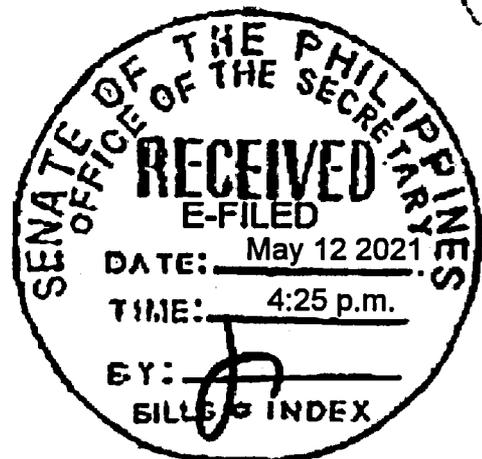


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 722

Introduced by SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE RECOGNITION AND PROMOTION OF THE FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE AS THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION OF DEAF EDUCATION, AS MANDATED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11106 OR THE FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE ACT, FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING ITS IMPACT TO DEAF LEARNERS AND TEACHERS UNDER THE K TO 12 BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM, IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING IMPLEMENTATION GAPS, ISSUES, AND CHALLENGES, AND CRAFTING COMPLEMENTARY OR AMENDATORY LEGISLATION

1 **WHEREAS**, Section 1, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution provides that
2 the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education
3 at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education
4 accessible to all;

5 **WHEREAS**, Section 21 of The Salamanca Statement and Framework for
6 Action on Special Needs Education, to which the Philippines is a signatory,
7 provides that the importance of sign language as the medium of
8 communication among the deaf should be recognized and provision be made
9 to ensure that all deaf persons have access to education in their national sign
10 language;

11 **WHEREAS**, the 2010 Census of then National Statistics Office reported
12 that twenty percent (20%) of Filipinos who have disabilities are in the age

1 group 0-14, while the earlier 2000 Census estimated over 45,000 persons to
2 have a form of hearing impairment;¹

3 **WHEREAS**, based on the data of the Department of Education (DepEd),
4 as of February 2017, a total of 648 Special Education (SPED) Centers and
5 regular schools were offering SPED Programs, and for the school years 2016
6 to 2017, there were 2,885 SPED Teachers teaching 13,365 learners with
7 diagnosed hearing impairment under the K to 12 basic education system;²

8 **WHEREAS**, a deaf child is one who cannot hear, needs accessibility, and
9 has a unique language and culture. In the Philippines, Filipino Sign Language
10 (FSL) is the identity and language of the deaf³ and has a tremendous impact
11 on literacy that without a strong foundation thereon, literacy in written
12 language will be very poor⁴;

13 **WHEREAS**, the promotion and recognition of FSL have been pronounced
14 in several laws enacted by Congress including, but not limited to, Republic
15 Act (RA) No. 10410 or the Early Years Act of 2013 and RA No. 10533 or the
16 Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013;

17 **WHEREAS**, on October 30, 2018, RA No. 11106 or The Filipino Sign
18 Language Act, the most critical measure highlighting the importance of FSL,
19 was signed into law;

20 **WHEREAS**, under Section 3 of the said law, FSL is declared as the
21 national sign language of the Philippines and shall be recognized, promoted
22 and supported as the medium of official communication in all transactions

¹ Submission from Civil Society to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for the List of Issues of the Philippines by the Deaf Education Council (Philippines), Pre-Sessional Working Group 57 (March 7-11, 2016). https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CESCR/Shared%20Documents/PHL/INT_CESCR_ICO_PHL_23036_E.pdf. Accessed on April 24, 2021.

² Gathered from the Disability Data of the National Council on Disability Affairs. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iTCSWS6WNchS1mLSwf9na7hSJ199ebxU/view>. Accessed on April 24, 2021.

³ Deaf Education Council, Public Hearing on Special Education Act and Inclusive Education Act by the Senate Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture Joint with the Committees on Ways and Means; Finance; and Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality, January 23, 2020

⁴ Deaf Education Council, Public Hearing on Special Education Act and Inclusive Education Act by the Senate Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture Joint with the Committees on Ways and Means; Finance; and Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality, July 2, 2020

1 involving the deaf, and as the language of instruction of deaf education,
2 without prejudice to the use of other forms of communication depending on
3 individual choice or preference;

