

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

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4454

INTRODUCED BY: REP. JORGE "BOLET" BANAL

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 17, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

Such policy of the State for the youth has long been pursued primarily through the education system. Cognizant of the ability of students to excel in multiple intelligences, higher education institutions create projects and programs that seek to develop not only the intellectual or academic competencies of their students, but also their artistic, kinesthetic, and interpersonal capabilities. Undergraduate students are encouraged to pursue any form of co-curricular involvements permitted by the school, the most common of these being student councils and school organizations, with the end of producing holistically-formed individuals.

However, participation of undergraduate students in co-curricular activities is limited by the lack of a structured support. Students find it difficult to convene together for co-curricular activities due to differences in schedule of classes. In effect, attendance in student-initiated meetings, forums, or events is restricted not because of want in interest but because of conflicting schedules.

Some leading higher education institutions in Metro Manila have attempted to address this issue by allotting a weekly period that is dedicated solely for co-curricular activities, to the exclusion of regular classes. This has led to the flourishing of student-initiated activities as well as activities organized by the faculty and school administration.

Through the proposed bill, this outstanding practice will be adopted by all higher education institutions offering undergraduate courses. Ultimately, the bill seeks to promote a holistic undergraduate education, which would produce productive citizens and leaders of this country.

Thus, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



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AN ACT
PROMOTING STUDENT DEVELOPMENT BY REQUIRING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
TO PRESCRIBE A WEEKLY STUDENT ACTIVITY PERIOD, 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 "Weekly Student Activity Period (WSAP) Act of 2011."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building. It shall promote their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being and shall encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

The State shall maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

The State shall promote the holistic development of students by encouraging institutional support for student activities in higher education institutions.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act:

(a) "Commission" or "CHED" shall refer to the Commission on Higher Education created by Republic Act 7722, otherwise known as the Higher Education Act of 1994.

(b) "Higher Education Institutions" or "HEIs" shall refer to all public and private universities and colleges offering undergraduate programs and duly recognized by the Commission.

(c) "Regular classes" shall refer to the student activities based on the schedule of the required course. The term shall include special classes for students/persons with disabilities (PWDs) who are grouped together in a self-contained class duly facilitated by the special education teacher or trainer.

(d) "Student activities" shall refer to activities designed for the enhancement of leadership skills, social responsibility, patriotism, and love of country, which include activities sponsored by student organizations accredited by the HEIs, student councils, and student publications. Such student activities shall adhere to the mission and vision of the HEI and shall conform to basic principles espoused in the Constitution.

SEC. 4. Weekly Student Activity Period. –

(a) HEIs shall allot at least one and a half hours per week of the academic year, to be known as the weekly student activity period, which shall be dedicated solely for student activities.

Regular classes shall not be conducted during the weekly student activity period. However, the weekly student activity period may be suspended during midterm and final examinations.

(b) HEIs shall, upon consultation with the students, student governments, and student organizations, designate the time and the day that will serve as the weekly student activity period.

(c) HEIs and their administration, faculty, and staff shall not discriminate against or show preference for any particular co-curricular activity.

SEC. 5. *Supervision and Monitoring.* –

(a) The Office of Student Affairs in the HEI shall designate a faculty adviser to supervise the programming and conduct of student activities.

(b) The Office of Student Affairs in the HEI shall be required to submit to the Commission such reports as may be deemed necessary for purposes of monitoring the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Administrative Liability.* – In case of violation of any provision of this Act, the Commission shall have the power to impose sanctions on the erring HEI, such as diminution or withdrawal of subsidy, recommendation on the downgrading or withdrawal of accreditation, program termination, or school closure.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Commission, in consultation with the HEIs, students, student governments and student organizations, shall promulgate the rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act. The Commission shall be guided by Republic Act No. 7722 (the Higher Education Act of 1994), Republic Act No. 7079 (the Campus Journalism Act of 1991), Republic Act No. 9418 (the Volunteer Act of 2007), Republic Act No. 7277 as amended (the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons), and CHED Memorandum Order No. 21, series of 2006 (the Guidelines on Student Affairs and Services Program) as amended.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any part, section or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *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,