

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
18TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6723



Introduced by Representative EVELINA G. ESCUDERO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID 19) has compelled our government to resort to the drastic measure of enforcing community quarantine so as to contain the spread of the said highly infectious disease. Consequently, schools all over the country are closed.

As the world is still grappling to find the cure, the shutdown of our education system will most likely be extended. Just recently, the Department of Education (DepEd) has announced that the new school year, which usually starts in June, will start in the last week of August this year.

During the hearing of the House Committee on Higher and Technical Education (CHTE) on April 30, 2020, the Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA) reported that in School Year (SY) 2018-2019, there are 30.7M learners in the country, of which 27.8M are enrolled in elementary and high schools and 2.9M are enrolled in colleges and universities. The report further indicated that 16% of the students in elementary and high school are in private schools, and 54% of the students in college are in private colleges and universities.

The extended closure of schools and the delayed opening of classes will adversely affect private schools as they incur huge losses due to uncollected tuition whilst continuing to pay for the salaries of their teachers and personnel. In addition to the unrealized tuition due to the delayed opening of the school year, private schools will most likely see significant decrease in their enrollment. Teachers and personnel in public schools are no exemption as well, particularly those who serve under contract, job order or under a "no work, no pay" arrangement.

Thus, in recognition of the significant role of education workers, both teaching and non-teaching, play in the development of our nation's human capital, this bill seeks to

offer special assistance to teachers and staff of private schools and public schools who are so greatly affected by school closure due to public health emergencies and other crises.

Needless to state, human capital is the primary force that drives national development. Hence, measures to safeguard the well-being of our educators must be adopted.

In view of the foregoing, consideration of this bill to address the intended purpose is respectfully requested.

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO WORKERS IN THE
EDUCATION SECTOR AFFECTED BY SCHOOL CLOSURE DURING
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY AND OTHER ANALOGOUS CASES

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

Section. 1. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared as a policy of the State, consistent with the constitutional provisions on education and national development, to protect and sustain the workforce in the education sector even in times of public health emergencies and other similar crises. As such, school teachers and personnel who work for education and ultimately national development must be accorded the necessary support for their livelihood.

Sec. 2. Definition of Terms.

a.) "Public health emergency" is as an occurrence or imminent threat of an illness or health condition, caused by bio terrorism, epidemic or pandemic disease, or (a) novel and highly fatal infectious agent or biological toxin, that poses a substantial risk of a significant number of human fatalities or incidents or permanent or long-term disability¹ resulting in a prolonged closure of school facilities and other learning institutions.

b.) "Other analogous cases" means any occurrence or imminent threat of any calamity or disaster, natural or man-made, having the same effect of prolonged closure of schools and other learning institutions.

¹ WHO/DCD, 2001

c.) "Prolonged closure" refers to the closure of schools and other learning institutions with a minimum period of at least one (1) month.

Sec. 3. Financial Assistance to Private School Teachers and Non-Teaching Personnel. Teachers and non-teaching personnel of private schools and other learning institutions which have prolonged closure due to public health emergency or other analogous cases shall receive financial assistance in an amount equivalent to the prevailing applicable wage rate promulgated by the respective Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards or as may be determined by the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) taking into consideration the individual financial standings of the affected schools and other learning institutions, whichever is higher.

The DepEd and the CHED, as the case may be, shall formulate and establish the policies and mechanisms for the identification of qualified grantees.

Sec. 4. Financial Assistance to Job Order or Contract of Service Teachers and Non-Teaching Personnel in Public Schools.- In the case of teachers and non-teaching personnel in public schools employed under a job order or contract of service under a "no work, no pay" arrangement shall continue to receive their monthly or daily compensation, as the case may be, as a form of financial assistance from the government.

Sec. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations - The DepEd and the CHED shall promulgate the corresponding implementing rules and regulations of this Act within sixty (60) days from the date of its effectivity.

Sec. 6. Appropriations. - The funds necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be sourced from the respective budgets of the CHED and the DepEd, as the case may be, in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 7. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, and rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 8. Separability Clause. - If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

Sect. 9. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,

