

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. 2729

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The first three (3) years of a child is so-called the formative years because this stage is critical to his brain development. Hence, utmost importance should be given in training and molding the child during these years.

This proposed measure seeks to establish early learning programs for indigent pre-kindergarten children in order to provide them with high-quality, child-centered and developmentally appropriate educational programs.

With the support of the government, our indigent children will be given the opportunity to hone their knowledge and skills which will allow them to be competent and successful in their future endeavors. Indeed, this is an important investment of our nation because ultimately, these children will be the leaders of our country.

Immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. **2729**

AN ACT

ESTABLISHING EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS FOR INDIGENT PRE-KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Early Learning Program Act*”.

SEC 2. *Purposes.* – The purposes of this Act are:

- (1) to make widely available to pre-kindergarten children a high quality, child-centered, and developmentally-appropriate early learning program;
- (2) to make widely available to parents of pre-kindergarten children who desire the services, a program in which they can enroll their pre-kindergarten children; and
- (3) to provide resources to ensure that all children enter elementary school ready to learn how to read and write.

SEC 3. *Definitions.* –

- (1) Early Learning Programs – refer to programs that provide services for children who have not attended kindergarten or elementary school. Such programs are designed to provide indigent pre-kindergarten children with a high-quality, child-centered, and developmentally-appropriate learning program and with resources to ensure that all children enter elementary school ready to learn how to read and write;
- (2) Parent – refers to a biological parent, an adoptive parent, a stepparent, or a foster parent of a child, including a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis;
- (3) Secretary – refers to the Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd).

SEC 4. *Early Learning Program.* – The Secretary shall establish and maintain an early learning program that provides learning services in every city or municipality. The program shall:

- (a) be developed pursuant to guidance provided by the educational authorities, and experts in early childhood development; and
- (b) be designed to improve child development through:
 - (i) improved access to and increased coordination with health care services;
 - (ii) increased access to enhanced early learning environments;

- (iii) increased parental involvement.

The program shall be designed to service pre-kindergarten children, including those with special needs, who shall receive enhanced educational and comprehensive services and support, through parent involvement and education.

SEC 5. *Assessment.* – The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the early childhood programs established and conduct needs and resources assessment, and use such an assessment to:

- (i) determine where early learning programs are lacking or are inadequate within a given city or municipality, with particular attention to poor urban and rural areas, and what special services are needed; and,
- (ii) specify which programs might be expanded or upgraded with the use of funds received under this Act.

SEC 6. *Appropriation.* – The amount necessary to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury.

SEC 7. *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.

SEC 8. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly

SEC 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.