

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6797



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

As we are currently battling the COVID-19, many of our usual activities are disrupted due to precautions that have to be observed. Among these is the suspension of physical classes and other school activities.

Children, although having higher immunity, are still susceptible to COVID-19. According to the recent COVID-19 situation report of the World Health Organization for the Philippines, there are already 673 confirmed cases of COVID-19 for age group <19 from January 18, 2020 to May 13, 2020.¹ Children have about three times as many contacts as adults and three times as many opportunities to become infected, making them very vulnerable. The numbers may rise if we allow the immediate resumption of classes.

There will always be a possibility that this same situation where we have to defer or make changes in the start of the school year would occur in the future. This could happen not only during health emergencies, but also during natural calamities and man-made crises. Thus, our laws should be aligned according to these evolving challenges.

This measure intends to amend Republic Act No. 7797 to allow deferment of the start of the school year in the event of state of emergency, state of calamity or any similar occurrence. This bill also mandates the Department of Education to utilize alternative modalities of learning and provide qualifying examinations for acceleration.

¹ World Health Organization. "Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Situation Report 31 Philippines 13 May 2020". Information retrieved from https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/wpro---documents/countries/philippines/emergencies/covid-19/who-phl-sitrep-31-covid-19-13may2020.pdf?sfvrsn=a009091_2 on May 23, 2020.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MDC', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

Representative

Magdalo Para Sa Pilipino Party-List

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6797

Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

AN ACT

AUTHORIZING THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION TO DEFER THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR IN CASE OF A DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY, STATE OF CALAMITY OR ANY SIMILAR OCCURRENCE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7797, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT TO LENGTHEN THE SCHOOL CALENDAR FROM TWO HUNDRED DAYS TO NOT MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED TWENTY CLASS DAYS

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

SECTION 1. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 7797, otherwise known as "An Act to Lengthen the School Calendar from Two Hundred (200) Days to not more than Two Hundred Twenty (220) Class Days", is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 3. *Start of the School Year.*— The school year shall start on the first Monday of June but not later than the last day of August; **PROVIDED, THAT IN THE EVENT OF A DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY, STATE OF CALAMITY OR ANY SIMILAR OCCURRENCE, THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION SHALL BE AUTHORIZED TO PRESCRIBE A DIFFERENT DATE FOR THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR PER REGION OR AREA WITH DUE REGARD TO THE SAFETY OF STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF.**

In the implementation of this Act, the Secretary of Education~~[-Culture and Sports]~~ shall determine the end of the regular school year, taking into consideration the Christmas and summer vacations, and the peculiar circumstances of each region.

1
2 In the exercise of this authority, the Secretary of Education ~~[, Culture and~~
3 ~~Sports]~~ may authorize the holding of Saturday classes for elementary and
4 secondary levels for public and private schools."

5
6 **SEC. 2. *Alternative Modalities of Learning.***— The Department of
7 Education (DepEd) shall ensure educational continuity during a state of emergency,
8 state of calamity of any similar occurrence by utilizing alternative modalities of
9 learning such as, but not limited to, modular instruction, online, digital or mobile
10 learning, radio or television-based instruction, and blended learning or a combination
11 of various modalities.

12
13 **SEC. 3. *Qualifying Examinations for Acceleration.***— The DepEd shall
14 provide qualifying examinations for acceleration in the event that the declaration of
15 state of emergency, state of calamity or any similar occurrence is prolonged for
16 more than half of the school calendar.

17
18 **SEC. 4. *Report to Congress.***— The DepEd, in coordination with relevant
19 agencies and sectors, shall submit a report to Congress regarding the opening of
20 school year within thirty (30) days from making such decision, through Senate
21 Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture and the House Committee on Basic
22 Education and Culture.

23
24 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.***— The DepEd, in
25 coordination with relevant agencies and sectors, shall within thirty (30) days from
26 the effectivity of this Act, promulgate the rules and regulations to effectively
27 implement the provisions of this Act.

28
29 **SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.***— If any portion or provision of this Act is
30 declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provisions not affected
31 thereby shall remain in force and effect.

32
33 **SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.***— Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
34 executive order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent with the
35 provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

36
37 **SEC. 8. *Effectivity.***— This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
38 complete publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,