

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

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2444

Introduced by:
ALIF Party-List Representative Acmad M. Tomawis

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to institutionalize the grant of a fixed fare discount privilege on land, sea/water and air transport utilities to certain students, not only during school days but to include Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, semestral breaks and Christmas vacations while they are currently enrolled in academic, vocational and technical schools, as defined and clarified in the proposed measure.

The proposed grant is aimed at alleviating the impact of the pressing financial burden brought about by the spiraling prices of basic commodities and the expected negative repercussion of the recently approved additional tax measures. Specifically, it envisions to mitigate the effects of the economic difficulties as they relate to the rising cost of education in our country. Majority of its intended beneficiaries belong to the indigent, depressed and under-privileged sector. Hence, they need and deserve the assistance of government.

As contemplated, the bill addresses manifest concerns on education. It invites particular attention on the increasing incidence of poverty that leads to the growing number of student dropouts. The inability of government to provide better school facilities and adequate school supplies which are restraints to quality education has been highlighted also in the drafting of said measure.

The grant is consistent with the provisions of Article XIV, Section 1 of the Constitution, which mandate that 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." It is also in keeping with Paragraph 3, Section 2 of said Article which directs the State to establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and **other incentives** which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged.

Under the proposed measure, the fare discount privilege is available to students even during Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, semestral breaks and Christmas vacations to enable and encourage them to undertake researches and group studies. It is a recognition of the fact that during such days and periods students are returning to their respective communities to assist their parents and at the same time to get their allowances for the succeeding school week. Moreover, there are certain students, like medical interns and those undergoing military trainings and specialized studies, who are required to report during such days and periods. It is hoped the grant of the 20% fare discount privilege for certain students shall cushion the impact of the prevailing economic difficulties that pose a serious threat to social stability and weaken the thrust of government towards quality education.

Definitely, the proposed measure shall further boost students' opportunity to pursue higher education and enhance the realization of their aspiration for a brighter future. Hence, approval of this measure is earnestly desired.



HON. ACMAD M. TOMAWIS
Representative
ALIF Party-List

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AN ACT
GRANTING FARE DISCOUNT PRIVILEGE ON LAND, SEA/WATER AND AIR
TRANSPORT UTILITIES TO CERTAIN STUDENTS AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

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

Section 1. Declaration of Policies and objectives. Pursuant to Article XIV, Section 1 of the Constitution, "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." In addition, Paragraph 3, Section 2 of said Article directs the State to establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and **other incentives** which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged.

Consistent with these Constitutional mandates, the following are the objectives of this Act:

- a) To enlist the cooperation and/or support of transport utilities to extend assistance to deserving students as a social responsibility;
- b) To encourage students, particularly the poor and underprivileged, to pursue quality education to secure their future and make them responsible citizens; and
- c) To establish a mechanism that ensures mandatory grant of fare discount privilege to deserving students.

Section 2. Definition of Terms. As used in this Act, the term "student" shall refer to any Filipino citizen, not more than thirty (30) years of age, and currently enrolled in elementary, secondary and collegiate institutions, including vocational and technical schools, specifically excluded are schools of culinary arts and short-term courses of seminar type.

The term "transport utilities" shall refer to both public and private firms/companies duly authorized to engage in the conveyance of passengers, either by land, sea/water or air for a fixed rate of fees.

Section 3. Privilege of Students. The students contemplated and/or qualified under this Act shall be entitled to a grant of twenty percent (20 %) discount on regular fares upon presentation of their duly issued Identification Cards (IDs) or current validated enrolment forms supported by other document/s or paper/s to establish identity. Said fare discount shall be available during the entire school year for elementary and secondary students, during the semester for college students, and during the duration of a course for vocational or technical students, including Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, semestral breaks and Christmas vacations.

Section 4. Coverage. This Act shall cover all students, except those specifically excluded therefrom as defined in Section 2 hereof.

Section 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The Secretary of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) shall direct/instruct concerned boards or offices under his Department to prepare and formulate, within thirty (30) days upon approval of this Act, the implementing rules and regulations for the availment of said student fare discount privilege on land, sea/water and air transport utilities.

Section 6. Complaints, Violations and Penalties. Complaints by students who are refused to avail of the privilege under this Act may be addressed and/or filed with the Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) which shall direct the concerned board/authority/office, as herein identified, to wit:

- a) The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) for land transportation utilities;
- b) The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) for sea/water transportation utilities;
- c) The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) for air transportation utilities;
- d) The Legal Service, DOTC, for rail transportation facilities, including the Light Railway Transit (LRT) and the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) projects.

After due investigation and finding the complaint to be true and valid, the following penalties shall be imposed as herein specified:

- a) For Land Transportation Utilities – suspension of license for the erring driver, conductor or inspector for one (1) month for the first offense; two (2) months for the second offense; three (3) months for the third offense; and for subsequent violations, each (violation) shall be penalized with three-month suspension of license, plus a fine of Five Hundred Pesos (P 500.00) for the erring party.
- b) For All Other Transport Utilities, Except Rail Transport System – A fine shall be imposed against the erring firms/establishments or their authorized agents of One Thousand Pesos (P 1,000.00) for the first offense; Two Thousand Pesos (P 2,000.00) for the second offense; Three Thousand Pesos (P 3,000.00) for the third offense; and Five Thousand Pesos (P 5,000.00) for each subsequent violations.
- c) For Rail Transport Utilities – all rail transport utilities are enjoined/directed to observe the aforesaid fare discount privilege and designate student fare booth in their boarding stations. Violations hereof shall be sanctioned or fined as indicated in the paragraph immediately preceding (item b, above).

Section 7. Repealing Clause. All provisions of laws, decrees, orders, including rules and regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and/or modified accordingly.

Section 8. Separability Clause. If any part or provision of this Act shall be held to be unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 9. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.