

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Pasay City/ Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6486



Introduced by Representatives FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ, MANUEL JOSE "MANNIX" M. DALIPE, YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ, AND JUDE A. ACIDRE

AN ACT
INSTITUTING A NATIONAL CITIZENS SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM IN ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9163, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM ACT", AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The multitude of emergencies and contingencies which confront our people today, especially in the areas of external and territorial defense, internal security and peace and order, and disaster risk reduction and management, requires the State to unsheathe its most valuable resource-the youth-and mobilize them in service to the nation. Indeed, the sheer number of our youth as well as their unrestrained potential makes them the most valuable resource of this nation. In fact, no less than the 1987 Philippine Constitution recognizes the vital role of our youth in nation-building.

This proposed measure seeks to establish a comprehensive framework and system for the training and mobilization of our youth and implement the said constitutional vision of drawing them into the mainstream of national life, by providing avenues for their participation in public and civic affairs, primarily through the establishment of a mandatory National Citizens Service Training (NCST) Program in Tertiary Education and an optional Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program in Higher Education.

Under this measure, the State shall enhance the capacity of its citizens to mobilize and perform their constitutional duty to render personal military or civil service to the State in times of calamities and disasters, national or local emergencies, rebellion, invasion, or war by the establishment of a unified, comprehensive and holistic national citizens service training and mobilization system. The national citizens service training and mobilization system shall include:

(1) A mandatory national citizens service training program to equip and organize the youth, with necessary, essential, practical and pragmatic knowledge and skills for civic duty, emergency and disaster response and preparedness, in the current

frameworks of law enforcement, peace and order, territorial defense and national disaster risk reduction and management, for mobilization for military and civil services, that produces reservists for the National Service Reserve Corps (NSRC) and AFP Citizen Armed Force (AFP Reserve Force);

(2) An optional Reserve Officers' Training Corp (ROTC) Program for higher education students designed to produce officers for the Citizen Armed Force and Regular Force of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; and

(3) A feasible, realistic and operational National Service Reservist and Citizen Soldier mobilization program through the National Service Reserve Corps and the AFP Reserve Force.

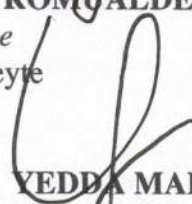
In the implementation of the national citizens service training and mobilization system, strict monitoring, evaluation and accountability shall be observed to prevent all forms of abuses, corruption, hazing, torture, data privacy rights violation, and all forms of violation of human rights. Any incident or report of abuses, corruption, hazing, torture, data privacy rights violation or any form of violation of human rights violation shall be immediately investigated, addressed and the maximum penalty imposed on any proven perpetrator or violator.

In sum, this measure is a structured, coherent and comprehensive legislative measure for the training and mobilization of our youth for their holistic development. This bill also gives life to the constitutional mandate of raising the youth as partners in nation-building, encouraging their early involvement in public and civic affairs, and developing a citizenry that is ready to defend the State in personal military and civil service.

Thus, the immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


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INSTITUTING A NATIONAL CITIZENS SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM IN ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9163, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM ACT", AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

ARTICLE I
TITLE

SEC. 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "National Citizens Service Training (NCST) Program Act".

ARTICLE II
DECLARATION OF POLICY

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It shall be the policy of the State:

- a) To institutionalize the vital role of the youth in nation-building, promote, propagate and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being; to inculcate in them patriotism, nationalism and respect for human rights; and to encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs;
- b) To constitute the youth into a major component of the citizens reserve envisioned in the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall undergo training and may be called upon to defend the State and to render personal military or civil service under conditions provided by law;
- c) To train, equip and organize the youth, within the current frameworks of national and territorial defense, law enforcement and peace and order and national disaster risk

reduction and management, to prepare them for rapid mobilization at the soonest possible time in order to address national and/or local contingencies which may require personnel beyond the capabilities of existing national government agencies or local government units; and

d) To capacitate the youth with the knowledge and practical skills to survive, respond and recover individually and as part of a bigger community in times of national and local emergencies, contingencies and disasters, both natural and man-made.

