

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

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3194

Introduced by Rep. **BERNADETTE HERRERA-DY**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution states that it is the policy of the state to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and that the government shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Time and again, it has also been emphasized that the government take aggressive steps to establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and the society.

At the advent of globalization, the importance of education at all levels cannot be overemphasized. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human development Report for 2009 ranks the Philippines as 105th with 8.4 percent of adults with high educational attainment levels (aged 25 and above), the 105th among the ranks with 26.4 percentage of adults with medium educational attainment levels for adults aged 25 and above and 105th with 62.6 percent of adults with low educational attainment levels on the same age category. This goes on to show that more and more Filipinos cannot afford higher levels of education and a bigger percentage of adults only receive a lower educational attainment year after year. One of the factors of this continuous decline is the continuing high-cost of education in the country. Filipino families would rather send their children to vocational and technical schools in order to attain technical skills and training for employment abroad, rather than earning a college degree which is very expensive and requires very long years of schooling.

To answer this problem, the government had to create policies that will open the pathways of opportunities for career and educational progression of students and workers, achieve a seamless and borderless education and empower students and workers to exercise options or to choose when to enter and exit from the educational ladder.

This proposed measure mandates the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Skills and Development Authority (TESDA) to formulate a unified qualifications framework that establishes equivalency pathways and access ramps in ladderized education. It also establishes a permanent National Coordinating Technical Committee composed of the CHED and TESDA personnel to monitor and ensure the effective implementation of the ladderized education program. The measure also engages an inter-agency cooperation for the effective implementation of the ladderization program. Moreover, this program provides scholarship grants and loans to deserving students and workers in addition to the present scholarship programs being implemented by the CHED and TESDA.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this proposed measure is earnestly sought.



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**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE LADDERIZED INTERFACE BETWEEN
TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND
HIGHER EDUCATION**

*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 "Ladderized
Education Act of 2010."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy*. - In line with the Constitutional
guarantee of the State to promote the right of all citizens to quality and
accessible education at all levels and to establish, maintain and support a
complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs
of the people and contributory to national development, it is hereby declared
the policy of the State to institutionalize the ladderized interface between
Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and higher education to
open pathways of opportunities for career and educational progression of
students and workers, create a seamless and borderless education, empower
students and workers to exercise options or choose when to enter and exit in
the educational ladder, and provide job platforms at every exit as well as the
opportunity to earn income.

The State likewise recognizes and supports the promotion and
protection of the inherent academic freedom enjoyed by all institutions of
higher learning. For this purpose, the government shall have due regard to

the academic standards, equity principles, promptness and consistency of the applications/admissions and equivalency policies of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby defined:

- (a) *Articulation* refers to a process which allows students to make the smooth transition from one course, program or educational level to the next without experiencing duplication of learning. The guiding principle of articulation is that no student should repeat the same course content for which credit has already been received, even if elsewhere or from another institution. In general, an articulated program allows a student to move from a Technical-Vocational (Tech-Voc) course to a College Degree Program, using the Principle of Credit Transfer.
- (b) *Credit* refers to the value given to a course.
- (c) *Credit Transfer* refers to the recognition and carrying forward of credits that constitute overlapping learning, from TVET to a degree program.
- (d) *Embedded Tech-Voc Qualification in a Ladderized Degree Program* refers to the process of determining the TVET competencies/qualifications that lead to job platforms in the relevant higher education or bachelor's degree program. A student of a ladderized degree program can earn full TVET qualification should he/she choose to exit from the program and get a job.
- (e) *Equivalency* refers to a process that involves assigning equivalent academic credits to the competencies demonstrated by a student through assessment tests, thereby providing entry points to the next higher level qualification, the purpose of which is to provide opportunities to the students to continue to learn and/or re-enter the educational program at a higher level

without having to unnecessarily retake courses in which a student already has demonstrated competence and knowledge.

- (f) *Job Platform* refers to the gateway in the ladderized curriculum which one reaches upon acquiring enough skills and knowledge to seek and find employment.
- (g) *Ladderized Education Program (LEP)* refers to the harmonization of all education and training mechanisms that allow students and workers to progress between Tech-Voc and College courses and programs, or vice-versa. It opens opportunities for career and educational advancement to students and workers, creates a seamless and borderless education and training system that will allow transfers in terms of flexibility entry and exit between Tech-Voc and College Degree Programs in the post-secondary school educational system.
- (h) *Post TVET Bridging Program* refers to a higher education or bachelor's degree program specifically designed to assist students who have finished Tech-Voc course/s to attend a College Degree Program and achieve a College Degree in the same field of study and in less time than an entry-level college student would require.
- (i) *Qualification* refers to a formal certification that a person has successfully achieved specific learning outcomes relevant to the identified academic, industry or community requirements.
- (j) *Recognition of Prior Learning* refers to the acknowledgment of a person's skills and knowledge through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant status or credit acquired competencies.

