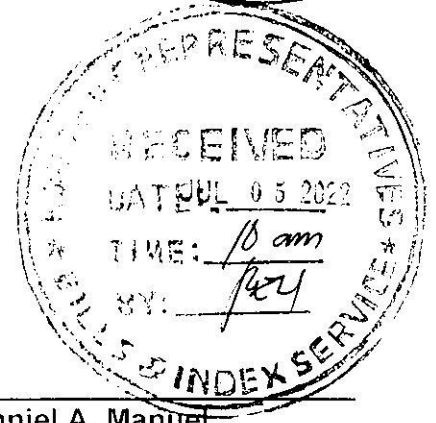


REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **1158**



Introduced by **KABATAAN PARTY-LIST Rep. Raoul Danniel A. Manuel**

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING FREE PUBLIC TERTIARY EDUCATION
AND ESTABLISHING SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR AND UPHOLDING FISCAL AUTONOMY
OF STUDENT COUNCILS/GOVERNMENT AND STUDENT PUBLICATIONS, AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10931, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO QUALITY TERTIARY EDUCATION ACT”**

Explanatory Note

Article II Section 17 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to “give priority to education, science and technology, art, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.”

This is the guiding principle behind the Comprehensive Free Public Education Bill originally filed by Kabataan Party-list, collectively championed by the youth and students themselves, and supported by legislators. Various efforts led to Republic Act (RA) 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (UAQTEA) which became law in August 2017.

After several academic years of implementing RA 10931, this representation believes that it is time to introduce much-needed amendments for the benefit of Filipino students and youth.

One of the proposed amendments seeks to uphold the public character of our state-run higher education institutions and gradually address the structural ills of the Philippine education system. It shall establish a new higher education curriculum responsive to the needs and the goals of the nation. As fundamental changes in education should address the basic ills that hound the system, we need to collectively strive for a type of education that is not only free, but also empowering and liberating.

Another amendment shall include all local universities and colleges and the branches of state universities and colleges in the free tertiary education program.

Finally, we forward an amendment that aims to establish, clarify, and institutionalize the source of funds for campus publications and student councils/governments. This is in response to funding and budget issues experienced by the aforementioned student institutions since the implementation of RA 10931.

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

REP. RAOUL DANNIEL A. MANUEL
Kabataan Party-list

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

SECTION 1. Free public tertiary education shall be strengthened and expanded through the formulation of nationalist, scientific and mass-oriented curriculum. Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the “Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education”, is amended to read as follows:

“Section 8. Student Loan Program for Tertiary Education. - To support further the cost of tertiary education or any part or portion thereof, a student loan program for tertiary education is hereby likewise established for all Filipino students who shall enroll in SUC, LUC, private HEI and TVET program in all TVIs registered under the TESDA. The Loan program shall be administered by the UniFAST Board and the amount necessary to fund the program shall be included in the budgets of the CHED and the TESDA: Provided, That the UniFAST may offer short-term or long-term loans: Provided, further, That those who availed of the loan during their undergraduate degree may still avail of another cycle of student loan for their pursuit of graduate studies, including medicine and law after they have fully paid the previously availed loan: Provided, furthermore, That those who did not avail of the loan program during their undergraduate studies may avail of it to pursue graduate studies including medicine and law: Provided, finally, That those who did not avail of the loan program during their undergraduate studies may avail of the loan program for their review expenses for licensure examinations administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

Repayment shall be effected by the incorporating a portion of the loan amount or a percentage thereof in the employee's monthly Social Security System (SSS) or Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) contribution, as the case may be based on a reasonable schedule of repayment and interest rates. As may be formulated by the UniFAST Board.

Payment of the loan amount will commence once the beneficiary secures any gainful employment with compensation, remuneration or earnings that reaches the Compulsory Repayment Threshold (CRT). For purposes of this Act, the CRT shall be set and reviewed by the UniFAST Board, and adjusted when necessary.

The UniFAST Board, in consultation with relevant agencies, shall formulate loan payment guidelines for loan beneficiaries whose earnings are not covered by the GSIS or the SSS programs, including those of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), emigrants, and self-employed persons and professionals (SEPs).

SECTION 9. FORMULATION OF A NATIONALIST, SCIENTIFIC, AND MASS-ORIENTED HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM. — ALONG WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SYSTEM OF FREE PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION, THE CHED SHALL FORMULATE A NEW HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM THAT IS:

(1) NATIONALIST – THE NEW HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM SHALL BE CRAFTED BASED ON THE NEEDS AND THE GOALS OF THE NATION. THE CURRICULUM SHALL FOSTER PATRIOTISM AND NATIONALISM, AND SHALL INSTILL IN EVERY STUDENT THE FIRM RESOLVE NEVER TO ALLOW OUR PEOPLE TO BE DOMINATED AND CONTROLLED BY FOREIGN POWERS OR DOMESTIC TYRANTS. TERTIARY-LEVEL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SHALL ALSO FOCUS ON DEVELOPING A SELF-RELIANT AND INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ECONOMY, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON AGRARIAN REFORM, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION'S AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL INDUSTRIES;

(2) SCIENTIFIC – THE NEW HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM SHALL INCULCATE A SCIENTIFIC WORLDVIEW THAT HEIGHTENS THE SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF ALL FILIPINO STUDENTS TOWARDS TOTAL HUMAN LIBERATION. PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL SERVE TO FOSTER A CULTURE OF LEARNING DIRECTED TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING AND SOLVING THE BASIC PROBLEMS OF PHILIPPINE SOCIETY;

(3) MASS-ORIENTED – THE NEW HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM SHALL INCULCATE THE VALUE OF FREE EDUCATION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS. IT SHALL SERVE TO EQUIP STUDENTS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED TO SERVE THE FILIPINO NATION. THE NEW CURRICULUM SHALL ALSO ENCOURAGE STUDY PROGRAMS THAT RESPOND TO COMMUNITY NEEDS. STUDENTS SHOULD NOT ONLY LEARN THROUGH FORMAL LEARNING INSTRUCTION AND TEXTBOOKS, BUT ALSO THROUGH IMMERSION INTO THE LARGER SOCIETY THAT EXISTS BEYOND THEIR CLASSROOMS.