ARTICLE III DEFINITION OF TERMS

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

- a. ***Armed Forces Of The Philippines (AFP) Citizen Armed Force*** refers to the component of the Armed Forces of the Philippines comprised of Citizen Soldiers or AFP Reservists trained and/or recruited in accordance with Republic Act No. 7077 that serves as the base for the expansion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the event of war, invasion or rebellion; to assist in relief and rescue during disaster or calamities; to assist in socioeconomic development; and to assist in the operation and maintenance of essential government or private utilities in the furtherance of its overall mission. Alternately referred to as the *AFP Reserve Force*;
- b. ***AFP Reserve Force*** refers to an alternate term for the “AFP Citizen Armed Force”;
- c. ***AFP Reservist*** refers to a graduate of the National Citizens Service Training (NCST) as established under this Act and as may be defined under R.A. No. 7077. Alternately referred to as a *Citizen Soldier*;
- d. ***Authorized Organization*** refers to a legitimate juridical entity created by law, or registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) which has the competence to deliver non-military courses of the NCST, a track record of undertaking quality programs, projects and activities for the youth which inculcate in the beneficiaries the values of patriotism, love of country, civic-mindedness, civic duty, service to others, and authorized by CHED or TESDA to deliver non-military courses under the NCST Program;
- e. ***Cadet Officer*** refers to a cadet who completed five (5) months of specialized training to be a cadet officer with the intention of undergoing and completing the ROTC Program;
- f. ***Citizen-cadet*** refers to A student undergoing NCST and ROTC Training;
- g. ***Citizen Soldier*** refers to an alternate term for “AFP Reservist”;

- h. **Community-Based NSRC Unit** refers to The official aggrupation, organization and operational unit of National Service Reservists based at the Barangay level;
- i. **Higher Education** refers to the stage of formal education, or its equivalent, requiring completion of secondary education and covering programs of study leading to bachelor and advanced degrees, including associate degrees;
- j. **Higher Education Institution (HEI)** refers to an institution of higher learning which primarily offers degree-granting programs duly recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and leading to the conferment of a diploma;
- k. **National Citizens Service Training (NCST) Monitoring and Oversight Committee** refers to a multi-agency committee with private sector representatives mandated to ensure that the provisions and intent of this Act are properly implemented and adhered to. It shall ensure that there shall be no abuse of any kind in both the conduct of the trainings and deployment of National Service Reservists and Citizen Soldiers;
- l. **National Citizens Service Training (NCST) Program** refers to a two-year mandatory citizen service program administered and implemented by the CHED and TESDA in accordance with this Act;
- m. **National Service Reserve Corps (NSRC)** refers to the official aggrupation and organization of National Service Reservists maintained and placed under the control and supervision of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council through the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) pursuant to Section 13 of Republic Act No. 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010. It shall be civilian in nature and shall be a source for volunteers and conscripts in times of national or local necessity, calamities, emergencies, disasters, or armed conflict to perform non-combat and non-military duties and services as the President or the appropriate Local Sanggunian may deem necessary;
- n. **National Service Reservist (NSR)** refers to a graduate of the NCST Program registered under the NSRC as defined under this Act;
- o. **Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program** refers to a citizen service and military training program designed to produce officers for both the AFP Regular and Reserve Force;
- p. **School-Based NSRC Unit** refers to the official aggrupation, organization and operational unit of National Service Reservists based in an HEI;

