

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

**Seventeenth Congress**  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5015**



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**Introduced by Honorable Mark O. Go**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Article XIV, Section 1 of the Constitution provides, "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all." However, our current education system only provides free public education in the elementary and secondary levels. In order to provide better access to tertiary and special purpose education, Student Financial Assistance Programs (StuFAPs) were created for the benefit of eligible students. However, even with the availability of StuFAPs, data show that the proportion of out-of-school youth (ages 15-24) across regions ranges from 14.5% to 20.4%, with the proportion higher among females than males in all regions.

The Constitution further recognizes the key role of education in accelerating social progress and promoting total human liberation and development. Many Filipinos who have fallen through the cracks of development are left trapped in an inter-generational cycle of poverty, sustained by their limited access to tertiary education. Among the top reasons for not attending school among the youth are the high cost of education, insufficiency of household funds, employment and marriage (2013 FLEMMS).

In this regard, this bill aims to provide scholarship grants to tertiary education students, the amount of which shall cover the tuition and other miscellaneous fees for those enrolled in State Universities and Colleges and public Technical-Vocational Institutes, and subsidize the same for those enrolled in Private Higher Education Institutions and private Technical-Vocational Institutes. By improving the access of students to tertiary education, complemented by the efficient and transparent management of public funds, the State shall be able to promote true social justice and create a workforce that is equipped to compete amidst rising global standards.

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

  
MARK O. GO

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**AN ACT PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO QUALIFIED TERTIARY  
EDUCATION STUDENTS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF**

*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 “*Tertiary Education Scholarship Act of 2017.*”

SECTION 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of citizens to accessible tertiary education by adhering to its Constitutional mandate of assigning the highest budgetary priority to education. Towards this end, the State shall provide scholarship grants for higher education and technical-vocational education and training to eligible students and ensure the optimized utilization of government resources in education.

SECTION 3. **Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act:

- (a) *Higher Education* refers to the stage of formal education, or its equivalent, requiring completion of secondary education and covering programs of study leading to bachelor and advanced degrees;
- (b) *Higher Education Institution (HEI)* refers to an institution of higher learning, primarily offering bachelor and advanced degrees;
- (c) *Other School Fees* refer to those fees which cover other necessary costs supportive of instruction, including, but not limited to medical and dental, athletic, library, and laboratory fees;

- (d) *Scholar* refers to a student-beneficiary of either the full tuition, miscellaneous and other school fees subsidy or any of the scholarship programs offered;
- (e) *Scholarship Grants* refer to the financial assistance given to students of SUCs and public TVIs, the amount of which is equal to the total tuition, miscellaneous and other fees, as well as the financial assistance given to eligible students of private HEIs and private TVIs on the basis of academic merit and socioeconomic background;
- (f) *State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)* refer to public HEIs established by national laws which are financed and maintained by the national government;
- (g) *Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET)* refers to the post secondary education or training process which involves, in addition to general education, the study of technical and related fields and the acquisition of the practical skills relating to occupations in various sectors;
- (h) *Technical-Vocational Institutes (TVIs)* refer to learning institutions offering post-secondary TVET; and
- (i) *Tertiary Education* refers to the stage of education following the secondary cycle which subsumes post-secondary non-degree diploma, TVET, and Higher Education programs.

SECTION 4. *Eligibility of Scholars.* – Any Filipino citizen enrolled in any degree program at any State University or College (SUC) or any technical-vocational education and training at any Public Technical-Vocational Institute (TVI) at the time of the effectivity of this Act, or shall enroll any time thereafter shall be eligible to a scholarship grant equivalent to tuition, miscellaneous and other school fees subsidy.

The requirements of eligibility for scholarship grants offered to students of Private Higher Education Institution (PHEI) or Private Technical-Vocational Institute shall be based on their academic qualification and the financial position of their household, the guidelines of which shall be developed by Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Provided, that the students whether of a public or private institution, shall meet the admission requirements of the institution they intend to enroll in. Furthermore, no student who has already attained a bachelor's degree or equivalent degree from any higher education institution, whether public or private, be entitled to the subsidies and

scholarships as provided for in this Act. Provided further, that the student is not a beneficiary of any other state-funded scholarship program.

**SECTION 5. *Tertiary Education Scholarship Fund.*** – The Tertiary Education Scholarship Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Fund, is hereby established. The Fund shall be used solely for the purpose of implementing a tuition, miscellaneous and other school fee scholarship grant for any student enrolled in a State University or College or a Public Technical-Vocational Institute and providing scholarship grants to qualified students in any Private Higher Education Institution or Private Technical-Vocational Institute.

**SECTION 6. *Coverage of the Tertiary Education Scholarship.*** – The full amount of the tuition, miscellaneous and other school fees of students of any SUC or Public TVI shall be covered thru the Tertiary Education Scholarship Fund.

The amount to be subsidized by the Fund for students of PHEIs and Private TVIs shall be determined based on the scholarship grants to be developed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in coordination with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

The scholarship grants to be administered thru the Fund shall be developed by CHED and TESDA based on the academic qualifications of the student, the financial position of the household and the socioeconomic background of the municipality/province where the institution is located.

**SECTION 7. *Administration of the Fund.*** – The Commission on Higher Education shall administer the Fund, with the following powers and functions:

- (a) Administer the Fund;
- (b) Develop scholarship grants to be offered to students of PHEIs and private TVIs;
- (c) Formulate guidelines on the eligibility of scholars;
- (d) Develop and implement an efficient and transparent mechanism in the disbursement of the Fund;

**SECTION 8. *Other Scholarship Programs.*** – Nothing in this Act shall prevent the continuation of effective programs implemented by other government agencies with specific and targeted beneficiaries such as, but not limited to, scholarships under the Indigenous Peoples

Rights Act (IPRA), the National Agriculture and Fisheries Education System (NAFES) and the Expanded Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education (E-GASTPE) Act. Furthermore, nothing in this Act shall preclude the SUCs and public TVIs from promulgating and developing other forms of financial assistance to their students.

SECTION 9. **Reportorial Requirements.** – Subject to the Rules of CHED or TESDA, each participating institution is mandated to submit an annual report on the status of the grantees and the amount of grants it received. CHED and TESDA may require the submission of other reports deemed necessary for the efficient monitoring of the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 10. **Appropriations.** – The amount of Twenty Billion Pesos (P20,000,000) is hereby initially appropriated from the Presidential Social Fund to implement the provisions of this Act. Thereafter, such amount necessary to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act shall be determined by CHED to be included in its annual programs and the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 11. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED, in consultation with TESDA, shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 12. **Separability Clause.** – Should any provision herein be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of this Act.

SECTION 13. **Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Acts are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 14. **Effectivity Clause.**– This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in thwo (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

*Approved,*