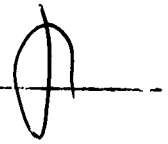


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

23 AUG 24 P 3 :00

SENATE

RECEIVED BY:



S. No. 2425

Introduced by Senator MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING A NATIONWIDE LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION
PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Art. XIV, Section 9 provides that "[t]he Congress shall establish a national language commission composed of representatives of various regions and disciplines which shall undertake, coordinate, and promote researches for the development, propagation, and **preservation of Filipino and other languages.**" (Emphasis supplied)

It is undeniable that the Philippines is a linguistically diverse society with about 130 different languages. However, out of these languages, "close to 40 are considered endangered as speakers are only about 8,000 or less and are slowly diminishing since their mother tongues are no longer the language of choice and use, replaced by Filipino or in other areas, Ilocano and Sebwano."¹


Examples of these nearly extinct languages are Isarog Agta (with only five documented speakers), Ata (three), Arta (11) and Sorsogon Ayta (15).² In response to this sad reality of dying or endangered languages, the government had initiated and implemented programs and policies that aim to preserve, revive and encourage the use of local languages. Examples of these are the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) enshrined in Republic Act No. 10533 or the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013" and the Language Immersion Program of the Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino.

¹ <https://lifestyle.inquirer.net/325511/kwf-races-to-save-dying-philippine-languages/>

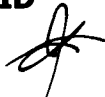
² <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1155014/saving-ph-diverse-languages-from-extinction>

However, addressing this problem of language extinction requires the implementation of a nationwide and comprehensive program. The institutionalization of a Language Revitalization Program for all the dying or endangered languages in the country is the aim of this proposed measure. This bill mandates the Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples to undertake the task of identifying, describing and mapping all of the dying and endangered languages in the Philippines with the end-goal of creating the List of Dying and Endangered Philippine Languages. Also, Bahay-Wika or language revitalization centers shall be established in areas identified in the List. These Centers shall be responsible for the implementation of language learning and immersion programs for students and adults, teacher training on the dying and endangered languages and the development of relevant courses and instructional materials.

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




MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator



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S. No. 2425

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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING A NATIONWIDE LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION
PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

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SECTION 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the "Bahay-Wika Act of 2023".

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Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared as a policy of the Government to preserve and revitalize dying and endangered local languages in the Philippines for purposes of affording future generations the use and appreciation the richness and beauty of these languages and the cultures that they underpin.

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Sec. 3. *Identification of Dying and Endangered Languages.* – Within one (1) year after the effectivity of this Act, the Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino (KWF), in coordination with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), shall undertake a comprehensive research program for the identification, description and mapping of dying and endangered languages in the Philippines. The outcome of this research program shall be the List of Dying and Endangered Philippine Languages, which shall contain information regarding the number of active speakers, the general location of active speakers, the availability of translators, among other data that the concerned agencies deem necessary. This List shall be updated on an annual basis.

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Sec. 4. *Establishment of Bahay-Wika.* – On the basis of the List of Dying and Endangered Philippine Languages, the KWF shall undertake the establishment of Bahay-Wika, or a language revitalization center, in the public elementary and secondary schools of the

1 cities or municipalities identified as the areas where a significant number of active speakers
2 still lives.

3 These centers shall:

- 4 a. implement extra-curricular classes and seminars on learning and immersing with the
5 dying and endangered language for the students in the respective schools where these
6 are stationed. Priority shall be given to students who belong to the indigenous
7 communities that speak said language;
- 8 b. provide relevant trainings to teachers on how to incorporate the dying and endangered
9 language to the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the basic
10 education curriculum;
- 11 c. provide a program for the teaching of the dying and endangered language to the adult
12 members of the ethnic group; and
- 13 d. develop courses and instructional materials, such as books, dictionaries, translations
14 and multi-media tools for learning the dying and endangered language and for
15 instruction using such language.

16 The personnel complement of these Centers shall be funded by the KWF, including the
17 appointment of at least one language expert based on the qualifications to be set by the KWF.
18 Teachers in the schools where the Centers are stationed may be designated as its staff subject
19 to the grant of additional honoraria and allowances.

20 *Sec. 5. Annual Report.* – The Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino shall submit to Congress an
21 annual report on the status of the implementation of this Act.

22 *Sec. 6. Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this
23 Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino.
24 Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued implementation of the language
25 revitalization program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

26 *Sec. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino shall
27 issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act not later
28 than ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

29 *Sec. 8. - Separability Clause.* - Should any provision of this Act or the application
30 thereof to any person or circumstance be held invalid, the other provisions or sections of this
31 Act shall not be affected thereby.

1 *Sec. 9. - Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations
2 or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified
3 accordingly.

4 *Sec. 10. Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
5 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

6 *Approved,*