- q. ***School-Based Ready Reserve Unit*** refers to an operational unit of the AFP Citizen Armed Force based in an HEI;
- r. ***Sector or Skill-Based NSRC Unit*** refers to the official aggrupation, organization and operational unit of National Service Reservists based on their sector or possessed skills or competencies;
- s. ***Technical-Vocational Education And Training (TVET) Programs Or Courses*** refers to the education process designed at postsecondary and lower tertiary levels, officially recognized as nondegree programs aimed at preparing technicians, paraprofessionals and other categories of middle-level workers by providing them with a board range of general education, theoretical, scientific and technological studies, and related job skills training;
- t. ***Technical-Vocational Institution (TVI)*** refers to a TESDA-recognized or accredited learning institution offering postsecondary TVET; and
- u. ***Tertiary Education*** refers to the stage of education following the secondary cycle which subsumes post-secondary non-degree diploma, TVET, and higher education programs, including graduate education;
- v. ***Tertiary Education Institution (TEI)*** refers to a learning institution that provides post-K-12 education or training and covers both HEIs and TVIs; and
- w. ***Undergraduate Degree Program/Course*** refers to any postsecondary program leading to a degree as may be authorized and recognized by the CHED.

ARTICLE IV THE NATIONAL CITIZENS SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM

SEC. 4. *Establishment of the National Citizens Service Training Program (NCST) Program.* – There is hereby established a National Citizens Service Training (NCST) Program, which shall be implemented by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA))in all Postsecondary Technical-Vocational institutions (TVIs), both in consultation with the Department of National Defense (DND).

SEC. 5. *Coverage of the NCST.* - The NCST shall be mandatory for all students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs in all public and private HEIs, and at least two-year TVET courses in all TVIs in the Philippines.

The NCST shall be administered to cover undergraduate and postsecondary TVET students for at least four (4) semesters or two hundred forty (240) hours over

two (2) school years, unless otherwise allowed by the CHED or TESDA in accordance with the rules recommended by the NCST Technical Panel.

SEC. 6. NCST Program Technical Panel. – The NCST Program design, curriculum, modes and method of delivery shall be formulated, periodically reviewed and updated by a Technical Panel to be composed of representatives from CHED, TESDA, DND, AFP, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) through the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the National Youth Commission (NYC), the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA), the Philippine Red Cross (PRC), and three (3) private sector representatives who shall be recognized experts or practitioners in the field of citizen service training, disaster preparedness, reservist training, or related fields. Two (2) of the private sector representatives shall be appointed by the CHED Chairperson and one (1) shall be appointed by the TESDA Director General. The NCST Program Technical Panel shall be under the Commission on Higher Education. The annual funds of the Technical Panel shall be included in the annual appropriations of CHED.

The NSTC Technical Panel shall formulate and recommend for approval of CHED the policies, standards, and guidelines (PSG) to make the four (4) year ROTC program an appropriate baccalaureate degree.

SEC. 7. The NCST Program Curriculum. – The NCST Program design and curriculum shall provide the students with practical and applicable knowledge and skills that are necessary, essential and ideal for survival, resilience, and providing service in times of local and national emergencies and disasters, both natural and man-made. It shall instill in students the values of civic mindedness, volunteerism and genuine service to others. It shall develop tertiary education students to be community crisis managers and leaders in times of emergencies and disasters.

The NCST Program Curriculum shall ensure that students who finish the NCST shall have competencies in Civic Duty, Individual Survival and Safety Skills, Community/ Mass Emergency and Disaster Response and Management, and Citizen Soldier Training.

Except for justifiable causes and only upon the issuance of a Certificate of Exception by the CHED or TESDA, the NCST must be completed, as far as practicable, within the first two (2) years of all undergraduate degree programs and two (2)-year TVET courses.

The NCST shall be a requisite for the graduation of covered tertiary education students.

SEC. 8. Special NCST for Students under Special Circumstances. – There shall be no exemptions from the NCST. However, the CHED or TESDA, based on rules recommended by the NCST Technical Panel, shall prescribe Special NCST programs to address the special needs and circumstances of the following students:

a) Those who are classified and officially registered as persons with disabilities;

b) Those whose religious beliefs prohibit the use of firearms in rendering service to the country; and

c) Those who have been convicted by final judgment of crimes involving moral turpitude.

Foreign citizens enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs or TVET courses where the NCST is required, shall also undergo a Special NCST prescribed by the CHED or TESDA that would deepen their understanding and appreciation of the Philippines, its people, society, culture and government, and harness their potential as bridges to improve, their respective countries with the Philippines.

