

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4447

Introduced by Representative RAUL T. GONZALEZ, Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill advances a dynamic implementation of the good conduct allowance under Article 97, Chapter II of the Revised Penal Code. It unequivocally recognizes as "good conduct" the demonstrated courage, willingness and the ability of a prisoner to increase his knowledge develop his skills and strengthen his moral values while under detention.

The potential benefits from this bill are as follows:

1. Increasing literacy and skills standards and strengthening moral values of prisoners will facilitate their reintegration into mainstream society as reformed and productive citizens.
2. The grant to prisoners of good conduct time allowance for participating in literacy, skills and values development programs will result in the reduction of their incarceration period. This translates to a decrease in the over-all cost of correction thru jail decongestion.
3. With increasing literacy among prisoners, a jail management system responsive to current needs and problems can be implemented to forestall jailbreaks, riots and other destabilizing activities.
4. The duty of the State to provide elementary and high school education to its citizens, for free, is fulfilled.

It is a fact that many prisoners are unschooled or are illiterates which may be contributory to their transgression of the law. Ignorance costs more than education according to an eminent educator and no better proof of this could be found than in jails where tangible returns on time and monetary investments are wanting.

As an incentive to parallel the rigors and the bliss of increasing knowledge, developing skills and strengthening moral values while under detention, the grant of good conduct time allowance for prisoners who participate in the literacy, skills, and moral development programs is made mandatory. A prisoner's "good conduct" deserves recompense under the law.

Life is still worth the living and must go on even if, for prisoners, it is lived temporarily behind bars. Living in ignorance is perpetually living in prison sans the bars, hence, the premium on educational and character-building endeavors.

If only for the moral and economic considerations it advocates, this bill deserves our unanimous support and an immediate approval.


RAUL T. GONZALEZ, Jr.

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AN ACT
GRANTING MANDATORY GOOD CONDUCT ALLOWANCE TO
PRISONERS WHO PARTICIPATE IN LITERACY, SKILLS, AND
VALUES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN PENAL INSTITUTIONS.

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

SECTION 1. Any prisoner who has earned or is making satisfactory progress towards earning a post-graduate or a college degree or a certificate of completion of a vocational or skills or values development course or a high school diploma or an elementary grades certificate shall be granted time credit towards the service of his sentence. The credit shall not exceed fifteen days for every month of study time.

Prisoners who may be utilized to teach courses or subjects or to engage in skills or values development shall also receive such time credit at the rate of fifteen days maximum for every month of mentoring service rendered to fellow prisoners.

Sec. 2. Good conduct allowances earned through the literacy, skills, and values development programs for prisoners shall be computed at the end of each calendar year, unless earlier required.

Sec. 3. The academic and values development programs for prisoners shall be implemented in coordination with the Department of Education; the vocational skills program with the Department of Trade and Industry.

Sec. 4. Within sixty days from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of Justice shall promulgate a classification system for the good conduct time allowance under such rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement this Act.

Sec. 5. All laws, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are contrary to or are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

Sec. 6. This Act shall take effect after fifteen days from its publication in three national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,