

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

16th CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2728



Introduced by **REP. EVELINA G. ESCUDERO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution, under Article XIV, Section 1 thereof provides: "The State shall protect the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."

Pursuant to this mandate, the State's primordial concern is to provide every citizen high quality standard of education.

State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) are great help in our country as they educate those who are willing to study but could not afford the tuition fees in private colleges and universities.

Through the years, a great number of SUCs have proliferated, especially in the countryside. To date, there are already 111 existing State Universities and Colleges in the country. And it is expected that there will still be a great numbers of proposals creating SUCs that would await the approval of Congress.

It is an unfortunate reality, however, that the quantity of SUCs does not guarantee quality of education.

The unregulated propagation of SUCs is not matched with the corresponding increase in the budget for these institutions, thereby diminishing the quality of service that these academic institutions should be known for.

In fact, there are SUCs that are not functional or those that are "just created for the vanity of politicians". The existing budget for these SUCs should be directed to a select number of SUCs that are proven to produce exceptional graduates and to conduct innovative researches.

The whole process of creation and/or conversion of SUCs has become so politicized, that in the end, lawmakers have sometimes completely disregarded the CHED guidelines for high standards of educational system, just to provide SUCs in their respective congressional district.

It is imperative, therefore, to assess the situation.

On October 7, 1999, former President Joseph E. Estrada issued a Memorandum addressed to the CHED reiterating its administration policy "not in any way support the creation of new state universities and colleges and the conversion/upgrading of existing state colleges and universities".

Unfortunately, despite this policy recommendation for the moratorium, the creation and/or conversion of SUCs persisted

The basic questions that should be resolved now are: Are the SUCs really providing quality education for our students? Is the Philippine educational system, through the SUCs, competitive enough to meet the challenges of the global education environment? Is the National Government allocating enough money to fund the budgetary needs of all the SUCs in the country? Until we provide the answers to these queries, there must be a suspension or moratorium in the creation and/or conversion of SUCs.

This bill proposes a three (3) years moratorium on the creation of new State Universities and Colleges, and conversion or upgrading of existing State Colleges into Universities, within three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act. This will provide Congress and the CHED reasonable time to assess, monitor and upgrade the educational system of higher education that would truly meet the challenges of the changing times.

In view of thereof, the passage of this bill is earnestly requested.



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AN ACT
IMPOSING A THREE-YEAR MORATORIUM ON THE CREATION OF NEW STATE
UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND CONVERSION OR UPGRADING OF
EXISTING STATES COLLEGES INTO UNIVERSITIES

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

SECTION 1. Title – This Act shall be known as “Moratorium on the Creation or Conversion of State Universities and Colleges Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. Declaration of Basic Policy – It is the policy of the State to give utmost importance to quality education that is accessible to all Filipinos. The State shall likewise provide an integrated system of education that is relevant to the needs of the people, and the changing times.

SEC. 3. Coverage – The moratorium mandated by this Act shall cover all existing public higher education institutions and State Colleges all over the country.

SEC. 4. Moratorium on the Creation of State Universities. There shall be a moratorium or suspension on the creation of new State Universities and Colleges, and conversion or upgrading of existing State Colleges into Universities, for a period of three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is hereby tasked to draft the implementing rules and regulations of this Act within sixty (60) days following its complete publication.

SEC. 6. Repealing Clause – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. Separability Clause – If any part or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. Effectivity – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication to two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,