Provided, that Filipino students enrolled in TVET Programs conducted for less than two (2) years shall be provided special seminars, as the TESDA and DND may jointly prescribe.

SEC. 9. Venue of Training. - The NCST shall be administered by HEIs or TVIs within their campuses. Should it be determined by the said HEIs/TVIs that it is impracticable to conduct the NCST in their respective campuses or facilities, they should immediately make the same known to the CHED Regional Office or TESDA Regional Office, which upon the proposal of the concerned HEI/TVI, shall designate such safe and appropriate venues for the NCST. As far as practicable, the venue shall be proximate to the campuses or facilities of the public and private HEI/TVI. Citizens Military Training Centers established in accordance with R.A. No. 7077 may be utilized as training venues for purposes of this Act.

SEC. 10. Prohibition on the Charging of Fees for Venues. - All local and national government agencies and instrumentalities that are managing sites and venues designated by CHED or TESDA for the conduct of NCST activities shall not charge any fees, except for reasonable fines and penalties for violations of the rules and regulations of the areas.

SEC. 11. Delivery of Non-Military Courses by Authorized Organizations or Partner Government Agencies and Entities. - The CHED and TESDA, subject to rules as may be recommended by the NCST Technical Panel, may allow lawfully-established non-partisan organizations and government agencies to partner with HEIs and TVIs in delivering the non-military NCST courses to students.

Any private organization which seeks to be recognized by the CHED or TESDA shall apply with the CHED or TESDA for such recognition and present evidence to establish its (1) track-record for noteworthy values-forming programs, projects and activities with the youth and (2) capacity and competence to deliver the knowledge or skill required for the course to be delivered. Only legitimate juridical entities created by law or registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA) may apply for registration.

Applying organizations must also submit appropriate security clearances from the Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC) and National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). All members of

the Governing Boards or Directors and corporate officers of the applicant-organization must secure and submit the proper security clearances from the PNP, AFP, ATC and NBI as well.

SEC. 12. Revocation of Recognition. – The CHED or TESDA shall revoke, based on substantive evidence and observing due process, the recognition of an Authorized Organization on any of the following grounds:

1. The organization or any of its directors, trustees or corporate officers is directly or indirectly involved in any unlawful, criminal, corrupt, immoral, unpatriotic or scandalous act or controversy;
2. The organization or any of its directors, trustees or corporate officers supports or is affiliated, directly or indirectly, with any organization, group, movement or individual that commits acts which are contrary to law, public morals, and public policy;
3. The public reputation of the organization or any of its directors, trustees or corporate officers has been publicly tarnished by its deliberate actions, negligence or inaction;
4. The organization engages in any partisan political activity;
5. The organization is affiliated, directly or indirectly, with any partisan political party, organization or movement or partisan political personality;
6. The organization is insolvent based on the assessment of the CHED or TESDA in consultation with the Department of Finance;
7. The organization is no longer capable of training the students for the courses it was authorized to deliver; and
8. Such other analogous circumstances.

SEC. 13. NCST Graduates as National Service Reservists and AFP Reservists (Citizen Soldiers). – Upon completion of the National Citizens Service Training, citizen-cadets shall be deemed NCST graduates and shall be incorporated in the National Service Reserve Corps (NSRC) and the AFP Citizen Armed Force (AFP Reserve Force).

The HEI or TVI, in accordance with rules recommended by the NCST Technical Panel and approved by CHED and TESDA, shall issue the National Service Reservist Serial Numbers to NCST graduates. The HEIs/TVIs shall submit the names, serial numbers, permanent and current addresses, electronic mail addresses, and mobile numbers of NCST graduates to the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) for inclusion in the official master list of the NSRC. A copy of the same list shall be submitted to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) for issuance of the appropriate Citizen Soldier/ AFP Reservist Serial Numbers, subject to rules as the AFP shall prescribe.

The National Service Reservist Serial Number and the AFP Reservist Serial Number of a student shall be reflected in the Transcript of Records of the NCST graduate.

