



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Sixteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **3833**



Introduced by Honorable Patrick T. Antonio

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In a publication issued by the IBON News dated 16 October 2012, its research group noted that based on a study commissioned by the government, Philippine agriculture is 20 years behind other Asian countries. Comparing land productivity with ASEAN member countries, the Philippines ranked 4th in rice, coconut, sugarcane, and 5th in corn. World Bank data also showed that Total Factor Productivity (TFP) growth in agriculture – or the ratio of machinery investment in productivity – has stagnated in the Philippines at 0.2% per year over the past two decades, compared to 1% per year in Thailand, 1.5% per year in Indonesia, and 4.7% in China.

Despite being a country rich in natural resources, the Philippines continues to display dismal performance in the area of agriculture. A significant factor believed to have contributed to the underperformance of this sector is the declining number of small farmers. Many are discouraged to engage in such line of work because of the perceived hardships, evidenced by statistics showing that small farming families form part of the country's poorest.

Taking the foregoing into consideration, this bill aims to increase the participation of Filipino workers in the agricultural sector by taking appropriate steps to uplift the standard of living of small farmers. In particular, the bill intends to make quality education accessible to small farming families who, based on experience, fail to send their children to finish higher education because of financial constraints. Thus, this bill seeks to institutionalize scholarship grants to the children of small farmers.

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


PATRICK T. ANTONIO

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AN ACT
GRANTING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHILDREN OF SMALL FARMERS AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 “*Scholarship for Children of Small Farmers Act.*”

SEC. 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to promote comprehensive rural development and agrarian reform as well as give priority to education and science and technology to accelerate social progress and promote development in the country. Toward this end, the government shall provide qualified children of small farmers opportunities to obtain quality education through the grant of scholarships.

SEC. 3. ***General Objectives.*** – This Act promotes the development of agriculture throughout the country by financing the college education of talented and deserving children of small farmers and provide incentives for them to pursue a career in the field of agriculture, especially in their home regions.

SEC. 4. ***Children of Small Farmers Scholarship Fund.*** – There is hereby created a Children of Small Farmers Scholarship Fund to be administered by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in financing the college education of talented and deserving children of small farmers. For purposes of this Act and in accordance with Republic Act No. 7607, otherwise known as the “*Magna Carta of Small Farmers*,” small farmers shall refer to natural persons dependent on small-scale subsistence farming as their primary source of income and whose sale, barter or exchange of agricultural products do not exceed a gross value of One hundred eighty thousand pesos (P180,000.00) *per annum* based in 1992 constant prices.

SEC. 5. ***Children of Small Farmer Scholarship Grant.*** – The scholarship grant awarded under this Act shall be applied for any agriculture or science and technology course, as identified by the CHED as a priority course, and shall cover the entire tuition and miscellaneous fees of the grantee. The grantee may enroll in any public or private university or college throughout the country.

Qualified and deserving children of small farmers who enroll in courses other than those identified by CHED as a priority course shall be granted financial aid amounting to fifty percent (50%) of the tuition fees.

SEC. 6. ***Qualifications.*** – To be eligible for the scholarship grant under this Act the applicant must:

- (a) Be a Filipino citizen of good moral character;
- (b) Be a high school graduate;
- (c) Be a child of a small farmer;
- (d) Be not more than thirty (30) years of age at the time of the award of the grant;
- (e) Be qualified as an incoming college student in any curricular year level at the time of the award; and
- (f) Have complied with such other requirements that may be established by the CHED.

SEC. 7. ***Limit.*** – The award of the scholarship grant shall be limited to three (3) children only per small farmer and shall apply even if both parents are small farmers.

SEC. 8. ***Conditions of the Grant.*** – The grantees of the scholarship must maintain a general weighted average (GWA) grade of eighty percent (80%) or better, with no failing grade in any subject. The grantee must also carry a full semestral or trimestral load as prescribed in the course curriculum and finish within the normal

duration of the course. Failure to meet any of these conditions shall be a ground for the termination of the grant.

SEC. 9. *Appeal.* – Upon receipt of a written notice of termination of scholarship due to non-compliance or violation of the terms and conditions of the scholarship, a grantee may, not later than fifteen (15) days from receipt of the notice, file an appeal for reconsideration and reinstatement of the scholarship with the CHED. Upon the lapse of the fifteen (15) days wherein a grantee may file an appeal and no appeal is made, the termination of scholarship shall become final and executory.

SEC. 10. *Service Obligation.* – After graduating, a grantee must render return service in the Philippines on a full-time basis, preferably in the grantee's home region and along the grantee's field of training, for a period equivalent to one-half (1/2) of the length of time that the grantee enjoyed the scholarship. Return service may be done by being employed within the Philippines in a government agency or a private company or by self-employment. The proof of employment, such as, certificate of employment, business permit, income tax return and other documents evidencing the grantee's completion of the required number of years of return service must be submitted to the CHED before being issued a final clearance.

A grantee that is unable to render the return service obligation imposed under this section shall be liable to reimburse the Government the amount equivalent to the scholarship funds received under this Act.

SEC. 11. ***Implementing Agency.*** – The CHED shall be the main implementing agency of the provisions of this Act. It shall be responsible for the evaluation, awarding and monitoring of the scholarship grants and scholars. The CHED is also tasked with coordinating with other relevant agencies in the fulfilment of the goals of this Act.

SEC. 12. ***Review and Monitoring.*** – The CHED shall report to the President of the Philippines and to Congress after the first year, and annually thereafter, on the implementation of the provisions of this Act and submit recommendations for its improvement.

SEC. 13. ***Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the CHED shall promulgate the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 14. ***Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be included in the appropriations of the CHED in the annual General Appropriations Act of the year the following the effectivity of this Act. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the effective and continuous implementation of the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 15. ***Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provisions not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 16. ***Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations and administrative regulations or parts thereof inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 17. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,