enshrined in other statutes. The 1991 Local Government Code provides for the youth's participation in local development and the establishment of the Sangguniang Kabataan. The 1995 Youth in Nation-Building Act provided a national comprehensive program on youth development and the creation of the National Youth Commission. Furthermore, the Medium-Term Youth Development Plan of the Philippines identified the youth's right to participate in decision-making on policies involving them and their responsibility to represent their sector in policy-making bodies.

This bill seeks to include the youth in the highest policy-making body of the country by institutionalizing the Youth Legislators Program. The proposed Youth Legislature is tasked to propose a youth agenda of bills and resolutions to the House of Representatives and the Senate.

To ensure that the youth's voices are heard in the national legislative process, the passage of this measure is earnestly urged.



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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 "Youth Legislators Program Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to promote youth participation in the legislative process by giving them an opportunity to express their views on issues affecting them and on what laws may be enacted to address these.

SECTION 3. Youth Legislators Program. - Immediately following the assumption of office of Senators and District Representatives, there shall be a body comprised of the youth who shall convene regularly for a period to propose bills and resolutions to the House of Representatives and the Senate. This body shall be called the Youth Legislature.

The Youth Legislature shall approve proposals for bills and resolutions in the same manner the House of Representatives and the Senate adopt bills and

resolutions. The approved proposals shall be submitted to the House of Representatives and the Senate who may adopt the same.

SECTION 4. Youth Legislators. - There shall be one youth legislator for every legislative district who shall report to the House of Representatives and twenty-four youth legislators who shall report to the Senate. They shall be selected from a pool of applicants through written and oral examinations to be conducted by the National Youth Commission (NYC).

(A) Qualifications - A youth legislator must:

- a. be at least 15 but not more than 24 years old, qualifying within the United Nations Youth age range;
- b. be a resident of the legislative district he/she is representing, if reporting to the House of Representatives;
- c. be a resident of the Philippines, if reporting to the Senate;
- d. not have previously been a youth legislator;
- e. not be a relative within the fourth civil degree of an incumbent elected official; and
- f. have other qualifications set by the NYC.

(B) Period - The Youth Legislature shall be given two weeks to convene and approve proposals for bills and resolutions.

(C) Obligations - A youth legislator shall:

- a. propose bills and resolutions to be presented to the Youth Legislature for approval, and participate in the deliberations of the body on the proposals;

- b. observe sessions, public hearings, and other meetings of the House of Representatives or the Senate, as the case may be; and
- c. attend trainings, seminars, or forums organized by the NYC for purpose of implementing this Act.

SECTION 5. Honorarium. - A youth legislator is entitled to receive a daily honorarium for a period of two weeks equivalent to 75% of the minimum wage in Metro Manila.

SECTION 6. Implementing Agency. - The NYC shall be the primary implementing and supervising agency for the implementation of this Act. It shall formulate the necessary implementing rules and regulations immediately upon the approval of this Act.

SECTION 7. Appropriations. - To carry out the provisions of this Act, such amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury, Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation of this program shall be included in the annual appropriations of the NYC.

SECTION 8. Separability Clause. - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. Repealing Clause. - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with, the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SECTION 10. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,