

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4659



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The World Health Organization (WHO) has established that countries need to meet the minimum threshold of 23 doctors, nurses and midwives per 10,000 population in order to deliver essential health services. In the Philippines, the Department of Health (DOH) said the physician, nurse and midwife collective ratio is 22.67 per 10,000 population. While the country barely meets the minimum requirement of the WHO, another major issue that needs to be addressed is the severe maldistribution of physicians in the country.

According to the DOH, most physicians want to stay in urbanized areas since majority of development efforts are in the cities. This leaves far-flung communities largely underserved. There are instances wherein patients from the rural areas have to travel to Metro Manila to get proper treatment.

Moreover, many Filipino nurses and doctors migrate to other countries for better-paying jobs. Based on the data from the UP College of Medicine, about 80 percent of its graduates leave the country to practice medicine abroad.

The grim reality now is that some 58.2 percent of deaths were considered "unattended", data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed. This means that close to 6 out of 10 Filipinos died without even seeing a doctor, nurse or any other allied health professional.

To address this, this bill seeks to provide medical scholarships in state universities and colleges to qualified students. The scholarship grant shall cover expenses for tuition, laboratory and miscellaneous fees; textbooks, school supplies and equipment; board and lodging expenses; uniform allowance, and subsistence and living allowance.

Under the proposed measure, the scholar must work in the Philippines for five years—two years of which must be rendered in a government hospital where the scholar resides. In addition, the needed number of physicians of the town or province where the state university or college is situated shall be taken into consideration in determining the number of scholars.

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



LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

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AN ACT
PROVIDING MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIPS IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND
COLLEGES TO QUALIFIED STUDENTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

*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 "*Medical Scholarship Act.*"

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. In order to carry out such policy, the number of health professionals who will provide for the needed health services must meet the World Health Organization standards. Towards this end, the State shall establish a scholarship program that will encourage aspiring medical students to pursue education and training in the field of medicine and who, thereafter, shall render their services in government hospitals or offices.

SECTION 3. *Qualifications of Candidates.* – A scholarship in a state-run university or college shall be granted to any aspiring medical student, subject to the following qualifications:

- a) Must belong to the top twenty per centum (20%) of the graduating batch;
- b) The personal and/or family's income must not be sufficient to support the aspiring medical student's education;

- c) Must passed the National Medical Admission Test (NMAT);
- d) Must passed the medical school's entrance examination
- e) Such other qualifications as the state-run university or college may deem necessary, provided that it shall not defeat the purpose of this Act

SECTION 4. *Extent of Scholarship Grant.* – The scholarship grant shall cover expenses for, among others, tuition, laboratory and miscellaneous fees; required textbooks, school supplies and equipment; clothing and uniform allowances; traveling expenses; board and lodging expenses; and subsistence and living allowances.

SECTION 5. *Conditions of the Scholarship Grant.* – The admitted scholars shall continue to enjoy the benefits of the scholarship grant until the completion of the program, subject to the following conditions:

- a) The scholar should finish the entire program without any delay;
- b) The scholar may be allowed to file a leave of absence for one (1) school year in the institution where he/she is enrolled only for justifiable reasons;
- c) No other scholarship grant shall be accepted by the scholar while enjoying the benefits of this Act;
- d) Immediately after graduating from the program, the scholar must work in the country for five (5) years, two (2) years of which must be rendered in a government hospital or office where he/she resides.

SECTION 6. *Failure to Comply with the Conditions.* – Failure of the scholar to comply with Section 5 pars, (a), (b) and (c) shall automatically disqualify him/her to enjoy the benefits of the scholarship program. In addition thereto, the non-compliant scholar shall pay for all the expenses incurred during his/her participation in the scholarship program if any condition is breached.

SECTION 7. *Number of Scholars to be Admitted.* – Every five (5) years upon the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH), the Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the President and a representative from the respective Boards of Regents of the state universities or

colleges concerned shall determine the number of scholars that should be admitted every school year. The needed number of physicians of the town or province where the state university or college is situated shall be taken into consideration in determining the number of scholars, provided that the admitted scholars in any state university or college for any given school year shall not be less than five (5).

SECTION 8. *Appropriations.* – Fifty per centum (50%) of the amount necessary to effectively carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the DOH, while the remaining fifty per centum (50%) shall be coming from the funds of the covered state-run university or college. Thereafter, such amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within 60 days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of DOH, the Chairman of CHED, and the President and a representative from the respective Boards of Regents of the state universities or colleges concerned shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision herein be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of this Act.

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect in fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in one (1) newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,