SEC. 14. Completion of the Compulsory Military Training Under Republic Act 7077. – All students who have completed the NCST shall be considered to have complied with the mandatory military registration and training under Section 14 of RA 7077.

ARTICLE V THE RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS

SEC. 15. Establishment and Administration of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program. – There is hereby established a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program which shall be an optional four (4) year military training program designed to provide military training to students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs in HEIs who have expressed interest or shown potential to be officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Regular and Reserve Force (Citizen Armed Force). A modified NCST shall be designed by the NCST Technical Panel and approved by the CHED and DND which shall incorporate a five-(5) month cadet officership/ leadership course which shall serve as the first two years of the four-(4) year program. The ROTC shall be administered and implemented by the AFP pursuant to the rules and regulations prescribed by the DND.

SEC. 16. ROTC Program Curriculum. – The ROTC Program Curriculum shall be designed by the DND and CHED and administered by the AFP. It shall be primarily designed to train volunteer tertiary education students to be officers of the Regular and Reserve Force of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The curriculum shall be designed in such a way that graduates of the four (4) year ROTC Program shall be capable of immediate deployment as commissioned officers of the AFP immediately after graduation from the ROTC and earning their baccalaureate degree. The program of instruction shall include advanced military subjects and courses, practical exercises and field exercises necessary and appropriate for an entry level officer commission in the AFP. The DND, AFP and CHED shall design the four (4) year ROTC program as an independent baccalaureate degree program subject to the policies, standards, and guidelines recommended by the NSTC Technical Panel and approved by CHED.

SEC. 17. ROTC Cadet as NCST Instructors and Cadet Officers. – ROTC Cadets shall serve as Cadet Officers and instructors for NCST cadets. This shall be considered as part of the leadership training module of the ROTC Program.

SEC. 18. Acceptance into the ROTC Program. – Students who volunteer for the ROTC program in HEIs shall be governed by Section 40 of Republic Act No. 7077. The provisions of Sections 42 and 43 of Republic Act No. 7077 in terms of training, uniforms and supplies, and the scholarship incentive shall remain effective and applicable for those accepted in the ROTC Program.

SEC. 19. Organization, Operation and Maintenance of ROTC Units. – The organization, operation and maintenance for the establishment of ROTC Units shall be in accordance with Sections 41 and 42 of Republic Act No. 7077 and shall remain

effective and operative unless inconsistent with this Act. The Secretary of National Defense, in consultation with the CHED, shall prescribe the organization and operational manual of ROTC units in public and private HEIs.

The Department of National Defense shall create or designate an office dedicated to the supervision and administration of the ROTC program.

SEC. 20. *Incentives for Undergoing The ROTC Program.* – ROTC cadets are entitled to the following benefits:

(1) Subject to other requirements prescribed by rules and regulations of the DND and other concerned government agencies, graduates of the ROTC shall be eligible upon completion of the ROTC for commission as officers in the Reserve Force of the AFP;

(2) Free hospitalization, medicines, and medical care in any government hospital in case of accident or injury during their training; and

(3) Automatic grant of first level civil service eligibility for ROTC graduates.

ARTICLE VI ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND MOBILIZATION OF THE NATIONAL SERVICE RESERVE CORPS

SEC. 21. *Maintenance of the National Service Reserve Corps (NSRC).* – The National Service Reserve Corps established under Section 11 of Republic Act No. 9163 shall be placed under the control and supervision of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) through the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) pursuant to Section 13 of RA NO. 10121, otherwise known as the "Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010". It shall be civilian in nature and shall be a source for volunteers and conscripts in times of national or local necessity, calamities, emergencies, disasters, or armed conflict to perform non-combat and non-military duties and services as the President or the appropriate Local Sanggunian may deem necessary.

The NDRRMC, through the OCD and in consultation with the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency, local government units (LGUs), and other agencies with public service and volunteerism mandates, shall undertake programs and activities to provide and promote avenues and platforms for National Service Reservists to volunteer their services even under normal non-emergency conditions and circumstances.

