

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3452**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
RECEIVED	
DATE:	05 SEP 2016
TIME:	1:50 PM
BY:	[Signature]
REGISTRATION UNIT BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE	

Introduced by AKBAYAN Representative Tomasito S. Villarin

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is evident that income inequalities prevent the youth from having access to education. Low income families are not capable of sending their children to school due to high tuition fees and other school related expenses. Thus, instead of sending children after high school to college, most of the poor students opt to work in order to help their respective families.

Tertiary education should not be viewed as added burden for poor families. It must be viewed as a tool that can help poor families to break out of the cycle of vicious poverty.

Thus, the State should uphold the right of Filipinos to quality education at all levels. It serves the State's goals if it has an educated citizenry.

This bill seeks to pursue free tertiary education in state universities and colleges thru government subsidies. Such subsidies are a form of investment for the State.

To implement this mandate, this legislative proposal provides for the guidelines on the following: (a) eligibility for tuition fee subsidy, (b) disqualification from free tuition, (c) creation of a special tuition fee subsidy fund, and (d) appropriation for the cost of the tuition fee subsidy fund.

By providing free and quality tertiary education, the State invests on its citizens so that students coming from poor families will have the ability to move up the economic ladder. Upon entering the labor force, the educated students will be able to contribute more significantly to the economic goals of the country.

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


TOMASITO S. VILLARIN

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3452**

Introduced by AKBAYAN Representative Tomasito S. Villarin

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A FULL TUITION FEE SUBSIDY FOR STUDENTS
ENROLLED IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCs), AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF

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 “Free Higher Education for All Act.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared that accessible and quality education is an inalienable right of the Filipino. Therefore, the State shall renew its constitutionally mandated duty to make education its top budgetary priority by providing free higher education for all students in state universities and colleges.

SEC. 3. Eligibility to the Full Tuition Subsidy. – All Filipino citizens who are either currently enrolled at the time of effectivity of this Act, or shall enroll at any time thereafter, in courses in pursuance of a bachelor’s degree, certificate degree, or any comparable undergraduate degree in any state university or college shall be exempt from paying tuition fees; *Provided*, That they meet the admission requirements of the SUCs where they intend to enroll in.

SEC. 4 . Exceptions to the Full Tuition Subsidy. – The provisions of the next preceding Section of this Act notwithstanding the following are hereby disqualified and deemed ineligible for the full tuition subsidy:

- a) Persons who have already attained a bachelors degree or equivalent degree from any higher education institution, whether public or private;
- b) Persons who have been dishonorably discharged from any higher education institution, whether public or private, for any reason other than financial difficulty in paying tuition and other fees;
- c) Persons who have been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude;
- d) Persons who fail to regain good academic standing within their respective state universities and colleges after one (1) year upon being placed on academic probation or delinquent status.

SEC. 5. Special Tuition Subsidy Fund. – The Special Tuition Subsidy Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Fund, is hereby established. The Fund shall be used solely for the purpose of implementing the full tuition subsidy under the provisions of this Act. Tuition fees for units enrolled by persons eligible for the tuition benefit under the provisions of this Act, payable to state universities and colleges, shall be paid from this Fund.

SEC. 6. Administration of the Fund. – The Fund shall be administered by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and shall have the following powers and functions:

- a) Manage and administer the Fund;
- b) Devise a reporting mechanism to be implemented by the state universities and colleges which will detail the exact amount of tuition fee subsidy availed of by persons eligible for the full tuition subsidy under this Act;
- c) Formulate and implement an efficient and transparent mechanism to ensure the payment of tuition fees, using money from the Fund, to the respective state universities and colleges, pursuant to this Act;
- d) Resolve and mediate disputes concerning the ineligibility or disqualification of persons from the full tuition subsidy under the provisions of this Act or any other provision of this law; and
- e) Any other powers or functions necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 7. Tuition Report. – The President of each state university or college shall submit to the CHED, within five (5) days after the last day of late registration for each semester, a report detailing the names of persons eligible for the full tuition subsidy in their institution, as well as the amount of tuition fee due based on the number of units enrolled.

SEC. 8. Payment from the Fund. - The CHED shall ensure the full payment of tuition fees due to the state university or college, as reported under the next preceding section of this Act, no later than thirty (30) days after the submission of the report to the CHED; *Provided*, That the CHED shall reserve the right to withhold or disallow the payment of any reported fees which are perceived to be anomalous or irregular until further investigation has been conducted.

SEC. 9. Accountability Report. - At the end of each academic semester, the President of each university or college shall submit to CHED a report reconciling the funds received from the Fund. Any unused or improperly disbursed amount shall be returned immediately to the Fund.

SEC. 10. Midterm Report. - Starting the first school year upon effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall conduct a mandatory review and submit a midterm report to Congress as to the status of implementation of this Act.

In this midterm report, the following key metrics of access to and quality of public tertiary education:

- a) Enrollment rate;
- b) Student demographics;
- c) Graduation rate;
- d) Gross tuition receipts;
- e) Disqualification and ineligibility;
- f) Teachers' welfare and training profiles;
- g) Adequacy of funding and training profiles;
- h) Other educational quality indicators, including but not limited to physical leaning infrastructures, teacher-to-student ratio and student housing.

SEC. 11. Appropriations. - The amount of Twenty Billion Pesos (P20,000,000) is hereby initially appropriated from the Presidential Social Fund to implement the provision of this Act. Thereafter, such amount necessary to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 13. Separability Clause. - Should any provision herein be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of this Act.

SEC. 14. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 15. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,