

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



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. 1845

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This measure is intended to meet the urgent and reasonable need to protect the health, safety and overall well-being of school children and student youth by adopting a school calendar most suited to Philippine climatic conditions. It would be negated by inability to go to school due to monsoon rains, typhoons respiratory illness of children aggravated by being wet and chilled by rain, or lack of classrooms destroyed by typhoons. This change is consonant with Philippine climatic conditions and the health and safety needs of the children and youth.

The months of June to August are the heaviest rainy months and the occurrence of the greater number of typhoons and monsoon rains. During these months, school children are subjected to the irregularity of school days due to the rains and floods, horrendous difficulties of commuting to and from school, danger to life from open drains resistance and aggravated by intermittent cough, colds and chills. Many of our public schools are unfit for appropriate classroom instruction and the health of the school children when the rains come. Those conducting classes outside of the school itself will be unable to do so.

The school calendar proposed for pre-elementary, elementary, secondary levels post-secondary and tertiary level of education is as follows:

First Semester: August to December plus Saturdays if needed to meet the 110 school days required excluding official holidays and to comply with required days plus enrolment or between semester periods to make up for non-seasonal typhoons, calamities and earthquakes.

Second Semester: January to May plus Saturdays if needed to comply with the 110 school days required and to make up for the days lost due to non-seasonal, climatic aberrations, calamities and necessary use of school facilities for refugees.

The nation can no longer ignore the reality that our school children and student youth suffer needlessly from having to go to school during the monsoon and typhoon/cyclone months of June to August and it is the time we also consider along with the weather the results of urbanization in school centers such as horrendous traffic difficulty of commuting and the rise of respiratory diseases as the major illness of children and youth below 18 and of school age.

Who will be benefited by this measure?

Each school year about 15.5 million pre-elementary, elementary and secondary school children are affected by the adverse climatic conditions under which they are forced to study, with an additional enrolment of about 300,000 each year.

For the post-secondary and tertiary levels, the school youth affected are about 1.44 million with an additional 78,000 to 122,000 more enrolled each year or about 1.5 million school youth affected of going to school during rainy season and monsoon or typhoon conditions.

For the sake of our children and youth, approval of this measure is urgent, reasonable and necessary for the protection of the future human resources of this nation-Filipino children and youth.



RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS)
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AN ACT

REVISING THE SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND STUDENT YOUTH, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* This Act shall be known as the “**School Calendar Act**”.

SEC 2. *School Calendar.* The annual school calendar for pre-elementary, elementary, secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels shall comprise two semesters for every calendar year. There shall be two hundred twenty (220) school days for every calendar year or one hundred ten (110) school days per semester. The first semester shall start the first week of August and shall continue until the second week of December and the second semester shall start the first week of January and continue until the third week of May.

The school calendar for shall comprise two (2) semesters. There shall be two hundred twenty (220) school days for every calendar year or one hundred ten (110) days per semester: *Provided, that,* for valid reasons with the written permission of the Commission on Higher Education, public or private post-secondary and tertiary level school may adopt a particular school calendar on a semestral or modified trimester basis geared to the needs of its students and the specific climatic conditions of the area where the school is located:

Subject to the provisions of this Act, the school calendar for the pre-elementary, elementary and secondary levels shall be determined by the Department of Education, taking into consideration days required for enrolment, official holidays and between semester days off from school for the health of school children. When necessary to complete the required number of school days and to make up for the days lost due to *force majeure*, the Department may include Saturdays in the school calendar.

Subject to the provisions of this Act, the actual school calendar and required hours for study according to credits for every trimester of the post-secondary and tertiary level shall be determined by the Commission on Higher Education, taking into consideration the enrolment period, official holidays, and days off from school for the well-being of school youth. The Commission may require school days on Saturdays to complete required hours for courses or to make up for days lost due to *force majeure*.

The revised school calendar pursuant to this Act shall be implemented starting the school year immediately succeeding the passage of this Act.

SEC 3. *Rules and Regulation.* The rules and regulation for the implementation of this Act shall be promulgated by the Department of Education, for the public and private pre-elementary, elementary and secondary levels and by the Commission on Higher Education and the public and private post-secondary and tertiary level of education.

SEC 4. *Resources.* Resources required for the appropriate implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual general appropriations of the Department of Education, for the pre-elementary, elementary and secondary levels and of the Commission on Higher Education for the post-secondary and tertiary level. Funds required for the initial year of

implementation of the School Calendar from the present system to that proposed under this Act shall be derived from any savings or unused funds of the Department of Education for the pre-elementary, elementary and secondary levels and from the resources under the Act creating the Commission on Higher Education for the post-secondary and tertiary level.

SEC 5. *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 6. *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 7. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect after publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,