

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4202



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ALFRED VARGAS

AN ACT

**ENCOURAGING YOUTH SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE AGRICULTURAL
SECTOR, ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA
AGRIKULTURA PROGRAM' AND A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA
TRUST FUND', APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,**

AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 5, Article XIII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that:

*The State shall recognize the right of farmers, farmworkers, and
landowners, as well as cooperatives, and other independent farmers'
organizations to participate in the planning, organization, and management of
the program, and shall provide support to agriculture through appropriate
technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and
other support services.*

Agriculture plays a significant role in the Philippine economy. Involving about 40% of Filipino workers, it contributes an average of 20% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This output comes mainly from agribusiness, which in turn accounts for about 70% of the total agricultural output (CIDA-LGSP, 2003).

The general trends in the last two decades present a dim picture of the agriculture sector. Significant decrease in productivity, high production costs,

and low government support to the sector, among other things, have led to a crisis in Philippine agriculture (CIDA-LGSP, 2003).

Moreover, the neglect of the agriculture sector and the uneven distribution of resources worsened the poverty situation in rural areas. Only the remittances of migrant workers to their families have enabled the latter to survive crippling poverty brought about by stagnant agricultural productivity, stiff competition from cheaper food imports, and periodic droughts and floods that devastated crops and livelihoods.

Immediate and effective intervention is needed to rejuvenate our agricultural sector. As a matter of fact, the Philippine Development Plan for 2017 to 2022 seeks to expand economic opportunities for those who are engaged in agriculture, and increase access to economic opportunities for small farmers, among others.¹

This legislative measure aims for the establishment of a *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura* scholarship program. The program shall be a ladderized program in Diploma in Agricultural Technology (DAT), Bachelor in Agricultural Technology (BAT) and Bachelor of Science in Agri-business (BSAgrib). At least 25% of the entire curriculum of the Program shall be in the form of an on-the-job training or related learning experience. The laboratory components of various agricultural subjects shall be in the form of agribusiness ventures, which are defined as business ventures in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and agri-entrepreneurship including but not limited to raising of poultry, goats, corn or rice or crop production.

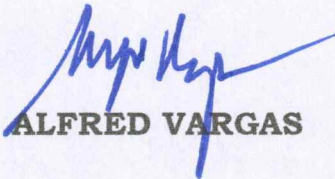
The program targets senior high school graduates of agricultural and fisheries tracks, and similarly situated students of agriculture and fisheries in tertiary education, who have a general weighted average (GWA) of at least 80% or its equivalent. Beneficiaries shall be entitled to financial assistance, which shall include tuition and other school fees; an outright grant for prescribed textbooks and essential school supplies; transportation expenses; and a monthly living allowance, among others.

This measure proposes the creation of a *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Trust Fund*, which shall come from the following sources: Php50,000,000.00 seed capital; a 10% annual share on the total gross collections of the travel tax and professional registration fee of the Professional Regulatory Commission; grants, donations and endowments from domestic and foreign sources, pursuant to

¹<https://www.pressreader.com>

existing laws and regulations; such amounts as may be indicated under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) for the purpose of sustaining the Fund; and all interest income of the trust fund.

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



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ENCOURAGING YOUTH SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA PROGRAM' AND A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA TRUST FUND', APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the “*Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Act of 2019*”.

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State shall give priority to education, science and technology to accelerate social progress and promote development. Towards this end, the government shall provide opportunities for all to obtain quality education and for this purpose, scholarships in Agriculture, Agri-Entrepreneurship, Forestry and Fisheries are hereby strengthened. It is also the policy of the State to develop graduates who will become competent agribusiness managers and entrepreneurs.

Sec 3. Objectives. – The objectives of this Act are to:

- a) Increase youth participation in the agricultural sector;
- b) Provide opportunities to poor but deserving students to realize their potentials in agribusiness and entrepreneurships;
- c) Develop competency skills and knowledge of students in agricultural technologies and agribusiness;
- d) Increase food production;
- e) Commercialize proven viable technologies to increase food production and income of rural communities through the development of livelihoods and markets;
- f) Provide income to students while doing experiential learning and on-the-job training which form part of their degree programs;
- g) Link young farmer-students with credit, financing, and marketing institutions; and
- h) Contribute to the alleviation of poverty.