Section [9] 10. Requirements for SUCs and LUCs. - SUCs and LUCs are hereby mandated to:

(a) Establish a learner information system in accordance with the guidelines to be developed by the CHED in order to facilitate the tracking of students and their performance;

(b) Submit relevant information as determined by the CHED on school quality and performance; and

(c) Formulate and submit to the CHED and to the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on Universal Access to Tertiary Education created under Section 17 of this Act, a detailed SUC development plan updated every ten (10) years which shall included plans for facilities and infrastructure development and expansion.

Section [10] 11. Quality Standard for SUC and LUC Budgets, TES and Student Loan Programs. - The CHED and the TESDA shall ensure quality standards in the review and consequent endorsement of the budget of the SUCs, LUCs and state-run TVIs, respectively. The detailed design of the TES and student loan programs shall also be subject to similar quality indicators defined by the UniFAST Board.

Section [11] 12...

SECTION 2. The scope of the free public tertiary education shall be strengthened and expanded by including all local universities and colleges (LUCs) and branches of state universities and colleges.

Section 3(e) of Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the "Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education", is amended to read as follows:

"Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act:

xxx

xxx

xxx

(e) Local universities and colleges (LUCs) refers to [CHED-accredited] public HEIs established by local government units (LGUs) through an enabling ordinance, financially supported by the LGU concerned, and compliant with the policies, standards and guidelines of the CHED."

xxx

xxx

xxx

SECTION 3. To establish the source of funds for and uphold the fiscal autonomy of student councils/governments and student publications, Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the "Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act" is amended to read as follows:

"Section [10] 11. Quality Standard for SUC and LUC Budgets, TES and Student Loan Programs. - The CHED and the TESDA shall ensure quality standards in the review and consequent endorsement of the budget of the SUCs, LUCs and state-run TVIs, respectively. The detailed design of the TES and student loan programs shall also be subject to similar quality indicators defined by the UniFAST Board.

SECTION 12. STUDENT COUNCILS/GOVERNMENTS AND STUDENT PUBLICATIONS - A STUDENT PUBLICATION IS PUBLISHED BY THE STUDENT BODY THROUGH AN EDITORIAL BOARD AND PUBLICATION STAFF COMPOSED OF STUDENTS SELECTED THROUGH FAIR AND COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS, AND STUDENT COUNCIL/GOVERNMENT OFFICERS ARE ELECTED BY THE STUDENT BODY EVERY ACADEMIC YEAR.

ONCE THE PUBLICATION IS ESTABLISHED AND THE STUDENT COUNCIL/GOVERNMENT OFFICERS ARE ELECTED, THE EDITORIAL BOARD AND SET OF COUNCIL/GOVERNMENT OFFICERS SHALL FREELY DETERMINE ITS EDITORIAL POLICIES AND/ OR CONSTITUTION AND MANAGE THEIR RESPECTIVE FUNDS.

SECTION 13. FUNDING OF STUDENT COUNCILS/GOVERNMENTS AND STUDENT PUBLICATIONS — FUNDING FOR THE STUDENT PUBLICATION AND STUDENT

1 COUNCIL/GOVERNMENT FOR STUDENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES MAY INCLUDE
2 THE SAVINGS OF THE RESPECTIVE SCHOOL'S APPROPRIATIONS,
3 COLLECTION FROM STUDENTS, STUDENT SUBSCRIPTIONS, DONATIONS, AND
4 OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDS.

5
6 IN NO INSTANCE SHALL THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION OR THE
7 SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION CONCERNED WITHHOLD THE RELEASE OF FUNDS
8 SOURCED FROM THE SAVINGS OF THE APPROPRIATIONS OF THE RESPECTIVE
9 SCHOOLS AND OTHER SOURCES INTENDED FOR THE STUDENT PUBLICATION
10 AND STUDENT COUNCIL/GOVERNMENT. FEES COLLECTED BY THE SCHOOL
11 ADMINISTRATION FOR STUDENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES – STUDENT
12 PUBLICATION AND STUDENT COUNCIL/GOVERNMENT – SHALL BE RELEASED
13 AUTOMATICALLY TO THE STUDENT PUBLICATION AND
14 COUNCIL/GOVERNMENT CONCERNED.

15
16 Section [11] 14. Prohibited Act. - Upon effectivity of this Act, it shall be unlawful for any
17 person, SUC and state-run TVI to collect tuition and other school fees from qualified
18 students: *Provided*, That this section shall not apply to collections from students who
19 voluntarily opt out of the tuition and other school fees subsidy or make a contribution to
20 the school.

21
22 Section [12] 15... "

23
24 **SECTION 4. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part thereof is held invalid or
25 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
26 valid or subsisting.

27
28 **SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.*** — Republic Act No. 10931 is hereby amended accordingly. All
29 laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the
30 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

31
32 **SECTION 6. *Effectivity Clause.*** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
33 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

34
35
36 *Approved,*