

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez and
Representative Maximo B. Rodriguez, Jr.*

House Bill No. **6512**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Mr. Paul Gerhard Schäfer was born in Germany on September 10, 1950. He studied in Germany and worked there from 1966 as a working student until 1989 when he was the Section Head for Language Course Organization (German as a Foreign Language for Participants of Government- and Industry-Sponsored Scholarship Programs for professionals from foreign, mostly developing countries in Germany) Carl Duisberg Centren (CDC), Cologne, Germany.

From then on, Mr. Schäfer became the Resident Representative of the Hanns Seidel Foundation/Germany (HSF) in Manila, Philippines. He was the Resident Representative until his retirement in 2016. It is quite evident that Mr. Schäfer fell in love with the Philippines and with Filipinos.

Hanns Seidel Foundation in the Philippines has devoted itself in promoting self-help and self-responsibility to help ensure the sustainability of the programs that have received its support. With Mr. Schäfer at the helm, HSF focused its efforts on improving the quality of life of the members of the disadvantaged sector in the Philippines. Through the strong partnership it had earlier forged with the Center for Research and Communication (CRC, now known as the University of Asia and the Pacific, UA&P), HSF helped contribute towards the socio-economic development of the country through support in the conduct of seminars and training activities for professionals and skilled workers, strengthening democratic structures, and in enhancing partnerships between the government and the private sector. In line with its development goals, HSF involved itself in the promotion and implementation of the dual training system for technical and vocational courses. This led to the further expansion and solidification of its network of local partners that grew to include the Dualtech Training Center, Pablo Borbon Memorial Institute of Technology (now integrated into the Batangas State University), Punlaan School, Pamantasan ng Makati, and Concordia College, among others.

Mr. Schäfer has also led the implementation of various programs of the HSF including the Dual Vocational Training and the Philippine Countryside Programs.

The Dualtech Center is one significant testament to the successful introduction of the German Dual Training System (DTS) in the Philippines by HSF. It started as a social development project aimed to alleviate poverty through vocational education and training programs and as a response to the growing problem of the lack of skilled manpower needed by the industries. Through its training programs, the Dualtech Center has transformed the unskilled/unemployed and underpaid out-of-school youth into highly-skilled workers earning above-the-minimum wage, thus, alleviating their families from the grip of poverty. From 1982 to date, the Dualtech Center produced over 20,000 graduates for its short-term courses and over 10,000 graduates for its two-year course.



Another program implemented was the Philippine Countryside Program (PCP) in cooperation with its local partners - Institute for People Power and Development (IPPD)- Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation (BSAF, renamed Ninoy and Cory Aquino Foundation, NCAF, effective 08 February 2010), Negros Oriental Development Center (NODC) and National Cooperative Movement (NCM). The program's ultimate goal was to develop viable and sustainable cooperative business networks and leadership espousing democratic principles and participatory processes towards social transformation. It was undertaken through the provision of training and education focused on leadership and advanced management courses. The program promoted the integration and consolidation of cooperatives along the economic value chain. It also developed and distributed training modules to training participants. The program was turned over in 2005 and 2007 to NODC and NCAF through the Philippine Federation of Credit Cooperatives (PFCCO), respectively.

Further, in September 2002, with special funds provided by the German government, an expansion program titled "Institutional Capacity-Building and Livelihood Assistance for Peace and Development" was initiated in Western Mindanao in cooperation with NCAF, local partners and other foreign donor agencies. This project, which was completed in November 2004, provided assistance in formerly war-torn communities of Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Zamboanga Sibugay through a comprehensive and integrated program covering psycho-social interventions, technical and management training/seminars, and income-generating projects (seaweed farming and bakeshop). The main program-beneficiaries were former combatants of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), their families and their immediate community. A total of 693 participants were trained and 203 individuals benefited from the livelihood projects including women.

In 2005 with the objective of institutionalizing the program, a 2-year tripartite program cooperation was forged with the Philippine Federation of Credit Cooperatives (PFCCO), an aggrupation of credit cooperatives which are considered the dominant and more successful cooperatives in the country with a nationwide network. The program has trained a faculty-on-field comprising of 33 members (i.e., Board Members, League Managers and heads of Education Committee) who graduated from the program, which complemented the Professionalization Program of PFCCO. Baseline and end-line studies were conducted before and after the training to measure the effectiveness and impact of the program at the level of the faculty-on-field. The program was turned over to NCAF and PFCCO in 2007.

The HSF, under Mr. Schäfer, has stood firm on its commitment to poverty reduction and to the overall socio-economic development of the country. One proof is its additional program cooperation in 2008 to provide support to the microfinance sector in the Philippines. The purpose of the program is to develop the capacity of microfinance institutions (MFIs) to enhance access of marginal sectors to innovative products, markets and services. The program has 4 components: i) curriculum development and standardization; ii) organization of a training faculty for microfinance courses; iii) research and development for new microfinance loan products and services; and iv) organization/networking of training institutions/service providers for micro-enterprise development.

These are just some of the main programs being implemented by the HSF and Mr. Schäfer not to mention the various trainings and seminars that they conduct to assist and improve the capabilities and competence of Filipinos including police officers. They have also provided programs that support initiatives of the Supreme Court, ASEAN-EU Cooperation, the 'International Conference of Asian Political Parties' (ICAPP) and of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA).

Complementary to the aforementioned key programs, HSF provides support to the following special programs on international cooperation:

- i. Information and study visits to Germany and to European institutions;

- ii. International and local conferences, seminars and meeting of experts on major topics related to foreign policy, security and economic affairs; and
- iii. Scholarship Program/study grants for young professionals who have expressed interest to pursue further studies (up to two years) in Germany related to the Foundation's project activities in the country.

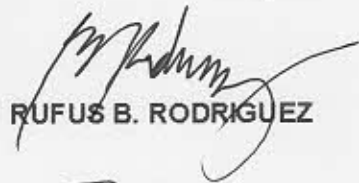
The HSF (and Mr. Schäfer) was also awarded the Congressional Medal of Achievement by the House of Representatives of the Republic of the Philippines because of all that they have done for the Filipino people.

Mr. Paul Gerhard Schäfer is married to a Filipina, Cruzalinda Mondejar Schäfer, and they are blessed with 3 sons.

It is quite evident that Mr. Schäfer has become more Filipino and has helped more Filipinos than many Filipino. He has made the Philippines his home since 1989 and because of his love for our country, he wishes to avail of the privilege of called a Filipino.

And while Mr. Schäfer is not yet a citizen of the Philippines, his mind, heart, soul and his actions show that he is a Filipino.

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



RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ



MAXIMO B. RODRIGUEZ, JR.

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AN ACT
GRANTING PHILIPPINES CITIZENSHIP TO PAUL GERHARD SCHAFER

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

Section 1. Paul Gerhard Schäfer is hereby granted Philippine citizenship with all the rights, privileges, and prerogatives appurtenant thereto.

After the taking and registration of the oath of allegiance to the Republic of the Philippines, Paul Gerhard Schäfer shall enter into the full enjoyment Philippine Citizenship.

Section 2. This Act shall take effect immediately following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,