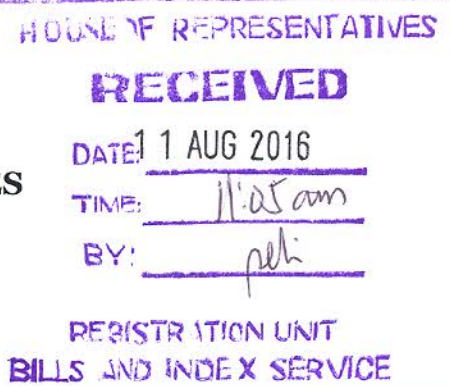


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2856



Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE EXPANDED STUDENTS GRANTS-IN-AID PROGRAM FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION (ESGP-PA) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article 4, Section 1 of the Constitution mandates that the State should "protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."


Unfortunately, access to tertiary education in the country remains a challenge especially to the poor and the underprivileged. A nationwide NEDA-commissioned survey entitled "Ambisyon 2040", which looks into the aspirations, values and principles of Filipinos, showed that 79 percent of Filipinos aspire for a simple and comfortable life which includes having the capacity to provide college education for their family.

An Annual Poverty Indicators Survey released by the Philippine Statistics Office showed, however, that almost 30 percent of high school graduates could not afford to earn a college degree.

Hence, this measure seeks to address this problem by establishing a mechanism that will enable poor Filipino families, especially the beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), to have at least one college graduate. Through the institutionalization of the Expanded Student Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA), a student-beneficiary will be entitled to a maximum of P60,000 per academic year to cover the cost for tuition and other school fees to complete the student-grantee's degree program. State universities and colleges shall monitor the academic performance of the beneficiaries at the end of each academic year until they have graduated.

This bill ultimately ensures that even the poor and underprivileged Filipino families will be provided the opportunity to have at least one family member who graduated from college, which is an effective tool that will help every Filipino family rise from poverty, and enable them to contribute to national development.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly requested.


ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.
4th District, Quezon

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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 "*Libreng Kolehiyo Laban sa Kahirapan Act*."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy*. - It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all Filipinos to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. It is also the policy of the State to establish and maintain a system of grants, scholarships and subsidies, which shall be available to deserving students, especially those who belong to the marginalized sector of society, in order to help poor families rise above poverty and contribute to national development.

SEC. 3. *Objective*. - This Act seeks to contribute to the National Government's thrust to effectively address poverty by increasing the number of graduates in higher education among poor households and by ensuring that these graduates are employed in high-value occupations. This Act will ensure that qualified household beneficiaries of the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* (4Ps) shall have at least one family member who has a college degree.

SEC. 4. *Establishment of an Expanded Student Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA)*. - There shall be established an Expanded Student Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA), which shall be exclusively granted and used for the tertiary education of poor but deserving students belonging to poor households under the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) identified by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Qualified student-beneficiaries shall be enrolled in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and in priority and other degree programs that the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) may consider critical to national development.

SEC. 5. *Coverage*. - The ESGP-PA may only be granted to deserving students belonging to the poor households covered by the 4Ps who qualified to enrol in selected SUCs to pursue priority programs of the CHED.

SEC. 6. *Entitlement*. - A student-beneficiary shall be entitled to a maximum of Sixty Thousand Pesos (Php60,000.00) per academic year, which shall be utilized to cover the cost of tuition and other school fees, academic and extracurricular expenses, textbooks, board and lodging, transportation, uniform, medical needs and other valid

related education expenses and support services to complete the student-beneficiary's degree program.

SEC. 7. *Selection Procedure.* – The DSWD shall identify and validate potential student-beneficiaries from among household beneficiaries of the 4Ps Program, which shall be submitted to participating SUCs for admission process. It shall likewise monitor together with CHED the implementation of the program.

SEC. 8. *Creation of the National ESGP-PA Committee.* – A National ESGP-PA Committee is hereby created, which shall be composed of the following:

1. CHED Chairperson as Chairperson of the Committee;
2. Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management as member;
3. Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development as member;
4. Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment as member; and
5. President of the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges as member

SEC. 9. *Function of the National ESGP-PA Committee.* – The Committee shall exercise the following functions:

1. Oversee the operation and implementation of the program;
2. Enhance the policies that will ensure that the services provided by the program shall serve the target student-beneficiaries;
3. Provide orientation to SUCs on the implementation of the program;
4. Reallocate unfilled slots to other equally deserving student-beneficiaries;
5. Decide on appeals, grievances, complaints, request for additional slots; and
6. Monitor and evaluate the administration and implementation of the program

SEC. 10. *Qualifications of Student-Beneficiaries.* – Student-beneficiaries must possess the following qualifications:

1. Identified as belonging to households covered by the 4Ps;
2. Graduate of secondary education or its equivalent;
3. Pass the entrance exam and academic requirements set by the SUC where he or she intends to enrol;
4. Pass the requirements set by the National ESGP-PA Committee;
5. Must enrol in priority programs identified by CHED; and
6. Must have no other higher education scholarship or grant from other government institutions

SEC. 11. *Responsibilities of Student-Beneficiaries.* – The responsibilities of the student-beneficiaries are as follows:

1. Carry a full-load per semester as prescribed in the curriculum and must finish within the required period of the program;
2. Maintain a satisfactory academic performance in accordance with the policies and standards of the SUC;
3. Enter into a return service agreement of two (2) years after graduation; and
4. Adhere to the terms and conditions stipulated in the Contract

SEC. 12. *Responsibilities of Parents/Guardian of Student-Beneficiaries.* – The responsibilities of the parents/guardian of the student-beneficiaries are as follows:

1. Sign the Contract with the SUCs as the executor of the program;
2. Ensure that related expenses and other incidental expenses for health and uniform shall be paid on time;
3. Ensure that the student-beneficiary will religiously attend his/her classes, minimize absences, and complete school requirements;
4. Ensure that financial benefits directly received by the student beneficiary shall only be spent on legitimate purposes and on time; and
5. If the student-beneficiary is the head of the family, he or she shall assume the foregoing responsibilities to complete his or her studies

SEC. 13. *Monitoring and Reporting by State Universities and Colleges.* – State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) where student-beneficiaries of the ESGP-PA are enrolled shall monitor and report to the ESGP-PA Committee the academic performance of the grantees at the end of each academic year until the student-beneficiaries have graduated.

SEC. 14. *Appropriations.* – The Department of Budget and Management shall release to the respective SUCs the amount of Two Billion Five Hundred Million Pesos (Php2,500,000,00) for the student-beneficiaries and the activities of the program for each academic year, which shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CHED, in consultation with the DSWD, DOLE, DBM and PASUC shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act, within six (6) months from its effectivity.

SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining part or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC 17. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,