LGUs shall establish programs that would continuously enhance and imbibe the spirit of volunteerism among National Service Reservists and strengthen NSRC Units within their respective territorial jurisdictions through local mobilizations, sustained participation in local events and activities, annual local awards and recognition systems for outstanding local citizen service programs and local stakeholders and other analogous programs.

SEC. 22. *Mandatory Registration and Enlistment in the NSRC.* – All graduates of the NCST shall be enlisted as National Service Reservists (NSRs) in the National Service Reserve Corps. The NDRRMC, through the OCD, shall provide for the rules and regulations governing community, school, sector and/or skill-based registration of all NCST graduates.

SEC. 23. *School-Based and Community-Based National Reserve Corps Units.* – The NDRRMC, through the OCD, shall have the authority to organize NS Reservists in school and community-based units. National Service Reservists who are baccalaureate or medical degree students in HEIs shall register with the School-Based NSRC Unit of their respective HEIs. NS Reservists enrolled in post graduate programs may opt to register with the School-Based NSRC Unit of their HEIs or register with the Community-Based NSRC Unit of their respective barangays of residence or occupation. All other NS Reservists shall register with the Community-Based NSRC Units of their barangays of residence or occupation, subject to rules as the NDRRMC may prescribe.

The NDRRMC, through the OCD, may require HEIs offering baccalaureate degree programs and barangay governments to provide appropriate office space, access to facilities and personnel to assist the NDRRMC and the OCD in managing and administering School-Based and Community-Based NSRC Units.

The NDRRMC, through the OCD and in consultation with the Department of Interior of Local Government (DILG) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), may promulgate the rules and regulations governing the organization, establishment and management of community and school-based NSRC Units. Such rules and regulations shall provide for nationwide and localized mobilization of NS Reservists and Units.

SEC. 24. *Sector and Skill-Based National Reserve Corps Units.* – The NDRRMC, through the OCD, shall have the authority to organize and mobilize NS Reservists based on their sector or possessed skill or competencies. As far as practicable, National Service Reservists shall be mobilized and deployed based on their possessed competencies and skills.

SEC. 25. *Continuous Training of National Service Reservists.* – The NDRRMC, through the OCD, shall develop systems and promulgate the necessary rules to ensure that NS Reservists are regularly provided readiness enhancement trainings to maintain their state of readiness to render service. Attendance in NSRC Readiness Enhancement Trainings shall be deemed as a form of NSRC Deployment. A recognition and badge system for NS Reservists for the acquisition and enhancement of citizen service-relevant skills and competencies, as may be recommended by the NSCT Technical Panel, shall be adopted and implemented by the OCD.

SEC. 26. *Annual NSRC Mobilization.* – The OCD, in consultation with the DILG, DSWD, DND and LDRRMOs, shall ensure that all Community-Based and School-Based NSRC Units conduct at least one (1) mobilization exercise every year to ensure the readiness of NSRC Units and NS Reservists.

SEC. 27. Prohibition Against the Mobilization of NCST Citizen-Cadets. – No student currently undergoing NCST shall be required to render service as National Service Reservists. Only National Service Reservists shall be mandatorily deployed or conscripted in times of national or local necessity, calamities, emergencies, disasters, or armed conflict to perform non-combat and non-military duties and services as the President or the appropriate Local Sanggunian may so declare.

SEC. 28. Benefits and Privileges of National Service Reservists. – Deployed National Service Reservists shall be entitled to the following benefits:

(1) Free hospitalization, medicines, and medical care in any government hospital in case of accident or injury during deployment;

(2) For those that have a cumulative deployment period of one hundred eighty (180) days, a grant of eligibility for local disaster risk reduction and management item positions subject to rules to be issued jointly by the DILG and CSC; and

(3) Free food, accommodations, and such other amenities necessary or essential to the performance of their mandated tasks as deployed National Service Reservists.

SEC. 29. Effect of NSRC or AFP Citizen Armed Force Deployment on Employees and Students. – Deployment of employees in accordance with the provisions of this Act shall not be a ground for dismissal or diminution of any benefit enjoyed by such employees prior to their deployment.

