

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives

Quezon City, Metro Manila

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill Number **5734**



Introduced by **Representative EDGARDO 'ERM' RAMA MASONGSONG**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE LINEMAN TRAINING ACADEMY OF THE PHILIPPINES,
PROVIDING FOR ITS POWERS, STRUCTURE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Being one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, the Philippines has been constantly confronted with intermittent power outages. The vicious cycle of delayed repair and reconstruction of transmission and distribution lines has oftentimes been aggravated by the inadequate number of linemen to carry out the repair works. This is a serious concern that needs to be addressed.

The power lineman has been dubbed as one of the "hard to fill" jobs in the Philippines based on the study conducted by the Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (BLES) in 2007. It is also considered to be one of the world's most dangerous jobs. In the course of their duties and responsibilities, linemen work in a harsh and high-risk working condition. While there seems to be lacking latest statistics to prove this point, I personally have seen the apparent shortage of linemen in the electric power industry, in my experience with Electric Cooperatives for more than a decade.

For all intents and purposes, some of our Distribution Utilities, including Electric Cooperatives, have developed their own training programs for linemen. However, the growing demand for this type of profession has not been met by increasing the number of apprenticeship programs available to aspiring individuals who would want to be linemen

in the future. Hence, there remains an apparent shortage for the profession. This could also be attributed to the high training requirements and level of expertise for this occupation. The budget in producing a lineman is also so high that almost none can afford to pay the training expenses. Most of the time, Distribution Utilities conduct the trainings but their expenses in producing a lineman are passed on and is being paid by consumers.

Thus, this bill seeks to address the growing concern for the shortage of linemen in the power utility industry. In the absence of an initiative to put up training institutions specifically to develop linemen, government needs to intervene through the establishment of a Lineman Training Academy of the Philippines that shall offer free training to qualified candidates. The Academy shall train qualified candidates to become skilled power lineman to construct, maintain, and operate the country's power grid. The Academy is also envisioned to play a vital role in providing skill development training to meet the present challenges in the power industry.

By producing more linemen we can be assured that we have available and adequate number of skilled workers to work and serve in the power industry that we badly need especially during emergency situations. More so, with the regular trainings conducted per region every year, those lineman graduates who will not be absorbed by the industry or employed locally could venture working in other countries where the same skills are also in demand. Hence, this bill will also address problem of unemployment that would benefit the Out-of-School Youth (OSY).

Therefore, I respectfully urge my dear colleagues in this August Chamber for the immediate passage of this bill.



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

SECTION 1. **Creation.** – There shall be established in the Philippines a training institution to be known as the LINEMAN TRAINING ACADEMY OF THE PHILIPPINES, to be herein called as the Academy.

SECTION 2. **Objectives.** – The establishment of the Academy is aimed to:

- a. Create a pool of skilled workers to work and serve in the country's power industry;
- b. Address the shortage of lineman training workers in the power utility industry;
- c. Develop skilled and competent workers as an alternative solution to the perennial and nagging employment in the country; and
- d. Train entry-level electrical line workers free of cost and it shall screen and train qualified candidates to be power lineman to construct, maintain, and operate the power grid.

SECTION 3. *Domicile.* – The principal office of the Academy shall be established in Cebu City. There shall also be one (1) satellite office for each region in the Philippines to facilitate the selection process of qualified lineman trainees.

SECTION 4. *Composition of the Training Academy.*– The Academy shall be composed of the Academy Training Board and Secretariat.

- (a) The Academy shall be under the direction and supervision of the Administrator of the National Electrification Administration (NEA), in close coordination with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and Electric Cooperatives (ECs). The Academy's Secretariat shall be headed by a Director-General with the assistance of a Deputy Director-General and an appropriate number of secretariat personnel. Both the Director-General and Deputy Director-General shall be elected by the Lineman Training Academy Board for a fixed term of five (5) years.
- (b) The Academy shall have a Training Board to be comprised of the following:
 - (i) Administrator of the NEA – Chairperson;
 - (ii) Director-General of TESDA – Vice Chairperson
 - (iii) Director-General of the Lineman Training Academy of the Philippines – Member;
 - (iv) Chairman of the Grid Management Committee (GMC) and Distribution Management Committee (DMC) – Member
 - (v) Three (3) representatives from the Inter-regional Association of Electric Cooperative representing Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao
 - (vi) National President of Institute of Integrated Electrical Engineering
 - (vii) National President of Lineman Training Association of the Philippines
 - (viii) Representative from the National Grid Corporation or concessionaire (TransCo or NGCP)
- (c) Each satellite office in every region shall have a Screening Committee to be composed of at least five (5) members.

SECTION 5. **Director-General.** – As head of the Academy Secretariat, the Director-General shall also act as Chief Executive Officer to exercise general supervision and control over its technical and administrative personnel. As such, his duties and responsibilities include, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) To submit for the consideration of the Training Board the policies and measures which may be necessary to carry out the objectives of the Academy;
- (b) To recommend, coordinate and administer the training programs and projects of the Academy;
- (c) To direct and supervise the operations and internal administration of the Academy;
- (d) To delegate administrative responsibilities in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Academy;
- (e) To submit an annual report to the Training Board highlighting the activities of the Academy during the year, including its financial operations and status, and a program and budget for the ensuing year; and
- (f) To exercise other functions and responsibilities as may be delegated by the Board.

SECTION 6. **Lineman Training Board.** – The Training Board shall meet at least twice a year, or as frequently as may be deemed necessary by its Chairperson, to perform the following functions:

- (a) To identify appropriate electrical lineman training programs that shall meet the requirements of the power industry;
- (b) To approve appointments of academic and training consultants, lecturers, instructors, and trainers of the Academy;
- (c) To approve a standardized training module which shall define the core competencies, including, but not limited to, basic handling and operation of line equipment such as capacitors, transformers, voltage regulators, potential transformers, current transformers, meters, among others;
- (d) To define the mode or criteria to be considered in the selection of trainees;
- (e) To elect the Director-General and Deputy Director-General; and

- (f) To conduct a regular annual review of the training module, which shall be updated or upgraded as may be required by the exigencies in the power industry.

The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Members of the Board of the Academy shall not receive any regular salary. However, they shall receive entitlements to actual allowances prescribed by law, and reimbursement of necessary expenses incurred during or in conjunction with their attendance in the regular meetings or special sessions of the Board, in connection with their official functions which shall be duly authorized by the Board through a Resolution.

SECTION 7. *Training Centers.* – The NEA shall identify one (1) training center for every region in the country, which may be an existing training facility of a Distribution Utility (DU) or Electric Cooperative (EC). Every regional satellite office shall screen and identify fifty (50) trainees every year.

SECTION 8. *Compliance with the Salaries Standardization Law.* – The compensation and emoluments of the officials and employees of the Academy shall be in compliance with the Salaries Standardization Law.

SECTION 9. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to finance the initial implementation of this Act shall be taken from the Malampaya Fund or included in appropriations of the National Electrification Administration (NEA). Thereafter, such funds as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The implementing rules and regulations to effectively carry out the provisions of this Act shall be adopted and promulgated by the National Electrification Administration (NEA), in consultation with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and Electric Cooperatives (ECs), not later than ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act. The IRR to be adopted shall be published in at least one (1) national newspaper of general circulation.

SECTION 11. ***Separability Clause.*** If any part or section of this Act is declared unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect in any manner other parts or sections of this Act.

SECTION 12. ***Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, proclamations, issuances, or ordinances that are contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. ***Effectivity Clause.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,