

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Sixteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1720



Introduced by Honorable Erico Aristotle C. Aumentado

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 4, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides:

"SEC. 4. The prime duty of the Government is to serve and protect the people. 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."

This constitutional provision affirms that the defense of the State is primarily the concern not only of the government but of the people as well. It shall be the responsibility of every Filipino citizen to defend the security, freedom and independence of the Philippine Republic by rendering personal, military or civil service. Thus, Republic Act (RA) No. 7077, otherwise known as the "*Citizen Armed Forces of the Philippines Reservists Act*," mandated the military training for students enrolled in colleges, universities and similar institutions of learning and established the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) units for the purpose of producing enlisted and officer reservists.

Republic Act (RA) No. 9163, otherwise known as the "*National Service Training Program (NSTP) Act of 2001*," however, made ROTC optional and voluntary. Since the passage of RA 9163, the number of ROTC enrollees and graduates has declined causing concerns over the sustainability of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reserve manpower supply and, consequently, on the capacity of the government to respond to any national security threat or national emergency. Reservists are often mobilized to respond to national emergencies, disasters and calamities.

This bill, therefore, seeks to reinstate the mandatory ROTC for all tertiary students enrolled in all public and private universities, colleges and similar learning institutions. Restoring ROTC will motivate, train, organize and mobilize our students for national defense preparedness. This will also positively shape their character to become more responsible and dependable citizens. Thus, should the government need to defend the State, our people will be well prepared for the contingency to render personal, military or civil service.

Hence, early approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erico Aumentado', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

ERICO ARISTOTLE C. AUMENTADO
2nd District – Bohol

Republic of the Philippines
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AN ACT
REINSTATING THE MANDATORY RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING
CORPS (ROTC) FOR STUDENTS IN ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES AND SIMILAR LEARNING INSTITUTIONS

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Mandatory Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Statement of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to serve and protect the people. 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.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* – The Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) shall apply to all male tertiary students enrolled in public or private universities, colleges and similar learning institutions. It shall form part of the curricula of all baccalaureate degree courses and two-year technical or vocational courses as a requisite for graduation.

SEC. 4. *Mandatory Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC).* – The Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) is hereby declared mandatory for all male students enrolled in any private or public university, college and similar learning institutions. Universities, colleges and similar learning institutions shall request for the conduct of military training in their respective schools, through the

Secretary of National Defense for the purpose of producing enlisted and officer reservists.

The program of instruction shall be prescribed by the Secretary of National Defense to prepare male students for military service. 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 the necessary summer or probationary training of not more than sixty (60) consecutive days.

The first two (2) years of ROTC training, which is mandatory shall hereafter be referred to as Basic ROTC while the second two (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.* – 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 students volunteering for reserve officers' training, they shall further be subject to competitive examination. 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 criminal offenses involving moral turpitude;

c. Students of universities, colleges and other similar learning institutions 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 reservists; and

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

SEC. 7. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Education shall, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education and the Department of National Defense, issue the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 8. ***Repealing Clause.*** – For purposes of this Act, pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 9163, otherwise known as the “*National Service Training Program Act of 2001*” is hereby deemed amended. All other all laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with any provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,