

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

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2666



Introduced by **HON. EDGAR M. CHATTO**
First District, Bohol

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The appreciation of literature has to be nurtured early in the young child and given expression through a stimulating environment and a cultural setting that highly values the written word.¹

“Why aren’t Filipinos reading?” One likely reason is that books are so expensive. For many families whose main income is spent on basic needs, buying a book for pleasure is a luxury.² Further, the availability of books in this country is a far cry from what it should be.³

Reading is a lifetime insurance. The child who starts reading early, acquires a kind of insurance that will bring him educational dividends throughout his lifetime. He will never tire of learning, of seeking answers, or of imagining new possibilities in life.⁴

As early as 1821, the Spanish Cortes mandated the establishment of public libraries in the country. Public librarianship in the Philippines, however, only officially started when the American Circulating Library was established on March 9, 1900. Several laws after that, including Republic Act No. 411 and Republic Act 7743, encouraged the development of public libraries and a national library.

In answer to that, and also to make available and accessible the books and other reading materials to the street children as well as the out-of-school youths, the local government of Bohol established the Balilihan Congressional Library in 2008. The local government provided for the site as well as the infrastructure of the library. To date, it shares in the costs of the library’s monthly operation.

The library, which is among the only five congressional libraries⁵ in the country today, serves various towns and communities in the first district of the Bohol. Since its establishment, the library sees a steady increase in its readers and visitors – from 23,809 of 2016 to 41,543 in 2017.

¹ Building Bridges, by Nina Lim-Yuson, 2000, page 96

² Ibid, page 78

³ Ibid, page 75

⁴ Supra

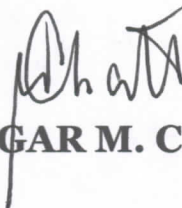
⁵ Crispina Marcos Memorial Library and Museum in Batac, Ilocos Norte; Sentro ng Karunungan Library in Tondo, Manila; Kaban ng Hiyas Congressional Library in Mandaluyong City and Batanes Provincial Library in Basco, Batanes

Budget for the personnel of the library comes from the National Library of the Philippines (NLP). The resources, however, are inadequate. To date, all the officials and employees of the Balilihan Congressional Library are sourced out through job orders. Utilities and other operational expenses are shared between the local government of Balilihan and the NLP.

According to the National Library, congressional district libraries while part of the NLP extension libraries and performs public library services are not and will not be part of any local government unit. The locally funded projects including congressional district libraries have been elevated to the locally funded programs because of the effective and efficient services these libraries provide to the Filipino communities.

This bill, hence, seeks to ensure that plantilla positions for the officers and employees of the Balilihan Congressional Library are created within the organizational structure and staffing of the NLP. Not only will this ensure that budget for their compensation but also for the operational expenses of the library are properly laid out in the NLP's annual appropriations allocation. Finally, this would ensure the efficient and adequate delivery of library and allied services.

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



REP. EDGAR M. CHATTO

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**“AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A BALILIHAN CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY
IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BALILIHAN, PROVINCE OF BOHOL
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”**

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

SECTION 1. Balilihan Congressional Library. – There shall be a Balilihan Congressional Library in the municipality of Balilihan, Province of Bohol under the direct control and supervision of the National Library of the Philippines (NLP).

SEC. 2. Appointment of Personnel. – The Director of the National Library shall appoint a Librarian III, Librarian I, Computer Operator II, Computer File Librarian I, Librarian Aide, Audio-Visual Equipment Operator II and Watchman I (Security Guard), and such other personnel as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act; *provided*, that, all appointments shall be in accordance with the Civil Service Act and its implementing rules and regulations; and *provided further*, that, their salaries and allowances shall be in accordance with the Salary Standardization Law and other applicable laws.

SEC. 3. Appropriations. – The amount necessary for the operation of the Balilihan Congressional Library shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the National Library of the Philippines. Thereafter, such amount necessary for its continued operation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 4. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The NLP shall issue the necessary rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 5. Repealing Clause. – All acts, presidential decrees, executive orders and issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 6. Separability Clause. – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or inoperative, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 7. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,