Senate
Office of the Secretary

TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

26 NOV 11 A10 :48

SENATE
S. No. 2609

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE STUDY OF FILIPINO WOMEN HEROES IN THE CURRICULA OF ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO PROMOTE HISTORICAL AWARENESS AND RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN NATION-BUILDING

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The hallmark of a democracy lies not only in who is permitted to lead, but also in who is encouraged to believe that they can. Although Filipino women have long contributed to the political, social, economic, scientific, and cultural development of the country, their roles and achievements remain insufficiently represented in many accounts of Philippine history.

Women have participated in the making of the nation in diverse capacities—as revolutionaries and resistance fighters, political and community leaders, educators, writers, artists, scientists, health workers, advocates, indigenous leaders, organizers, and builders of communities. Many of these women exercised leadership not only at moments of national consequence but also through sustained work within local communities and sectors whose histories have seldom received adequate attention.

Available studies of Philippine textbooks and other educational materials have identified the continuing underrepresentation of women as historical actors and leaders. When women do appear, their contributions may be presented primarily in relation to men or confined to supporting and domestic roles. Such limited portrayals prevent learners from acquiring a complete and inclusive understanding of the persons and communities that shaped Philippine history.

The State has already recognized the importance of gender-responsive education. Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta of Women," directs the State to ensure that gender stereotypes and images in educational materials and curricula are adequately and appropriately revised. Republic Act No.

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10533, otherwise known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013," likewise requires the basic education curriculum to be inclusive, research-based, culture-sensitive, contextualized, and responsive to the educational and social contexts of learners.

This measure seeks to give more specific effect to these policies by integrating the study of Filipino women of historical significance into relevant subjects, courses, learning areas, and educational activities. It does not require the creation of a separate subject. Rather, it seeks to enrich the teaching of Philippine history by ensuring that the lives, works, struggles, and contributions of women are appropriately represented within the broader national narrative.

For basic education, the Department of Education shall develop age-appropriate content, learning competencies, and instructional resources. For higher education, the Commission on Higher Education shall develop model frameworks and recommended approaches while respecting the constitutional guarantee of academic freedom and the curricular autonomy of higher education institutions.

The measure also gives appropriate roles to the National Historical Commission of the Philippines and the Philippine Commission on Women in providing historical and technical guidance, supporting research, and developing reliable reference materials. It encourages the inclusion not only of nationally prominent figures but also of local, indigenous, grassroots, and marginalized women whose contributions are supported by credible historical evidence.

The purpose of this measure is not to present women as a separate or competing category in Philippine history, nor to require the uncritical veneration of any historical figure. It seeks to provide every learner with a fuller, more inclusive, and evidence-based understanding of the women and men who collectively built the nation.

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

LOREN LEGARDA

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act will be known as the *"Lakambini Act of 2026."*

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men, consistent with Article II, Section 14 of the Constitution.

Consistent with Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta of Women," and other relevant laws, the State shall promote the accurate, inclusive, gender-responsive, and culturally sensitive teaching of Philippine history by ensuring the appropriate recognition of the diverse contributions of Filipino women to national and community life.

Toward this end, the State shall promote the integration of the lives, works, struggles, achievements, and contributions of Filipino women of historical significance into relevant subjects, courses, learning areas, and educational activities. Such integration shall be evidence-based, age-appropriate, historically contextualized, and respectful of academic freedom, indigenous knowledge systems and practices, and the diverse historical experiences of Philippine communities.

Sec. 3. *Inclusion in the Curriculum.* – The study of the lives, works, struggles, achievements, and contributions of Filipino women of historical significance shall be appropriately integrated into relevant subjects, learning areas, and educational activities in public and private basic education institutions.

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Such integration shall not require the creation of a separate subject and shall, as far as practicable, be undertaken within existing appropriate subjects and learning areas, including Philippine history, social studies, literature, arts, culture, science, civics, and values education.

In higher education, the study of Filipino women of historical significance may be integrated into relevant general education courses, disciplinary subjects, institutional programs, research activities, and other appropriate academic undertakings. Higher education institutions shall determine the manner and extent of such integration in accordance with their respective curricular policies and the constitutional guarantee of academic freedom.

For purposes of this Act, "Filipino women of historical significance" shall refer to Filipino women who, through their acts, leadership, works, advocacy, scholarship, service, or other significant contributions, helped advance the welfare, development, freedom, identity, or collective life of the Filipino nation or their respective communities. These may include, but shall not be limited to, revolutionaries, resistance fighters, political and community leaders, indigenous women leaders, educators, writers, artists, scientists, health workers, advocates, and other women who have made meaningful contributions to nation-building, whether nationally or locally recognized.

Sec. 4. *Development of the Curriculum.* – The Department of Education (DepEd) shall develop and integrate into the basic education curriculum age-appropriate content, learning competencies, instructional materials, and other learning resources consistent with this Act and with the standards and principles governing the enhanced basic education curriculum.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in consultation with higher education institutions, shall develop model frameworks, reference materials, and recommended approaches for the integration of the subject matter covered by this Act into higher education. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as authorizing the abridgment of the academic freedom or curricular autonomy of higher education institutions.

The DepEd and CHED shall undertake their respective responsibilities under this Act in consultation with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), relevant cultural agencies, academic institutions, historians, scholars, educators, indigenous peoples' representatives, and other appropriate stakeholders, and with the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), pursuant to Sections 5 and 7 of Republic Act No. 10086, otherwise known as the "Strengthening Peoples' Nationalism Through Philippine History Act."

Sec. 5. *Instructional and Learning Resources.* – All public and private

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institutions shall use textbooks and learning resources aligned with the curriculum developed by the DepEd for the primary and secondary levels, and by the CHED for the tertiary level. Further, these institutions shall adopt creative, culturally responsive, and accessible mediums as supplemental teaching materials, including but not limited to the following, to ensure an inclusive and engaging learning experience for all students:

(a) Literature;

(b) Research studies;

(c) Films;

(d) Documentaries;

(e) Theater performances;

(f) Digital media; and

(g) Community-based artworks.

Sec. 6. *Protection of Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Integrity.* – In developing and using content concerning indigenous women and indigenous cultural communities, the implementing agencies and educational institutions shall ensure meaningful consultation with the concerned communities and respect for their indigenous knowledge systems and practices, customary laws, cultural integrity, and collective intellectual and cultural property rights.

Where required by applicable law, the documentation, publication, or educational use of indigenous knowledge, oral histories, cultural expressions, and community-held information shall be subject to free and prior informed consent and other appropriate community protocols.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed as authorizing the disclosure, reproduction, or use of sacred, confidential, or culturally restricted knowledge without the consent of the concerned indigenous cultural community.

Sec. 7. *Appropriations.* – This Act will be implemented initially within the framework of the budget of the DepEd and CHED for the year it is enacted into law. As far as practicable, the funds required will be drawn from their appropriations for policy formulation, program planning, standards development, and instructional materials development. Thereafter, the amounts as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act will be included in the budget of the DepEd and CHED in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the

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effectivity of this Act, the DepEd and CHED, in consultation with the NHCP, the PCW, relevant cultural agencies, academic institutions, and other appropriate stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

Sec. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining parts or provisions not affected will continue in full force and effect.

Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and other issuances, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Sec. 11. *Effectivity.* – This Act takes effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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