



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **6310**

Introduced by Representative Maria Jamina Katherine B. Agarao

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to provide for nursing scholarship to deserving students.

Section 1, Article XIV of the Constitution provides that “*The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.*”

Likewise, Section 2 paragraph (3) of the same article states 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.*”

The study of a nursing teaches the students the necessary skills and knowledge in health care, health promotion, and prevention of injuries and illnesses. Graduates of the program may pursue a career path in various health facility settings. A degree in nursing is one of the popular courses sought by senior high school graduates.

This bill seeks to provide a nursing scholarship program for deserving students in state universities and colleges (SUCs) or in partnership with private higher education institutions (PHEIs) in regions where there are no SUCs offering a nursing course, or SUCs in the region offering nursing course that cannot accommodate all students interested in availing the scholarship grants. Moreover, a return service and integration into the public health system for at least five years is mandated after passing the nursing licensure examination and conferment of license to practice the nursing profession.

About 13,000 nurses leave the country annually, and because of this, the Philippines is regarded as one of the world's top suppliers of nurses. In order to address the shortage of nurses in the country, this bill encourages high school graduates to pursue nursing course through the scholarship program.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly recommended.



MARIA JAMINA KATHERINE B. AGARAO



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1 **AN ACT**
2 **PROVIDING FOR NURSING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO**
3 **DESERVING STUDENTS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**
4

5 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines*
6 *in Congress Assembled:*
7

8 SECTION 1. ***Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “*Nursing*
9 *Scholarship Act.*”

10 SEC. 2. ***Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the policy of the State to protect
11 and promote the right of students to quality education, and shall take
12 appropriate steps to make nursing education accessible to them. Towards this
13 end, the State shall provide a nursing scholarship program which shall be
14 available to deserving students, especially the underprivileged, in both public
15 and private schools.

16 SEC. 3. ***Nursing Scholarship Program.*** – There is hereby created a
17 Nursing Scholarship Program, to be administered by the Commission on Higher

Education (CHED), for deserving students in state universities and colleges (SUCs) or in partnership with private higher education institutions (PHEIs) in regions where there are no SUCs offering a nursing course, or SUCs offering nursing course in the region that cannot accommodate all students interested in availing the scholarship grants. The CHED may designate more than one (1) partner PHEI in the region, including regions where there are existing SUCs offering a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program as deemed necessary, upon consultation with the Department of Health (DOH).

Any qualified student, especially the underprivileged, is entitled to the scholarship program. The scholarship includes cost of living expenses, transportation allowance, uniform allowance, average cost of books and other educational materials, and other nursing education-related subsistence required to complete the nursing education in SUCs or PHEIs.

Qualified applicants from the municipalities which lack government nurses shall be prioritized in the allocation of scholarship slots to ensure the assignment of at least two (2) nurses for every municipality in the country.

SEC. 4. *Conditions of the Scholarship Program.* – Without encroaching upon the rights of the SUCs or PHEIs which have the right to impose the additional rules of the scholarship, the grantee must comply with the following conditions:

(a) Maintain a general weighted average (GWA) grade of eighty percent (80%) or above with no failing grade in any subject;

(b) Carry a full semestral or trimestral load as prescribed in the course curriculum;

(c) Complete the degree within the normal duration of the course; and

(d) Enter into a contract of scholarship with the CHED outlining the return service obligations as provided in Section 7 of this Act.

Failure to meet any of these conditions, without justifiable reason, shall be a ground for the termination of the scholarship.

SEC. 5. ***Qualifications.*** – To be eligible for the scholarship under this Act, the applicant must possess the following qualifications:

(a) Natural-born or naturalized Filipino citizen residing in the Philippines;

(b) Family income not sufficient to support tertiary education;

(c) Senior high school graduating student from any Department of Education (DepEd) recognized educational institution; and

(d) Must have passed the entrance examinations and other related requirements for admission for a nursing degree identified in the SUC or PHEI where the applicant intends to enroll, as determined by CHED, and DOH.

SEC. 6. ***Termination and Appeal.*** – Upon receipt of a written notice of termination of scholarship due to non-compliance or violation of the terms and conditions of the scholarship, a grantee may, not later than fifteen (15) days from receipt of the notice, file with CHED an appeal for reconsideration and reinstatement of the scholarship. In case no appeal is filed within fifteen (15)

1 days from receipt of the notice, the termination of the scholarship becomes final
2 and executory.

3 SEC. 7. ***Mandatory Return Service and Integration into the Public***
4 ***Health System.*** – Within one (1) year after passing the nursing licensure
5 examinations administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)
6 and conferment of the license to practice the nursing profession by the PRC, the
7 scholar shall serve in one of the DOH specified priority health facilities on a
8 full-time basis for at least five (5) years, and shall receive the appropriate civil
9 service rank, salary and related benefits. Should the scholar find a high paying
10 job abroad prior to or during the return service as required herein, the scholar is
11 required to pay the cost of the scholarship in full or pro-rata, depending on the
12 length of service the scholar has rendered. The CHED shall prescribe the mode,
13 amount, and duration of payment that the scholar may undertake taking into
14 consideration the capacity of the scholar to pay.

15 In the event of failure or refusal to serve the return service required under
16 this Act, the scholar shall be required to pay the full cost of the scholarship,
17 including other benefits and related expenses incurred by reason of participation
18 in the scholarship program. In case of non-payment, necessary and applicable
19 charges shall be filed against the said scholar: *Provided*, That the sanction shall
20 not apply to scholars who fail to comply with the required return service by
21 reason of serious illness, death, civil interdiction, or any other justifiable reason
22 analogous to the foregoing.

1 SEC. 8. ***Training While Serving the Mandatory Return Service.*** – The
2 CHED and DOH shall develop programs for the continuous training of scholars
3 while serving the mandatory return service under this Act.

4 SEC. 9. ***Integration of All Nationally-Funded Nursing Scholarship***
5 ***Programs.*** – Upon the effectivity of this Act, all nationally-funded nursing-
6 related scholarship programs shall be harmonized, rationalized, and
7 consolidated by the Unified Student Financial Assistance System (UniFAST)
8 Board created under Republic Act No. 10687, otherwise known as the “*Unified*
9 *Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Act.*”

10 SEC. 10. ***Implementing Agency.*** – The CHED shall be the main
11 implementing agency of this Act. It shall be responsible for evaluating,
12 awarding, entering into a contract of scholarship to the grantee, and monitoring
13 of the scholarship. The CHED shall also coordinate with the SUCs, PHEIs, and
14 DOH to achieve the objectives of this Act.

15 SEC. 11. ***Review and Monitoring.*** – After the end of each year, the
16 CHED shall report to the President of the Philippines and to Congress the
17 implementation of this Act and submit its recommendations.

18 SEC. 12. ***Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60) days from the
19 approval of this Act, the CHED shall, in consultation with DOH, and the
20 UniFAST Board, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the
21 effective implementation of this Act.

22 SEC. 13. ***Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial

1 implementation of this Act shall be charged to the current year's appropriations
2 of CHED. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the effective
3 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General
4 Appropriations Act.

5 SEC. 14. ***Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is
6 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not
7 affected shall remain in full force and effect.

8 SEC. 15. ***Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules
9 and regulations inconsistent with any provision of this Act are hereby repealed,
10 amended or modified accordingly.

11 SEC. 16. ***Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
12 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

13 Approved,