

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4974



Introduced by Hon. John Marvin "Yul Servo" C. Nieto

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XII, Section 12, provides that:

"The State shall establish and maintain an effective food and drug regulatory system and undertake appropriate health manpower development and research, responsive to the country's health needs and problems."

Further, it is provided in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XIV, Section 2 (3):

"The State shall establish and maintain a system of scholarship programs, subsidies, and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged."

In a report conducted by CNN Philippines last October 13, 2016, it was stated that the Philippines is short of 15, 000 doctors to be able to adequately meet the health needs of the Filipinos each year since the Philippines is only producing 2,600 doctors per year. The Philippine Medical Association said that there are 130,000 licensed physicians in the country, whereas, only 70,000 are active in the profession.

This bill aims to remove, or at least minimize, the shortage of doctors by means of creating a program that will help them fund their medical studies. In exchange, the scholars shall be required to work as public practitioners to give back to the community. The bill provides for certain qualifications before one may be granted a medical scholarship, one of which is that the candidate must be among the top thirty per centum (30%) of their respective graduating class, in order for the State to assure that only deserving students will be granted this kind of scholarship. It is our duty to give priority to education to accelerate social progress and promote human development.

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


JOHN MARVIN "YUL SERVO" C. NIETO

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AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVICE PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF

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 "Medical Scholarship and Service Program Act"

Section 2. Declaration of Policy - It is the policy of the State to undertake health manpower development responsive to the country's health service needs; that the State shall establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged. Towards this end, the State shall establish a scholarship and service program to enable deserving and qualified individuals to pursue education and training in the field of medicine and shall formulate and implement such policies and programs to systematically integrate these individuals, upon qualifying as Doctors of Medicine, into the public health care system.

Section 3. Medical Scholarship and Service Program (MSSP) - There shall be an annual selection through appropriate examinations and screening processes of those who shall be admitted to the medical Scholarship and Service Program (MSSP). The candidates shall come from among qualified graduating students or graduates of appropriate courses in Colleges and Universities nationwide. The qualified and selected scholars shall be granted scholarship in medical courses and shall cover expenses for, among others, tuition, matriculation, and other school fees; prescribed textbooks, supplies and equipment; board and lodging expenses; clothing and uniform allowances; travelling expenses and other related miscellaneous living allowances; Provided, that at least five (5) candidates per region, or when practicable, one (1) candidate from every province and city shall be chosen to participate in the annual selection; provided, further, that at least fifty (50) scholars shall be selected annually.

Section 4. Qualification of Candidates - Candidates for the MSSP shall possess the following minimum qualifications:

A. Must belong to the top thirty per centum (30%) of the respective graduating classes and must be completing or already completed undergraduate courses identified by the Department of Health (DOH) as a prerequisite course to the pursuit of studies in the field of medicine;

B. Family and/ or personal incomes are not sufficient to finance their education in the field of medicine; Provided, that those who are financially capable and are willing to serve in public health and medical institutions after graduation may be accepted; Provided, further, that they do not compose more than ten percent (10%) of the total scholars for a particular year;

C. Must not be more than twenty-five (25) years of age and a natural-born citizen of the Philippines;

D. The DOH shall determine such other qualifications as it deems necessary for the purpose;

Section 5. General Conditions for Admission to the MSSP - A medical scholar shall be accepted to the MSSP and shall receive and continue to enjoy the benefits of the scholarship until the completion of the course, subject to the following conditions:

A, He shall pass the entrance/ admission examination and related requirements of the DOH and the medical school the scholar intends to enroll;

B. The scholar shall carry the full load of subjects prescribed per semester by the medical school, and shall, under no circumstances, drop a course which will result in under-loading, and;

C. The scholar may be allowed, for valid reasons preventing his enrollment, to defer availing of the scholarship and file a leave of absence for a period not exceeding one school year.

D. The scholar shall sign an agreement stating the terms and conditions of the scholarship on a form prescribed by the DOH;

E. He shall repay the full cost of the scholarship and other related benefits received, and the scholarship shall be terminated in the event the grantee accepts another scholarship from other government or private agencies or entities; and

F. The full cost of scholarship and related benefits received shall be paid by the scholar in case of failure to complete the medical course without valid cause as may be determined by the DOH; Provided, that, if the terminated medical scholar completes another course and qualifies as an allied medical service practitioner, he may choose, instead of repayment of scholarship costs, to render public service and be integrated into the public health and medical service system.

Section 6. Secretariat - The Department of Health, through its Secretary, may create a Secretariat to provide administrative and technical assistance to effectively and efficiently implement the MSSP. It shall perform duties and responsibilities as may be determined and delegated by the Secretary of Health. The support staff as may be created shall be recruited preferably from qualified professionals from the academe and medical profession.

Section 7. Appropriations - The sum of One Hundred Million (P100,000,000.00) pesos for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the Contingent Fund and over-all savings of the Executive Branch. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the subsequent annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 8. Donations, Grants, and other contributions - The DOH may accept donations, legacies, grants, and other contributions to form part of the Medical Scholarship Fund. Provided, that such donations, legacies, grants, and other contributions shall be exempt from taxation and shall be allowable deductions for income tax purposes. Proceeds from at least two (2) draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes per year shall also be allocated to finance the Program.

Section 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations - The Secretary of the Department of Health, in coordination with the Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education, the President of the University of the Philippine System and the Chairpersons of the Committees on Health and Education of the Senate and the House of Representatives shall issue such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act within sixty (60) days from the effectivity thereof.

Section 10. Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuance or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 11. Effectivity - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation or the Official Gazette.

Approved,