4 **WHEREAS**, Section 4 of the mentioned law provides for the significance
5 of FSL in education through the following: (a) use of FSL as the medium of
6 instruction in deaf education and the teaching of FSL as a separate subject
7 in the curriculum for deaf learners; (b) promotion of the licensing and
8 mobilization of deaf teachers in formal education as well as alternative
9 learning systems; (c) inclusion of FSL as a curricular or co-curricular offering
10 in teacher education programs; and (d) undertaking of regular pre-service and
11 in-service training and evaluation of teachers by all national and local
12 government agencies and centers providing education to deaf students;

13 **WHEREAS**, to ensure that the objectives of the said law will not remain
14 aspirational, Section 13 thereof prescribes for the issuance of the necessary
15 rules and regulations for its implementation by the Komisyon sa Wikang
16 Filipino, in coordination with the Secretary of Education, the Chairperson of
17 the Commission on Higher Education, the Director General of the Technical
18 Education and Skills Development Authority, the Chairperson of the
19 Professional Regulation Commission, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court,
20 the Secretary of Justice, and the heads of other relevant agencies, and in
21 consultation with the representatives of the deaf community, teachers with
22 knowledge and experience with the use of FSL in deaf education, the academe,
23 interpreters, and other persons concerned within one hundred eighty (180)
24 days after its effectivity;

25 **WHEREAS**, Section 14 thereof further creates an Inter-Agency Council
26 with the mandate of making an annual report on the law's monitoring and
27 implementation, submitting a copy thereof to both Houses of Congress, and
28 publishing in accessible formats in the respective websites of the members of
29 the Council and through other means necessary to serve the purpose of
30 effective dissemination;

31 **WHEREAS**, notwithstanding the enactment of these laws which stress
32 the importance of FSL, there has been serious neglect on their

1 implementation⁵ which continuously causes communication, information,
2 and institutional barriers in deaf education;⁶

3 **WHEREAS**, the insufficient training of teachers on FSL, non-promotion
4 of the licensing and mobilization of deaf teachers, lack of FSL materials, non-
5 issuance of the implementing rules and regulations of RA No. 11106, and non-
6 submission of the Inter-Agency Council of an annual report on the law's
7 monitoring and implementation further aggravate such barriers in deaf
8 education;

9 **WHEREAS**, the following issues surrounding teacher training on FSL
10 have been a concern prior to the enactment of RA No. 11106: (a) education
11 programs for sign language instruction and interpreter training are all done
12 by a handful of nonprofit organizations with no government regulations; (b)
13 teachers act as interpreters in the classrooms and are pulled away from their
14 duties to interpret in trial courts and police stations; (c) teacher education
15 programs have no sign language instruction; and (d) public school teachers
16 are typically hired with zero signing skills or are just given a crash course on
17 pre-service training for a few weeks and an annual in-service training on
18 signing skills⁷;

19 **WHEREAS**, the licensing and mobilization of deaf teachers are not being
20 promoted as there are many deaf graduates in education who fail the
21 Licensure Examination for Teachers which does not match the competencies
22 for which they are prepared for. This creates an institutional barrier for deaf
23 graduates who, instead of entering the educational system as teachers, tend
24 to end up as tutors with low-paying jobs;⁸

25 **WHEREAS**, deaf learners are unable to improve their learning processes
26 because of the lack of the production of FSL materials as a result of the non-
27 inclusion of skilled and competent deaf teachers in their production and due

⁵ *Supra* Note 3

⁶ *Supra* Note 4

⁷ *Supra* Note 1

⁸ *Supra* Note 4

1 to the view of the DepEd that FSL materials are only supplementary
2 materials;⁹

3 **WHEREAS**, since the effectivity of RA No. 11106 in 2018, no
4 implementing rules and regulations thereon have been issued and no annual
5 reports have been submitted by the Inter-Agency Council to both Houses of
6 Congress;

7 **WHEREAS**, there is an urgent need to determine the impact of the
8 recognition and promotion of FSL as the language of instruction of deaf
9 education to ensure that the objectives under RA No. 11106 for deaf learners
10 and teachers are ultimately achieved;

11 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE**
12 **PHILIPPINES**, to direct the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an
13 inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the recognition and promotion of the Filipino
14 Sign Language as the language of instruction of deaf education, as mandated
15 under RA No. 11106 or The Filipino Sign Language Act, for the purpose of
16 determining its impact to deaf learners and teachers under the K to 12 basic
17 education system, identifying and addressing implementation gaps, issues,
18 and challenges, and crafting complementary or amendatory legislation.

Adopted,



WIN GATCHALIAN

⁹ *Ibid.*