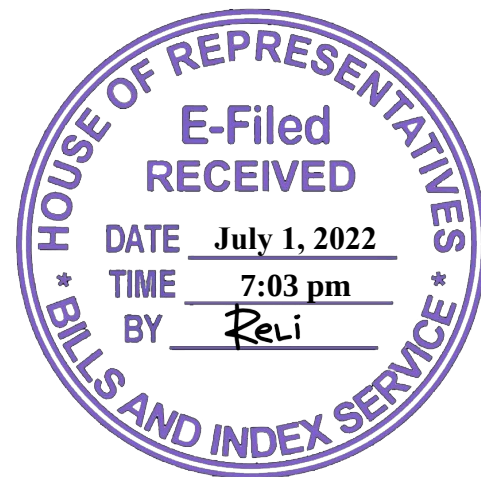


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 984

Introduced by Hon. Mark O. Go

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education is a landmark piece of legislation. However, certain realities have to be accommodated to fully attain the goals sought by the law. First is the limited number of Public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that could cater all higher education students. Presently, there are only 242 public HEIs (including SUCs, LUCs, and other special HEIs). Geographical considerations also deny the access of students to these public HEIs. In addition, the range of courses or degrees offered in each public HEI limits the options of the students who are in need of government subsidy. Any or a combination of any of these and other factors hinder students from enjoying the benefits of the law.

Last academic year 2020-2021, there were 1,822,813 students enrolled in these 263 public HEIs. Meanwhile the 1,734 private HEIs all over the country are serving only 1,820,705 students. Much of these HEIs can absorb the students, particularly those restrained by geographical considerations. This bill seeks to grant financial assistance to students opting to study in private HEIs and private TVIs through a voucher system.

Article XIV, Section 2, paragraph 3 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged. Creating the voucher system is compliant with this Constitutional mandate. Furthermore, Section 4, paragraph 1 of the same Article provides that the State recognizes the complementary roles of public and private institutions in the educational system and shall exercise reasonable supervision and regulation of all educational institutions.

Good governance is characterized by the sharing of the responsibility of nation-building among all sectors of the society. As we continuously strive for inclusive and sustainable socio-economic growth, let us create synergy with the private sector in nurturing our youth and equipping them to become productive and globally competitive.

This bill has been approved by the House of Representatives in the 18th Congress and was transmitted to the Senate for its consideration and approval. However, due to lack of material time, this proposed measure was not enacted into law.

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



MARK O GO

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Nineteenth Congress
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HOUSE BILL NO. 984

Introduced by Hon. Mark O. Go

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY
QUALIFIED STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
AND PRIVATE TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AMENDING FOR
THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10931, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO QUALITY TERTIARY EDUCATION ACT”

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

SECTION 1. Section 7 of Republic Act No. 10931 or the “Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act” is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 7A. *TERTIARY EDUCATION SUBSIDY (TES) for Filipino Students.* - To support the cost of tertiary education or any part or portion thereof, a TES is hereby established IN ALL SUCs, LUCs, PRIVATE HEIs AND TVIs for all Filipino students who [shall] enroll in THE FIRST undergraduate, post-secondary TERTIARY EDUCATION program[s] [of SUCs, LUCs, private HEIs and all TVIs] OF THEIR CHOICE. The TES shall be administered by the UniFAST Board and the amount necessary to fund the TES shall be included in the RESPECTIVE budgets of the CHED and the TESDA: *Provided*, That prioritization shall be given to students in the following order: (a) students who are part of households included in the UPDATED *Listahanan* 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income; and (b) students not part of the *Listahanan* 2.0, ranked according to estimated per capita household income based on submitted documentation of proof of income to be determined by the UniFAST Board: *Provided, further*, That such prioritization shall not apply to Filipino students in cities and municipalities with no existing SUC or LUC campus AND PUBLIC TVI.

TO SUPPORT THE COST OF TERTIARY EDUCATION OR ANY PART OR PORTION THEREOF, [T]he TES may, among others, [and to support the cost of tertiary education or any part or portion thereof,] cover the following:

(a) Tuition and other school fees in private HEIs, and private or LGU-operated TVIs, which shall be equivalent to the tuition and other school fees of the nearest SUC or state-run TVI in their respective areas;

(b) [An] Allowance for books, SCHOOL supplies, transportation TO AND FROM SCHOOL, and [miscellaneous personal expenses, including a] reasonable allowance for the documented rental or purchase of a [personal computer or laptop] DESKTOP OR PORTABLE COMPUTER WHEN APPLICABLE [and other education-related expenses];

(c) An allowance for room and board costs incurred by the student WHEN APPLICABLE;

(d) xxx

(e) xxx

ALL TES BENEFICIARIES SHALL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE SUCH BENEFITS OR SUBSIDY UNTIL THEY COMPLETE THEIR POST-SECONDARY TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL COURSE OR HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAM: *PROVIDED*, THAT THEY DO NOT FAIL IN ANY SUBJECT ENROLLED IN AND COMPLY WITH RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE HEIS AND TVIS.

SEC. 7B. *VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR QUALIFIED STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HEIS AND TVIE.* – THERE SHALL BE A PROPORTIONAL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION IN THE FORM OF A VOUCHER SYSTEM TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE UNIFAST BOARD FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS WHO OPT TO STUDY IN PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs AND PUBLIC TVIs. ELIGIBILITY FOR COVERAGE UNDER THE VOUCHER SYSTEM SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE UNIFAST BOARD AND SHALL BE BASED ON THE STUDENTS' ECONOMIC SITUATION AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS.

STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HEIS AND TVIS WHO ARE ALREADY COVERED UNDER THE TES PROGRAM CAN NO LONGER QUALIFY FOR THE VOUCHER SYSTEM. ALL VOUCHERS ISSUED UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS WHO OPT TO STUDY IN PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs AND PUBLIC TVIs.”

SEC. 2. Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the "Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act”, is hereby amended. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,