

As a result of the fierce criticism against the bill itself as well as frequently inconsistent explanations by the government, the controversial bill was dropped. However, the ruling party succeeded in reaching a backroom agreement with two centrist parties on further deliberation of future United Nations peace cooperation. Future developments of this problem warrant further attention.

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b. Administrative Law

The Lifelong Learning Act.

Promulgated on June, 29, 1990. Ch. 71. Effective as of July 1, 1990.

[Background of the Legislation]

With the improvement of the standard of living, the increase of free time, and the development of an aging society, the need for lifelong study has become increasingly recognized. In order to meet this demand of the times, the state must provide various opportunities for learning and take measures to promote spontaneous individual activities. This Act was enacted to make preparations to support lifelong learning and take necessary measures for administrative adjustment.

[Main Points of the Act]

The Board of Education of each city and town shall make an effort to: (a) collect, arrange, and provide information concerning opportunities for learning and cultural activities; (b) research the resident demand for learning and examine methods of assessing the results of learning; (c) develop a learning system appropriate for local circumstances; and (d) train leaders and advisers concerning learning (Article 3).

Cities and towns may draw up basic plans concerning the systematic provision of various opportunities for learning and cultural activities with the assistance of private businesses. Recognition of the basic plan by the Ministers of Education and International Trade and Industry may be applied for (Article 5).

A Council of Lifelong Learning will be established within the Ministry of Education (Article 10).

[Comment]

This is the first legislation in Japan on lifelong learning. The Act uses the words “lifelong learning”, instead of “lifelong education,” considering that learning and cultural activities should be accomplished through individual free will. In this sense, lifelong learning is a problem all of us have to wrestle with. However, the government can promote a shift to a system of lifelong learning by taking various measures. This Act is widely expected to be a starting point for the future development of the system of lifelong learning.

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2. Commercial Law

Act Partially Amending the Commercial Code, etc.

Promulgated on June 29, 1990. Ch. 64. Effective as of April 1, 1991.

[Background of the Legislation]

This Act amends provisions of the Commercial Code, the *Yugen-kaisha* (company with limited liability) Act and the Act