

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1706**



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Introduced by **HONORABLE LUIS RAYMUND F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

It is enshrined in the Constitution that the State must provide quality education that is accessible to all. As an archipelago, however, the country is replete with areas that are far too remote from city centers or unreachable due to natural topographic conditions. These same areas are heavily reliant on agriculture as their main source of income, and report high incidence of poverty. Due to limited opportunities, many residents choose to leave their rural hometowns in search of better employment and/or educational opportunities in the cities or even abroad. Such migration results in a vicious cycle of poverty and brain drain in the areas they leave behind.

Teachers are one of the most in demand professionals, especially abroad. In the last decade alone, the United States needed two million teachers while Arab countries reportedly needed at least 450 000. It is hereby imperative upon the State to take urgent steps to combat the massive migration of top Filipino teachers who leave the country in droves in pursuit of higher pay and better working conditions. This bill seeks to counter such migration of talent by providing financial incentives to highly qualified teachers or highly qualified special education teachers in the rural areas.

Under a five-year pilot program, the Department of Education (DepEd) shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to not more than 10 provinces to enable them to extend salary bonuses to highly qualified teachers or highly qualified special education teachers who teach, or to commit to teach, for at least three (3) academic years in select rural academic institutions. It is the ardent hope of the bill that this incentive shall inspire our teachers to stay in our country, especially in rural areas where students need their talent and competence the most.

In light of the foregoing premises, the swift passage of this bill is humbly sought.

  
**LUIS RAYMUND F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING A COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM TO RETAIN HIGHLY**  
**QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES**

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

**CHAPTER I**  
**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 1. Short Title.** — This Act shall be known as the "Rural Teacher Retention Act of 2018."

**SECTION 2. Definition.** — For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- A. Child with disability — a minor who has a physical, mental or medical impairment resulting from an anatomical, physiological, or neurological condition that prevents the exercise of a normal bodily function or that substantially impair cognitive function, and include but is not limited to, impairments requiring the use of an artificial device to move, walk, see, hear or breath, such as a wheelchair, braces, respirator, or other supportive equipment, or use of a guide dog, or other guiding device, which renders such person incapable of adequately providing for his or her own health and personal care;
- B. Department — the Department of Education (DepEd); and
- C. Secretary — means the Secretary of Education.

**SECTION 3. Grant.** — The Secretary shall carry out a five-year pilot program under which the Secretary awards grants, on a competitive basis, to not more than 10 provinces to enable them to award salary bonuses to highly qualified teachers or highly qualified special education teachers who teach, or to commit to teach, for at least three (3) academic years in such institution.

**SECTION 4. Basis.** — The Secretary shall award grants under this section on the basis of the needs of rural local educational agencies within a province for recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers or highly qualified education teachers.

SECTION 5. Consideration of Needs. — In determining the needs of rural education teachers for recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and highly qualified special education teachers under Section 5, the Secretary shall consider one or more of the following:

- A. The impact on a rural local education agency of low-income students who are served by the rural local educational agency
- B. The impact on a rural local educational agency of children with a disability who are served by the rural educational agency.
- C. The long-term plans of a province to improve the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers and highly qualified special education teachers in rural local educational agencies with the province.

SECTION 6. Application. — A province that desires to receive a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require. The application shall contain a plan for the proposed distribution and use of the grant funds among rural local educational agencies within the province.

SECTION 7. Use of Funds. — Grant funds under this Section shall be used to provide salary bonuses for highly qualified teachers or highly qualified special education teachers who teach, or commit to teach, for at least 3 academic years, in an elementary school or secondary school served by the same rural local educational agency.

SECTION 8. Study. — The Secretary shall carry out a study of each project that is funded under this Act. The study shall track and assess the implementation and effectiveness of each project.

SECTION 9. Report. -

- a) ANNUAL REPORTS FROM PROVINCES - Each province receiving a grant under this Act shall submit an annual report to the Secretary regarding each project within the State that is funded under this Act. The report shall contain such information as the Secretary determines necessary to evaluate the project.
- b) REPORT TO CONGRESS — The Secretary shall submit a report on the study described in Section 8 to the appropriate committees in the Senate and in the House of Representatives within five (5) years from the effectivity of this Act.
  - 1. the number of rural local educational agencies assisted under this Act.
    - a. the characteristics of such local rural educational agencies with respect to the considerations of needs described in section 5 (c);
  - 2. the number and demographic characteristics of teacher receiving bonuses under this Act;
  - 3. the impact of the bonuses provided under this Act on the ability of rural local educational agencies assisted under this Act to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and highly qualified special education teachers; and
  - 4. such other information and analysis as the Secretary determines necessary to evaluate the projects.

SECTION 10. Appropriations. The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Education under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for its full implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act as a distinct and separate item.

SECTION 11. Separability Clause. — If, for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, such parts or portions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. Repealing Clause. — All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,