Deployment of students in accordance with the provisions of this Act shall not prejudice the academic standing, status, scholarship, privilege, or grant enjoyed by the student prior to and during deployment.

SEC. 30. Annual Reports. – The OCD shall regularly publish an annual report containing a list of the organization, deployment, employment, and accomplishments of the Corps as well as an assessment of readiness for mobilization and the incidence and details of each mobilization for the year concerned. Such report shall be submitted to the President, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of National Defense, the Secretary of Education, the CHED Chairperson, and the TESDA Director General.

SEC. 31. Awards and Recognition System for National Service Reservists. – The NCST Monitoring and Oversight Committee shall establish a national-level system of awards and recognition for outstanding National Service Reservists and Citizen-Cadets and Exemplary Volunteer and Service Programs under this Act.

LGUs shall adopt and implement their respective annual local awards and recognition system for outstanding citizen service programs, reservists, cadet-citizens, cadets and other stakeholders within their respective areas of jurisdiction.

ARTICLE VII

ORGANIZATION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE AFP CITIZEN ARMED FORCE

SEC. 32. Organization and Deployment of AFP Citizen Soldiers/Reservists. – The Department of National Defense shall provide for the rules and regulations governing the organization and deployment of AFP Citizen Soldiers/Reservists enlisted pursuant to this Act.

SEC. 33. School-Based Ready Reserve Units (SBRRUs). – School-Based Ready Reserve Units may be organized by the DND, through the AFP, in public and private HEI campuses offering baccalaureate OR undergraduate degree programs. The DND, through the AFP, shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the establishment, management and operation of SBRRUs. HEIs shall provide office space, access to facilities and personnel to assist the DND and AFP in managing SBRRUs.

ARTICLE VIII

MONITORING, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PREVENTING ABUSES

SEC. 34. National Citizens Service Training Monitoring and Oversight Committee. – There is hereby established a National Citizens Service Training Monitoring Committee which shall have the mandate to ensure that the provisions and intent of this Act are properly implemented and adhered to. It shall ensure that there shall be no abuse of any kind in both the conduct of the trainings and deployment of National Service Reservists and Citizen Soldiers.

SEC. 35. Composition of the NCST Monitoring and Oversight Committee.
– The NCST Monitoring Committee shall be composed of the following:

- 1) CHED Chairperson, as Chairperson;
- 2) DND Secretary, as Vice Chairperson;
- 3) TESDA Director General;
- 4) DILG Secretary;
- 5) DSWD Secretary;
- 6) National Security Adviser;
- 7) NYC Chairperson; and
- 8) Two (2) Representatives of Relevant National Organizations to be appointed by the President of the Philippines.

SEC. 36. Powers and Functions of the NCST Monitoring and Oversight Committee. – The NCSTM Monitoring and Oversight Committee shall have the following powers and functions:

- a) Review, monitor and provide strategic guidance on the implementation of this Act;
- b) Receive and cause the immediate and expedient investigation of all complaints or reports of forms of abuses, corruption, hazing, torture, data privacy rights violation, and all forms of violation of human rights in any of the programs under the national citizens service training and mobilization system;

- c) Conduct announced and unannounced inspections of citizen service classes and activities, NCST and ROTC sessions and facilities, NSRC Units, SBRRUs and other Reserve Units under the AFP Citizen Armed Force;
- d) Immediately inform and compel concerned agencies, organizations or personnel engaged or involved in the implementation of this act to undertake corrective actions or measures to address any abuse, inefficiency or lapses in the implementation of this Act;
- e) Receive annual reports from the DND, OCD and AFP on the proper implementation of the NCST, ROTC, NSRC and AFP Citizen Armed Force;
- f) Establish a national-level recognition system for outstanding NSRC and AFP Reservists, Citizen-cadets and Cadets and Exemplary Volunteer and Service Programs; and
- g) Deputize or delegate to agencies, organizations or individuals any of its mandated powers and functions under this Act.