SECTION 4 *National Qualifications Framework.* – The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) are hereby mandated to closely coordinate and effectively implement a unified national qualifications framework that

establishes equivalency pathways and access ramps in ladderized education, allowing for easier transitions and progressions between TVET and higher education. The framework shall include Qualifications and Articulation mechanisms, such as, but not necessarily limited to the following: Credit Transfer, embedded TVET qualification in ladderized degree programs; Post-TVET Bridging Programs; enhanced equivalency; adoption of ladderized curricula/programs; modularized program approach; competency-based programs; network of dual-sector colleges or universities; and accreditation and/or recognition of prior learning.

For this purpose, CHED and TESDA shall design harmonized guidelines and equivalency competency courses to enhance the delivery of high-quality Tech-Voc and higher education courses, synchronize standards and upgrade curriculum design per discipline and adopt a strategic implementation scheme, including a massive consultation and information dissemination scheme. In so doing, CHED and TESDA shall continue exploring and developing other mechanisms and systems that will allow the interface between TVET and higher education with the end in view of creating a seamless and borderless education system.

SECTION 5. *Priority Disciplines.* – As a preliminary approach to the implementation of the ladderized program and to ensure a more focused implementation of the said program, CHED and TESDA, in consultation with the industry, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) and other related agencies, are directed to identify priority disciplines and programs for ladderization, taking into account labor market realities. Therefrom, CHED and TESDA shall implement the ladderization of other disciplines, other than those presently being implemented, should it be found necessary and beneficial to do so based on a comprehensive study on the viability of such move.

SECTION 6. *Enhancement of the Ladderized Education Program.* - CHED and TESDA, in consultation with the PRC, are directed to jointly devise systems, procedures, and mechanisms as well as to issue, amend and update existing implementing guidelines, as necessary, for the efficient and effective implementation of LEP and to ensure that the objectives of the program are met. Incentives may be given to HEIs and Technical-Vocational Institutions to further encourage wider participation in the LEP.

For this purpose, a permanent LEP National Coordinating Technical Committee, composed of CHED and TESDA personnel, is hereby established to replace the Technical Secretariat established under Executive Order No. 358, Series of 2004. The Technical Committee may contract the services of technical experts and authorities on relevant areas of concern such as equivalencies, accreditation, curriculum development, educational measurement and testing.

The CHED and TESDA shall ensure that there are designated personnel at the regional and provincial levels responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of LEP nationwide.

SECTION 7. *Support from Other Agencies.* - The PRC, DOLE, Department of Education, DOST, DTL, the Department of Budget and Management and the NEDA are hereby mandated to extend the necessary support and provide relevant inputs towards the effective implementation of the ladderized system of education. Likewise, other agencies both in the public and private sectors, including non-governmental organizations, business groups, professional associations and similar entities both foreign and local may be tapped for consultations.

SECTION 8. *Scholarships, Grants and Loans.* - To ensure the effective implementation and greater nationwide impact of the program and its accessibility to the students and workers, CHED and TESDA shall endeavor to include in their respective budgets the provision of scholarships, grants and loans to deserving students and workers availing themselves of the

ladderized system of education, in addition to the present scholarship programs being implemented by CHED and TESDA.

SECTION 9. *Enabling Clause for HEIs.* - To encourage application of ladderized education and to ensure greater nationwide impact of the program and its accessibility to students and workers, HEIs that have been granted government recognition to its curriculum by the CHED may opt to ladderize said recognized programs without need for permit either from CHED or TESDA: *Provided,* That the proposed ladderized program is within the purview of the curricular matter and that the minimum curricular requirements under the relevant guidelines of CHED and TESDA are complied with.

For this purpose, however, the HEI shall be required to submit to the LEP National Technical Committee the copy of the curriculum for the proposed ladderized program for monitoring and for potential objective inputs from the technical experts in the said LEP National Technical Committee.

SECTION 10. *Academic Freedom.* - Nothing in this bill shall be construed to restrict the HEI in the exercise of its academic freedom. The HEI shall retain the right to assess the level and standard of previously completed TVET programs by an applicant-student in a manner that is transparent and objective, incorporating therein its own admission requirements. The applicant-student must gain admission to the HEI's undergraduate program by meeting all the usual criteria and program requisites and such other requirements by the HEI.

SECTION 11. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and development funds of the CHED and TESDA. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act in the ensuing years shall be included in the annual respective appropriations of CHED and TESDA in the General Appropriations Act.

As additional funding source, TESDA and CHED may tap international funding agencies for donations and grants.

SECTION 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The CHED and TESDA, in consultation with relevant stakeholders in higher and tech-voc education shall issue within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 13. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act or any part thereof be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are separable from the invalid ones, shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 14. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,