Sec. 4. Definition of Terms. – for the purposes of this Act:

- a. *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Program* or *The Program* – refers to the scholarship program established by this Act which targets poor but deserving graduates of agricultural and fisheries tracks in senior high schools and similarly situated students taking up agriculture and related courses in tertiary education;
- b. *Tulong Kahataan sa Agrikultura Trust Fund* or *The Fund* – refers to the trust fund created under this Act to ensure the achievement of this Act's incentives;
- c. *Agribusiness Venture Laboratory* – refers to agricultural subjects and classes designed as business ventures in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and agri- entrepreneurship including but not limited to raising of poultry, goats, corn or rice or crop production and counted as satisfying the laboratory requirement of a course.

Sec. 5. Establishment of a Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Program.

– A *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura* scholarship program in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related areas to be administered by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is hereby established. The program shall be a ladderized program in Diploma in Agricultural Technology (DAT), Bachelor in Agricultural Technology (BAT) and Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness (BSAgrib). The program shall initially be offered by the University of the Philippines-Los Baños College of Agriculture in the first two (2) years of this Act's effectivity. The program shall be offered in SUCs which provide courses in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and other allied fields.

Sec. 6. Target Beneficiaries. – The Program shall target senior high school graduates of agricultural and fisheries tracks, and similarly situated students of agriculture and fisheries in tertiary education, who have a general weighted average of at least eighty percent (80%) or its equivalent: Provided, that beneficiaries who complete the agriculture and fisheries tracks of senior high and who enroll in an agriculture, forestry, fisheries, or other similar course in tertiary education shall continue to be covered by the Program.

Sec. 7. Assistance to Grantees. – Beneficiaries of the Program shall be entitled to financial assistance, which shall include the following:

- a) Tuition and other school fees;
- b) Outright grant for prescribed textbooks and essential school supplies;
- c) Transportation expenses; and
- d) Monthly living allowance.

Sec. 8. Curriculum Formulation. – There is hereby established a technical committee which shall design the curriculum of the Program. The Committee shall be composed of the following:

- a. The Chairperson of the CHED, or his permanent representative, as Chairperson of the Committee;
- b. The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA), or his permanent representative, as the Vice Chairperson;
- c. The Dean of the University of the Philippines-Los Baños College of Agriculture; and
- d. One (1) representative each from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao from other colleges of agriculture, who shall be appointed by the President, and who shall each serve a term of one (1) year.

At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the entire curriculum of the Program shall be in the form of on-the-job training or related learning experience. Laboratory components of various agricultural subjects shall be in the form of agribusiness ventures.

Sec. 9. *Strengthening Agri-Fisheries Tracks in Senior High.* – To achieve the objectives of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd) is hereby directed to ensure that agri-fisheries tracks are offered in as many senior high school programs in appropriate areas nationwide.

Sec. 10. *Agribusiness Venture Laboratories.* – Each agribusiness venture shall be under the supervision of a faculty who is also a technology expert in the chosen commodity. The agribusiness venture laboratory to be developed must have short gestation, around three to twelve (3 to 12) months, should be science and technology-based agribusiness, the end products should be highly marketable and the facilities needed should be present within the SUC.

Sec. 11. *Use of Idle Lands for the Agribusiness Venture Laboratory.*
– The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall make available untenured public lands under its jurisdiction for the use of students in their agribusiness ventures under appropriate arrangements with CHED and the participating SUCs.

Sec. 12. *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Trust Fund.* – To ensure the financial sustainability of this Act, a Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Trust Fund is hereby created. The Fund shall be used exclusively to fund the Program, and shall be funded from the following sources:

- a) The amount of Fifty Million Pesos (Php 50,000,000.00) as seed capital;
- b) The equivalent of ten percent (10%) annual share on the total gross collections of the travel tax;
- c) The equivalent of ten percent (10%) annual share on the total gross collections from the Professional Registration Fee of the Professional Regulatory Commission;
- d) Grants, donations and endowments from domestic and foreign sources, pursuant to existing laws and regulations;
- e) Such amounts as may be indicated under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) for the purpose of sustaining the Fund; and
- f) All interest income of the trust fund.

Sec. 13. *Administration of the Fund.* – The CHED shall administer the fund and shall make available all records of how the funds are utilized, disbursed, and invested, in accordance with existing laws.

Sec. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CHED in coordination with the DA, and DENR and relevant private sector stakeholders shall prepare the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of this Act and promulgate it within ninety (90) days after approval of this Act.

Approved,