

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City



SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3705**

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Education plays a very powerful role in affording an individual a certain degree of success and security. It is through formal and systematic learning that young minds are honed, developed and pushed to their limits in order to be fully equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills to face the hard realities of the future they behold.

Education is also key in eradicating poverty especially in third world countries such as ours, the Philippines. Education opens the gates of opportunities for a person; and once this opportunity is grabbed, it is also education that keeps the person on such position and allows him to move further up the ladder of professional success.

Education also equips one with enough understanding and enlightenment with respect to the current issues prevailing in our society which inevitably leads to the development of sensible

decision-making skills. Possessing the latter characteristic is crucial not only with respect to the personal progress of an individual but also to the national development of our country. For one, education prepares our children to become the next great leaders of this nation. Also, an individual who is well educated and well-aware of his rights and of his duties will surely be more vigilant and critical about our country's current state or condition.

Unfortunately though, in as much as education is perceived to be the only effective way to fight off poverty, oftentimes poverty serves as the very hindrance for people to obtain proper education.

It is not an unusual sight to us how a typical Filipino household works. In a third world country like ours, majority of the families usually lack means and resources to even put food on the table three times a day. The alarming unemployment rate, underemployment rate and other several economic factors contribute to making it more difficult for a family to survive on a day to day basis. As these problems continuously shoot off by the years, more and more Filipinos are forced to postpone, if not permanently give up their education in order to attend to the more basic needs of the family.

This bill seeks to address this ironic tossing-back-and-forth kind of situation wherein the only plausible solution to a chronic problem of our country is rendered unavailable by the very problem it wishes to solve.

By providing mandatory and automatic scholarship programs to the top 10% of the graduating class of all public high schools, the education of the deserving students need not be compromised anymore regardless of the economic hardships being faced by majority of the Filipino families. It is high time that we make Filipinos realize that education, although not as basic a necessity as food, clothing and shelter, should never be sacrificed. In

connection to this, the significant role of the State comes in. By the approval of this bill, the State shall grant to more Filipino students who are deserving and hardworking tertiary education that they otherwise could not afford. Through the facilitation of our government, the looping interplay of poverty and education is once and for all ended, and the main purpose of education -which is to eradicate poverty - can now be attained slowly, but surely.

Eric Olivarez
ERIC OLIVAREZ

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**AN ACT PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO THE TOP 10
PERCENT OF THE GRADUATING CLASS OF PUBLIC HIGH
SCHOOL**

Section 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as the
“College Scholarship Act of 2014.”

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared as the
policy of the State to promote completion of tertiary education by
the deserving and bona fide students from public high schools as a
way to eliminate the poverty prevailing in the country.

Section 3. Coverage. The scholarship grant under this Act
shall cover all graduating public high school students nationwide
belonging to the top 10% of their respective batch, without regard to
their sex, age, religion or creed.

Section 4. *Scholarship Program.* The Scholarship Program contemplated in this Act shall cover the payment of tuition and other related fees of the student as well as a monthly stipend to be fixed by the Commission on Higher Education but must in no case be less than five thousand pesos (P5,000.00) per month and which shall cover meal allowances, transportation costs, board and lodging expenses if applicable and any other expenditures deemed appropriate and necessary by the Commission. Provided, that the student covered by this Act complies with Section 5 hereof with respect to the school, college or university in which he or she shall go.

Section 5. *General Rule is to Enrol in a Public College or University.* To avail of the scholarship grant under this act, the student must enrol only in a public college or a state university in the country. However, the scholarship grant may still be availed of by a student who wishes to study in a private college or university provided he/she qualifies in a separate scholarship which exempts him/her from paying tuition and other related fees thereat. In such case, he/she will still get a monthly stipend and other benefits as described in the preceding section, as fixed by the Commission on Higher Education.

Section 6. *Monitoring.* The Commission on Higher Education shall coordinate with and may require the college or university in which scholars under this Act are enrolled for the purpose of monitoring the performance of the said students. It may also require a monthly report or certification from the said scholars to be issued by their respective colleges or universities assuring the Commission that its scholars therein as of present do not possess

the status of "dropped from the rolls" and/or have not undertaken "leave of absence" or "absence without leave".

Section 7. *Temporary Disqualification.* A scholar under this Act who has undertaken a "Leave of Absence" during the semester shall be temporary disqualified from receiving the benefits of the scholarship program until the time that he or she formally returns to school. Provided that a scholar may only take at most two leaves of absence in the entire duration of his or her college years, otherwise he shall be permanently disqualified from receiving said benefits and shall automatically be excluded from the coverage of this Act. Provided further, that the absence of the student must be "with Proper Leave or Notice" in accordance with the rules and policies of the school. An AWOL (Absence without leave) status and a "dropped from the rolls" status shall automatically disqualify the scholar from receiving scholarship under this Act permanently.

Section 8. *Transfer of School.* A scholar who transfers from one public college or state university to another retains his scholarship under this Act provided that the transfer is not due to being dropped from the rolls from the previous college or university, and the scholar retains the same course in the new college or university. Provided further, that a scholar may only transfer once in the entire duration of his college years otherwise he or she will be permanently disqualified from receiving the scholarship benefits.

Section 9. *Rule on Leave of Absence when Transferring to another School* . The limit on the number of leave of absence which a scholar may undertake as described in Section 5 hereof encompasses both the previous and the new college or university. The number of Leave of Absence a transferring scholar has

undertaken in his/her previous school is taken into consideration along with the number of leave of absence he/she has undertaken in the new school, for purposes of determining whether or not he/she has exceeded the limit of allowed number of leaves of absence and thereby be permanently disqualified from the scholarship.

Section 10. *Budget Appropriation.* The funding of this Scholarship Program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Unless otherwise provided in this Act, the Commission on Higher Education shall promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act. Such rules and regulations shall take effect upon their publication in three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

Section 12. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, letters of instructions, executive orders, rules and regulations insofar as they are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or amended as the case may be.

Section 13. *Separability Clause.* – In the event that any provision of this Act or any portion thereof is declared unconstitutional by a competent court, the other provisions shall not be affected thereby and shall remain valid and enforceable.

Section 14. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect after its complete publication in at least three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED.