

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

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5710**



---

**INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ALFRED VARGAS**

---

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Public libraries play a vital role in the national and social development of our citizens. Libraries contribute to the improvement of literacy in the country, enable easy access to information and information technology, help deepen one's rootedness in the community, and facilitate the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. If properly supported, public libraries provide the people with access to resources which can help improve their intellectual, economic, and social well-being.

As we are now in the modern era of information literacy, the State must recognize the immense potential of technology and public libraries as hand-in-hand partners in the development of a strong nation.

This bill seeks to equip our public libraries with the latest computer and electronic library technology. Through this, we are closing the gap between the citizens – the children, the youth, the vulnerable and marginalized, the entrepreneur, or the scientist – and their access to technology and information, thereby empowering people to unleash their potential and meet their information needs.

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

  
**ALFRED VARGAS**

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

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**5710**  
HOUSE BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

---

**INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ALFRED VARGAS**

---

**AN ACT**

**AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7743, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL, CITY, AND MUNICIPAL LIBRARIES AND BARANGAY READING CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

**SECTION 1.** Section 2 of RA 7743 is hereby amended to read as follows:

**SECTION 2. Establishment of Public Libraries and Reading Center.**

The National Library in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall undertake the establishment of additional public libraries to serve all congressional districts, cities and municipalities in the Philippines and reading centers in every barangay except in cities or municipalities where there are existing public libraries or in barangays where there are existing public libraries or in barangays where there are existing reading centers: Provided, That the [establishment of such libraries and reading centers shall be based on the development program of the National Library] **ESTABLISHMENT PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY SHALL BE BASED ON THE LATEST COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY**, in coordination with the development council of each city or municipality and in the case of the barangay reading centers, in coordination with the respective barangay councils: Provided, further, That where these public libraries and reading centers already exist, the National Library shall continue to upgrade the facilities thereof [.] **WITH COMPLETE STANDARD SETS OF BOOKS, E-BOOKS, ONLINE RESEARCH RESOURCES AND OTHER MATERIALS AS PROVIDED UNDER SEC. 3 OF THIS ACT AS WELL AS THE LATEST ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SYSTEM USING COMPUTERS FOR STORING, CATALOGING, AND FILING OF DATA AND MATERIALS: PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT BY THE YEAR 2022, ALL THE CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES WILL BE PROVIDED WITH ELECTRONICALLY-OPERATED LIBRARY SYSTEM".**

SEC. 2. Section 7 of RA 7743 is hereby amended to read as follows:

**“Section 7. Appropriation.** The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law [and for the next five (5) years: thereafter this local government units shall undertake the maintenance of public libraries and reading centers while the National Library shall continue to provide reading materials and supplies to the said libraries and reading centers]. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FUNDS NECESSARY FOR THE ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SYSTEM TO BE IMPLEMENTED, THE BUDGET OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY SHALL BE INCREASED IN THE AMOUNT OF FIVE HUNDRED MILLION PESOS (P500,000,000.00) PER YEAR UNTIL ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES ARE PROVIDED AND HAVE ACCESS TO FULL ELECTRONIC LIBRARY FACILITIES.

**SEC. 3. Role of the DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION and COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (DICT).** – The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall assist in the provision of the cutting-edge computer and electronic library technology, as well as a fast and reliable internet connection, through the Department’s flagship program, the Technology for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs, and Economic Development (Tech4ED) Project.

**SEC. 4. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or portions thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 5. Effectivity.** – This Act take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,