

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS  
**First Regular Session**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 4508**



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Introduced by **HON. GUS S. TAMBUNTING**

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**AN ACT**  
**INSTITUTIONALIZING HUMAN RIGHTS AS A SEPARATE AND SPECIALIZED SUBJECT**  
**IN BOTH BASIC AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Section 18, subparagraph 5, Article XIII of the Constitution obliges the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to "establish a continuing program of research education, and information to enhance respect for the primacy of human rights."

Subsequent legislation, such as Republic Act Nos. 6655 or the "Free Secondary Education Act", 9710 or the "Magna Carta of Women", 9745 or the "Anti-Torture Act", and 9262 or the "Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act" also expressly mandate government agencies to teach human rights in schools and other training institutions.

On top of these, various international human rights instruments, many of which are ratified by the Philippines, encourage State parties to provide for Human Rights Education (HRE). A 2012 study commissioned by the CHR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the state of HRE in the Philippines however, reported that HRE was only taught at an appreciation level with HRE only being incorporated in various existing subjects from Grade 1-12.

Considering the numerous accounts of human rights violations, it is only apt that the State introduces measures to protect citizens against abuses. This measure is proposed to build a strong positive human right culture where everyone's rights are fully protected and realized. This measure seeks to deepen the HRE and go beyond the appreciation level through the institutionalization of HRE as a separate and specialized subject in both basic and higher education curricula.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gus S. Tambunting".

**REP. GUS S. TAMBUNTING**  
2nd District, Parañaque City

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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 shall be known as the “Human Rights Education Act.”

**Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – As an integral part of our Constitution, human right is a concept that all Filipinos must learn and practice if we are to survive as a modern democracy. As such our learning institutions must ensure that citizens are properly educated on the principles of human rights in both formal and non-formal settings. In furtherance thereof, it is hereby declared a policy of the State to require all educational institutions to teach human rights as a specialized subject taught separately and progressively throughout the basic and higher education programs.

**Sec. 3. Curriculum.** – The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall identify international human rights education, standards, and best practices for basic and higher education, respectively, and adopt, those that they may determine to be aligned with the existing State Policies and domestic conditions. Consistent with such standards and best practices, the DepEd and CHED, in consultation with the Commission on Human Rights, shall formulate the corresponding curricula and the course programs for human rights studies for basic and higher education that shall, at the minimum:

1. Consist of teaching modules or course syllabi that cover an introduction to basic human rights principles, such as equality, non-discrimination, human dignity, inclusion, empowerment, environmental awareness, and respect for the rights of women, children, indigenous peoples, Persons with Disability (PWDs), and of people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression (SOGIE), and other marginalized or vulnerable sectors;
2. Focus on personal values, attitudes, and behaviors that promote personal responsibility for respecting, upholding, and protecting human rights; and

3. Provide practical information for protecting oneself from gender-based violence, child abuse, and exploitation.

**Sec. 4. Implementation Period.** – The DepEd and CHED shall formulate and finalize their respective curricula within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act and implement the same within two (2) years from the effectivity of this Act.

**Sec. 5. Mandatory Evaluation and Reporting.** – Every four (4) years, the DepEd and CHED shall conduct a mandatory review of the implementation of this Act and submit a report of its findings to Congress.

**Sec. 6. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the implementing agencies. Thereafter, such an amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

**Sec. 7. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, presidential proclamations, letters of instruction, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**Sec. 8. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

**Sec. 9. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the official Gazette or two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

*Approved,*