

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3403



Introduced by **Representative JOEY SARTE SALCEDA**

AN ACT
PROHIBITING THE USE OF CELLULAR PHONES AND
SIMILAR DIGITAL DEVICES DURING CLASSES

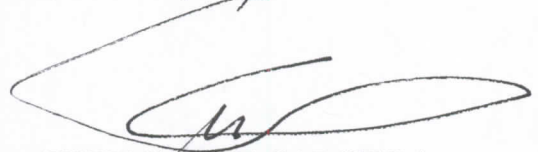
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Cellphones and digital devices are so ubiquitous to the point that its use has become so closely intertwined with our daily routine and activities. It has revolutionized the way people do things, especially how we communicate with each other. Digital 2019, a report from Hootsuite and We are Social showing people's online behavior around the world, said Filipinos spend an average of 10:02 hours a day on the internet — on any device. Filipinos also spent the most time on social media at four hours and 12 minutes on average per day. It also noted that the country has the highest female ratio on Twitter at 63 percent, and Instagram at 64 percent. The report also noted that Social media penetration in the country is at 71 percent, above the worldwide average of 45 percent, the report said. Some 79 million Filipinos aged 13 and older are also on social media, it added. Overall, there are 76 million internet users in the country, and all of them are on some form of social media. Seventy-two million Filipinos access them via a mobile device.

Concededly, use of cellphones and other digital devices has many benefits in many areas of human concern like business, work, and school or simply for communicating with friends and family. Cellphones and other devices used in today's world allow users to do a variety of tasks like sending and receiving text messages, emails, photos and video as well as access the Internet, play games, listen to music, use GPS (Global Positioning Systems) and more. However, much like any other technological device, the use of mobile phones is Janus faced. With its many advantages, these smart devices can also cause distraction and disruption to work and school activities especially among the youth.

This bill seeks to prohibit, with few exceptions, cellphones and other digital devices to use or access, irrespective of duration, for any student in all private and public kindergarten, elementary, and secondary (including senior high school) educational institutions within the classroom or any area, whether or not within the school premises, where teaching lessons or activities are performed. For purposes of this proposed bill, every school is required to establish a device depositary office where students can deposit their phones and gadgets upon entering the school premises.

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



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

SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “No Cellphone during Classes Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people, the country and society-at-large.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* – This Act shall cover all private and public kindergarten, elementary, secondary (including senior high school) and tertiary educational institutions.

SEC. 4. *Regulation of cellphone use in schools.* – Except in cases of emergencies and teaching programs that necessitate the use of cellular phones and smart devices, it is hereby prohibited for any student of a covered institution to use or access, irrespective of duration, cellular phones, smart phones and any similar digital device within the classroom or any area, whether or not within the school premises, where teaching lessons or activities are performed.

All covered educational institutions shall implement policies to ensure that students comply with the above-stated provision.

SEC. 5. *Device Depositary.* – Every school is mandated to establish a device depositary office where students can deposit their phones and gadgets upon entering the school premises.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Education shall issue implementing rules and regulations to carry out the objectives of this Act, in consultation with the private sector.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.* – The provisions of this Act are hereby declared to be separable. If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect within fifteen (15) days from its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,