

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1852

INTRODUCED BY HON. MARCELINO "MARCY" R. TEODORO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is the policy of the State to provide quality education to all qualified citizens at all levels of education and to establish a system of grants, subsidies and incentives which shall be available to deserving students, especially the poor and underprivileged.

This is the only way we can help the people become productive, secure and successful individuals. Through education, they can dramatically alter their pitiful conditions, and overcome whatever difficulties that may come their way.

Given the limited resources of government, however, provision of quality education should be meticulously pursued focusing on areas that would provide the people with better opportunities for individual growth and development.

One of these areas is information technology, which can provide immense opportunities for Filipinos not only here but also abroad.

As we are being transformed to increasingly becoming an information society, the government should give poor but deserving students the education necessary to enable them to take part in this growing trend.

One way is to provide for free college education in state colleges and universities in information and communications technology that would allow them to pursue this cost extensive field.

Although there are many private institutions offering the same degree or diploma, the cost of tuition and other expenses, given the nature of these programs, are so exorbitant and prohibitive that many could certainly not avail of them.

Therefore, this measure should be enacted immediately to provide these indigent students the opportunity to pursue information technology and other related fields.



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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING AND PROVIDING FOR FREE COLLEGE EDUCATION IN
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER
PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Free Information and Communications Technology College Education Act of 2010".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to provide quality education to all qualified citizens at all levels of education and to establish a system of grants, subsidies and incentives which shall be available to deserving students, especially the poor and underprivileged, in order to enable them to truly participate in the benefits of a democratic society.

SEC. 3. Definitions. – For purposes of this Act:

- a) "Free College Education" shall mean any two-year college degree course or program in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) offered in or conducted by state colleges and universities;
- b) "State Colleges and Universities" refers to institutions of higher learning, including specialized schools, maintained and funded by government;
- c) "Qualified Beneficiaries" shall mean all graduates of public high schools;
- d) "Tuition Fee" shall refer to the fee representing direct costs of instruction and training facilities;
- e) "Other School Fees" refer to those fees which cover the other necessary costs supportive of instruction, including, but not limited to medical and dental, athlete, library and laboratory fees.

However, fees related to membership in students organizations or college activities may be collected, provided that non-payment of these fees shall not in any case prejudice the enrollment or graduation of a qualified beneficiary.

SEC. 4. Implementation of Free College Education. – The system of Free College Education as provided in this Act, shall commence in the School Year following approval of this Act. Qualified beneficiaries intending to enroll or already enrolled in ICT course offerings in state colleges and universities shall be free from payment of tuition and other school fees and shall be entitled to such other incentives or subsidies as may be granted in accordance with such rules and regulations to be promulgated to carry out the provisions of this Act: *Provided*, that nothing in this Act shall cause or authorize the reduction or

removal of any benefit which the national or local government may be granted to the students prior to the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. Formulation of ICT Curriculum. – The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall formulate a two-year college curriculum geared to provide students with highly competitive training or skills consistent with the manpower demands of a highly competitive business environment.

SEC. 6. Limitation. The right of any student to avail of free college education shall terminate if he fails for two (2) consecutive semesters in the majority of the subjects in which he is enrolled during the course of his study.

SEC. 7. Place of Study and Admission. – The qualified beneficiary shall take his free college education in state colleges or universities of his choice situated in the city or province where he resides.

Should there be no state college or university in the city or province where he resides or where the university or college facilities cannot accommodate all qualified beneficiaries, the student may take his free college benefit in any college or university within the region nearest to his place of residence. In the absence of public universities or colleges within the region of his residence, the qualified student beneficiary may avail of the privilege in any public or state college or university in any region nearest to the province where he resides.

SEC. 8. Obligation of State Colleges. – The State colleges or universities have the obligation to admit qualified beneficiaries, subject not only to limitation of funding and facilities. A violation of this obligation shall constitute a ground for dismissal of the school authorities concerned.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The CHED, in coordination with the association of state colleges and universities, shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations within one hundred twenty (120) days from effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 10. Funding. – Adequate funds shall be earmarked by the President from available funds in the National Treasury for the initial implementation of this Act. The President shall likewise utilize for the purpose available funds or savings of the CHED or the Department of Education. Funds needed for the ensuing fiscal years for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the appropriations of state universities and colleges in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. Repealing Clause. – All laws or parts thereof inconsistent with any provision of this Act shall be deemed repealed or modified as the case may be.

SEC. 12. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect immediately upon its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,