

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4341**



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Introduced by: REPRESENTATIVE NOEL L. VILLANUEVA

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#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish a free college education program for one member of a family, who graduated from public high schools, desiring to pursue tertiary education in any state college and university.

The measure is in accord with the explicit Constitutional mandates that the State shall not only make education accessible to all but also to uphold the right of citizens to quality education.

It must be emphasized that in pursuance also with the aforementioned Constitutional mandates, Congress passed Republic Act No. 6655 otherwise known as the "*Free Secondary Education Act of 1988*." Consequently, the number of enrollees in public high schools has grown tremendously over the years.

However, pursuing college education for most of our countrymen has become very difficult due to poverty. Most of these high school graduates ended up as out-of-school youths or work as laborers or farm workers if not unemployed. Even when the government extended assistance to students and teachers in private education through Republic Act No. 6728 and its amendatory law, Republic Act No. 8545 otherwise known as the Expanded Government Assistance to Students and Teachers Education, many of our countrymen still do not have the means to avail of this privilege. What they really need is a free college education.

It is a fact that there is no substitute for education as investment in knowledge always pays the best interest and therefore, a ticket out of poverty and good station in life.

The foregoing reasons warrant the approval of this bill.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Noel L. Villanueva".

NOEL L. VILLANUEVA  
Representative  
Third District, Tarlac

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AN ACT  
PROVIDING FREE COLLEGE EDUCATION IN STATE COLLEGES AND  
UNIVERSITIES FOR ONE MEMBER OF A FAMILY WHO GRADUATED  
FROM OF A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS  
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "*Free College Education Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to establish free college education to one member of a family who graduated from public high school in order to afford them opportunity to be productive members of society and contribute to nation-building.

SEC. 3. *Definitions.* - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a) *Free College Education* - means that the students enrolled in any college degree course or program offered in any state colleges and universities shall be free from payment of tuition and other school fees;
- b) *Tuition Fee* - refers to the fee representing direct costs of instruction, training and other related activities and for the students' use of the instruction and training facilities;
- c) *Other school fees* - refers to the fees which cover other necessary costs supportive of instruction, including but not limited to medical and dental, athletic and laboratory fees;

- d) *Qualified beneficiary* - refers to only one member of a family who graduated from a public high school may avail of the privilege granted under this Act.

**SEC. 4. *Implementation of Free College Education.*** - The system of free college education as provided under this Act shall commence in the next school year following the approval of this Act. The qualified beneficiary enrolled in any course offerings in state college and universities shall be free from payment of tuition and other school fees: *Provided, That* nothing in this Act shall cause or authorize the reduction or removal of any benefit which the national or local government may have granted to the students prior to the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5. *Limitation.*** - The right of any qualified beneficiary to avail of free college education shall terminate if he or she fails in the majority of the academic subjects for the school year in which he or she is enrolled during the course of his or her study.

**SEC. 6. *Place of Study.*** - The qualified beneficiary shall take his free education in any state college and university of his or her choice in the city or province or within the region where he or she resides.

**SEC. 7. *Mandatory Admission.*** - It shall be mandatory for the state colleges and universities to admit a qualified beneficiary, who desire to avail of free college education: *Provided, however,* That, he or she shall pass the college admission test, if required as a matter of policy. Any rejection of qualified beneficiary shall constitute a ground for dismissal of the school authorities concerned.

**SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in consultation with the association of state colleges and universities, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act

**SEC. 9. *Appropriations.*** - The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged against the money in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

The President is hereby authorized to realign or transfer any item of appropriation within the CHED and/or utilize any savings therein to carry out the purposes of this Act. Such sums as maybe necessary for its continuous implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SEC. 10. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.