

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

_____ Regular Session

House Bill No. **3968**

Introduced By Honorable Pastor M. Alcover Jr.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to revive the Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC) as a mandatory requisite for graduation for all Filipino male college students repealing for the purpose R.A. 9163 otherwise known as the "National Service Training Program (NSTP) Act of 2001.

Undeniably, the ROTC course was the only one in the curriculum of the tertiary level of studies whose primordial aim is to instill in the mind and heart of every male students the concepts and values of discipline to shape their character and person into responsible adults and patriotic citizens. The course likewise served as the reservoir of reservist for the three branches of the armed forces of the Philippines – the Philippine Army, the Philippine Air Force and the Philippine Navy.

Our own history will tell us that when the Japanese Imperial Army invaded the country during the Second World War, the defense of our territory and the subsequent rebellion against the occupying foreign forces was carried out by regular soldiers of the beleaguered Commonwealth government alongside the Filipino guerillas and the reservist who were called to active duty.

In fact, it was the reservist from the ranks of the ROTC graduates who kept the flames of the torch of liberation continually burning to free the country from the Japanese stranglehold especially during the period when the American military forces in the country were ordered to abandon the Philippines to augment their defense efforts in Australia.

The ROTC course is one of the collegiate courses that gives life to the avowed State policy as expressed in Section 13, Article II of the Constitution that "the State shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civil affairs." Without the ROTC course becoming a mandatory part of the collegiate curriculum, the declared State principle enunciated in Section 4, Article II of the Constitution that "the Government may call upon the people to defend the State and, in the fulfillment thereof, all citizens may be required, under conditions provided by law, to render personal military, or civil service," would be put to naught and rendered meaningless.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly recommended.



PASTOR M. ALCOVER JR.

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AN ACT

REVIVING THE RESERVED OFFICER TRAINING CORP (ROTC) IN ALL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND SIMILAR LEARNING INSTITUTIONS AS A MANDATORY REQUISITE FOR GRADUATION FOR ALL MALE TERTIARY STUDENTS REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE RA 9163 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM (NSTP) ACT OF 2001 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 "Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Act of 2011".

SEC 2. Declaration of Policy - It is the policy of the State to serve and protect its citizens. The government may call upon the people to defend the state and, in the fulfillment thereof, all citizens may be required, under conditions by law, to render personal military or civil service.

Recognizing the youth's vital role in nation-building, the State shall promote civic consciousness among the youth and shall develop their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism, nationalism, and advance their involvement in public and civic affairs.

In pursuit of these goals, the youth, the most valuable resource of the nation, shall be motivated, trained, organized and mobilized in basic military training in the service of the nation.

SEC 3. Coverage - The Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) shall be applicable to all male tertiary students enrolled in colleges, universities and similar institutions of learning. It shall form part of the curricula of all baccalaureate degree courses and of two-year technical and vocational courses as a prerequisite for graduation: Provided, that, female students may likewise undergo such ROTC training on a voluntary basis.

SEC 4. Establishment of the Reserved Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Course - There is hereby established a mandatory Reserved Officer Training Corps Course for all male students enrolled in colleges, universities and similar institutions of learning. The Course shall form part of the curricula of all baccalaureate degree courses and of at least two (2)-year technical vocational courses and is hereby declared a requisite for

graduation. The ROTC Course shall instill patriotism, respect for rights of civilians, and adherence to the Constitution, among others.

The program of instruction shall be prescribed by the Secretary of National Defense and may include instruction to prepare female students for military service: provided, that, such course of instruction shall not exceed two (2) academic years in the case of enlisted reservists, and four (4) academic years in the case of officer reservists which shall include as necessary summer or probationary training of not more than sixty (60) consecutive days.

The first two (2) years ROTC training, which is mandatory, shall hereafter be referred to as basic ROTC while the second (2) years after said basic ROTC, which is voluntary, shall hereafter be referred to as advance ROTC. The allocation of ROTC units to the various major services of the AFP shall conform to the projected manpower needs of their respective reserve components.

SEC 5. *Acceptance for Advance ROTC Course.* – Students who volunteer for advance ROTC shall be screened by an ROTC acceptance board which is hereby created for the purpose, composed of the commandant of the ROTC unit, a representative of the school nominated by the school authorities, and a military physician. The student volunteer shall be physically examined for fitness for training and shall further be made to execute in writing a testament that he volunteered for training of his own volition. Where the student is below eighteen (18) years of age, he shall be required to obtain his parent's or guardian's consent. In the case of student volunteering for reserve officers' training, they shall further be subject to competition examination in order to select the best material. The students undergoing advance ROTC shall be referred to as advance ROTC cadets.

SEC 6. *Persons Disqualified or Exempted.* – The following students are disqualified or exempted from the coverage:

(a) Students who are physically or psychologically unfit as certified to by the medical personnel of the university or institution concerned;

(b) Those convicted by final judgment of crimes involving moral turpitude;

(c) Students of Colleges, Universities and similar institutions of learning who have undergone or still undergoing ROTC or similar military training as recognized by the military authorities as among those undergoing training to qualify as reservist; and

(d) Those persons who are member of affiliated units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

SEC 7. *Organization and staffing of ROTC Units.* – The Secretary of National Defense shall prescribe the organization and staffing of ROTC units. Reserve officers in the active service as well as qualified enlisted and officer reservists in the inactive status shall be given priority to handle training instruction and to assist in the administration and shall be entitled to receive honoraria and other allowances as the Secretary of National Defense shall prescribe.

SEC 8. *Funds for Maintenance and Operation of school ROTC Units.* – The funds for the establishment, maintenance and operation of ROTC units shall be provided for in the regular annual appropriations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Such appropriations shall provide for the full funding support for advance ROTC only. The school of the student may not be required to spend any amount for the establishment, operation and maintenance of ROTC training: provided, that the school requesting for such establishment shall provide the training ground and office facilities free of charge.

The advance ROTC cadets shall each be provided free two (2) suits of fatigue uniform with headgear, belt and one (1) pair of combat boots for the duration of the training. However, those taking the basic ROTC are required to pay a reasonable ROTC fee, the amount to be determined by the Secretary of National Defense in coordination with the school official concerned.

SEC 9. *Scholarship Incentive for Advance ROTC Training.* – Students undergoing advance ROTC who belong to the upper five percent (5%) of their academic class shall be provided a tuition subsidy of fifty percent (50%) of their annual tuition for the period of their advance ROTC. The funds for this purpose shall be provided in the annual appropriations of the AFP. For this purpose, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines shall promulgate the proper guidelines.

SEC 10. *Creation of the National Service Reserve Corps* - There is hereby created a National Service Reserve Corps, to be composed of the graduates of the ROTC Course. Members of this Corps may be tapped by the State for personal military service in times of war or civic welfare activities in times of other national emergencies. The members of the Corps shall also form part of the Citizens' Armed Force, pursuant to Republic Act No. 7077.

SEC 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – There shall be created a committee, to be chaired by the Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education and with representatives from the Department of National Defense and Department of Education as members, to be tasked with the formulation of the necessary implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

SEC 12. *Transitory Provisions* – This Act shall apply in the next school year following its approval. Students who are currently taking the NSTP Program under R.A. 9163 otherwise known as the "National Service Training Program (NSTP) Act of 2001" shall be allowed to finish the program and shall be considered as having graduated from their ROTC Course after completing the said program.

SEC 13. *Separability Clause* - If any section or provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC 14. *Repealing Clause* – For purposes of this Act, Republic Act 9163 otherwise known as the "National Service Training Program (NSTP) Act of 2001 is hereby repealed. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, other executive issuances, or part thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

APPROVED