

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6039



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

There are currently around four million out of school youth (OSY) in the country or persons aged 15 to 30 years who are not attending school, have not finished any college or post-secondary course, and are not working. While the government continues to push forward initiatives for 100% inclusive education that leaves no Filipino behind, there is a percentage of our youth population that are unable to secure an education, or complete the same.

The State avows in its 1987 Constitution to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and to take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. The State also recognizes human capital as its best national resource, and has increasingly invested to produce an educated citizenry which eventually translates to a competitive labor force and discerning electorate, among others. It is hereby the burden of the State to reach out to its out-of-school youth and present them with new opportunities to improve their lives.

In pursuit of the aforementioned mandate, this bill seeks to institutionalize the Abot-Alam Program of the Department of Education (DepEd) to ensure that our out-of-school youth will be provided resources to enhance their potential regardless of financial or other constraints. Through this program, DepEd

identifies the OSY with the help of select elementary and high school teachers, locates them through a Barangay Abot-Alam Targeting System, and meets with them to determine their goals and interests.

Upon assessment, a potential Abot-Alam beneficiary chooses whether he/she intends to pursue further education or is keener on entrepreneurship or employment opportunities. The out-of-school youth will then be linked to the respective public or private entity that best matches his/her chosen pursuit.

Since its commencement in 2014, 1.9 million OSY have been identified and mapped, with over 400,000 OSY already enrolled under various programs in education, employment and entrepreneurship. Some are pursuing tertiary education, or undergoing trainings under the Technical Education and Skills Authority (TESDA). By institutionalizing this reform initiative, a zero-OSY Philippines as envisioned by DepEd in coordination with the National Youth Commission (NYC), other government agencies and the private sector is now within reach.

The bill reaffirms the State's commitment to engage the youth in nation-building, and endeavors to support their potential for success. It is also a counterpart to Senate Bill No. 1022 filed by Senator Grace Poe under the same title.

In consideration of the foregoing premises, its speedy approval of is hereby sought.



LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE "ABOT-ALAM" PROGRAM
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title* – This Act shall be known as the "*Abot-Alam Act of 2017*".

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy* – It is a declared policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens, especially the poor and the marginalized, to quality education at all levels. The State also recognizes the primordial role of the youth in nation-building. Therefore, the "*Abot-Alam*" program of the Department of Education is hereby institutionalized and recognized as a means to provide education to out-of-school youths and adults who have neither undergone nor completed basic education, and to other individuals who cannot be adequately served by the formal educational system.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- a) *"Abot-Alam"* refers to the "Abot-Alam" program of the Department of Education which is institutionalized under Section 4 of this Act;
- b) *"Abot-Alam Enlisted Learners"* or *"Enlisted Learners"* refers to individuals, whether out-of-school youths or adults who have neither undergone nor completed basic education, who are enrolled in any of the components of the Abot-Alam Program.
- c) *"Abot-Alam Partner"* or *"Partners"* refers to individuals, groups, organizations or agencies (e.g. LGUs, NGOs, private institutions/companies, religious groups, etc.) implementing the Abot-Alam Program in different areas using their own resources and/or which provide technical assistance or other resources in support of the Program at any level;
- d) *"Barangay Abot-Alam Targeting System"* or *"Targeting System"* refers to the comprehensive database of OSY established under Section 5 of this Act.
- e) *"Alternative Delivery Modes"*, as defined and adopted from Department of Education Order No. 54, s. 2012, refers to alternative modalities of delivering education which allows schools to deliver quality education to marginalized students and those at risk of dropping out in order to help them overcome personal, social and economic constraints in their schooling. It shall include, without limitation, the following:
 - 1. Enhanced Instructional Management Parents, Communities and Teachers (E-IMPACT);
 - 2. Modified In-School Off-School Approach (MISOSA); and

3. Open High School Program (OHSP)

- f) "*Alternative Learning System*" as defined and adopted from Republic Act No. 9155, otherwise known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, is a parallel learning system to provide a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction. It encompasses both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills;
- g) "*Out-of-School Youth*" or "OSY" refers to individuals who are 7 to 24 years of age who are not enrolled in formal schooling.

SECTION 4. *Institutionalization of the Abot-Alam Program* – There is hereby established a nationwide program to be known as the "Abot-Alam" Program, herein referred to as "the Program".

SECTION 5. *Objectives* – The Program aims to:

- a) Create a comprehensive database of OSY in the country by organizing a Barangay Abot-Alam Targeting System;
- b) Unify and harmonize the efforts and resources of all agencies and organizations directed towards providing education and training for OSY in the country;
- c) Ensure that all OSYs have access to programs and services of different agencies and organizations; and
- d) Integrate adults who have neither undergone nor completed formal education in the Program.

SECTION 6. *Coverage* – The Act shall cover:

- a) Out-of-School Youths;
- b) Marginalized students who are at risk of dropping out; and
- c) Adults who have neither undergone nor finished basic education.

SECTION 7. *Barangay Abot-Alam Targeting System* – A comprehensive database of OSYs in the country is hereby established. The targeting system shall be based on information collected and updated by Barangays on OSYs in their jurisdiction, in coordination with the relevant Public Schools District Supervisors and School Heads. The database shall be updated annually and shall include information such as one's name, age, location, and learning needs. All information shall be submitted to and consolidated by the Philippine Statistics Authority.

Existing enrollees of the Program need not be included in the database.

SECTION 8. *Components* – The Program shall have three (3) modalities:

- a.) ALS-Education- a community-based ALS program which helps Enlisted Learners to acquire basic reading, writing, numeracy skills and the ability to read with comprehension and solve simple numeracy problems.

Enlisted Learners under this program shall undergo an accreditation and equivalency test before and after the program duration which will measure their learning competency. Passers of the test shall be given a diploma certifying their competencies as comparable graduates of the formal school system and shall be considered qualified to enroll in secondary and post-secondary schools.

This program shall be implemented by the Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with interested Partners.

b.) ALS-Entrepreneurship- an ALS program which provides livelihood and entrepreneurship training and assistance to Enlisted Learners. This shall be a joint program of the Department of Education and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in coordination with interested Partners.

c.) ALS Technical-Vocational and Employment Program- an ALS program which provides technical-vocational skills training to Enlisted Learners. This shall be a joint program of the Department of Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Skills Development Authority in coordination with interested Partners.

SECTION 9. *Utilization of Alternative Delivery Modes* – The Department of Education and concerned Partners shall, in addition to formal, school-based modes of delivering education, maximize the utilization of Alternative Delivery Modes of education.

SECTION 10. *Program Implementation* – DepEd Division Offices, in consultation with all concerned Partners, shall map and provide information on all of the ALS programs of intervention that they are offering in their jurisdiction and match the needs of Enlisted Learners with the available programs mapped;

SECTION 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* – Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and the Department of Trade and Industry, in consultation with relevant government agencies and partners, shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the effective regulation of this Act.

SECTION 12. *Appropriations* – An amount of Ten Million Pesos (Php 10,000,000.00) is hereby allocated for the initial implementation of this act. Such amounts as may be necessary for the continuing implementation of this Act shall be included as a separate line-item under the appropriations of the Department of Education under the General Appropriations Act and may be augmented by grants, donations and endowments from domestic and foreign sources, pursuant to existing laws and regulations.

SECTION 13. *Separability Clause* – If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 14. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to this Act, are hereby deemed accordingly repealed or amended.

SECTION 15. *Effectivity Clause* – This Act shall take effect upon its approval and completion of publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,