SEC. 37. *Funding for the NCST Monitoring and Oversight Committee.* – Initial funding for the operation of the NCST shall be sourced from the current funds of the concerned agencies. Subsequent annual funding shall be included in the annual appropriations of CHED and concerned agencies.

ARTICLE IX PENAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 38. *Maximum Penalty to be Imposed.* – Any act of abuse, corruption, hazing, torture, data privacy rights violation, or violation of human rights committed in direct or indirect relation to the implementation of this Act which are punished criminally or administratively by existing laws, rules or regulations, shall be prosecuted in accordance with such laws, rules or regulations but the penalty to be imposed shall be the maximum penalty. The accessory penalty of permanent or temporary absolute disqualification may also be imposed.

SEC. 39. *Prosecution Not a Bar to Civil Action.* – Criminal or administrative prosecution shall not be a bar to any civil action for damages or any appropriate relief a victim of any act of abuse, corruption, hazing, torture, data privacy rights violation, or violation of human rights committed in direct or indirect relation to the implementation of this Act may file.

ARTICLE X MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 40. *Appropriations* – All funds previously appropriated for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of the ROTC Program of the AFP, established under Republic Act No. 7077, as amended, and which will subsequently and hereafter be appropriated for such purpose shall be used exclusively for the

implementation of the objectives and purposes of this Act. All funds appropriated for the implementation of the National Service Training Program under Republic Act No. 9163 shall also be used exclusively for the implementation of the objectives and purposes of this Act.

The initial budget for the operation of the NCST Monitoring and Oversight Committee shall be sourced from available funds from CHED and other concerned agencies. The subsequent annual budgetary allocation for the NCST Monitoring and Oversight Committee shall be included in the annual appropriations of CHED and concerned agencies.

SEC. 41. *School Fees.* – Covered HEIs and TVIs may collect a reasonable NCST training fee of not more than fifty percent (50%) of the tuition fee per academic unit or subject. Such funds shall be used only for the implementation of the NCST. The CHED, TESDA and DND shall determine the reasonable distribution of the fees among the HEI, TVI and DND to cover the cost of training and related expenses.

Public HEIs and TVIs covered by Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, shall not collect any fee for the NCST or ROTC. The training costs shall be included in the annual appropriations of such HEIs or TVIs. In cases of students not eligible to avail of the benefits under Republic Act No. 10931, public colleges, universities and similar learning institutions may collect a training fee of not more than fifty percent (50%) of the tuition fee per academic unit.

HEIs and TVIs not covered by Republic Act No. 10931 may collect a training fee of not more than fifty percent (50%) of the tuition fee per academic unit. Such funds shall be used only for the implementation of the NCST and ROTC and maintenance of the School-Based NSRC Units and School-Based Ready Reserve Units, if any.

ARTICLE XI IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS

SEC. 42. *Implementing Rules and Regulations [(IRR)]*. - The CHED, TESDA and DND, in consultation with the DILG, DSWD, and NYC, shall formulate and jointly promulgate the implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within sixty (60) days from the approval of hereof.

ARTICLE XII TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

SEC. 43. *Transition Period of Implementation.* - To ensure efficient transition and to enable all public and private schools to adopt the necessary structural changes within their units in accordance with the provisions of this Act, the NCST and ROTC under this Act shall be administered only after the promulgation of the implementing rules and regulations[;]. *Provided*, that the implementation of the programs shall commence within a non-extendable period of eighteen (18) months from the effectivity of this Act into law.

SEC. 44. *Current Enrollment under Republic Act No. 9163.* – In all cases and until such time as the rules and regulations of this Act are published and have taken effect, students who are currently enrolled under the curriculum implemented by virtue of Republic Act No. 9163, otherwise known as the National Service Training Program Act of 2001, shall be allowed to finish the curriculum and be deemed to have satisfied the requirement for graduation after completion thereof.

SEC. 45. *Priority employment for NSTP Personnel under Republic Act No. 9163.* – Personnel implementing the NSTP under R.A. No. 9163 shall have priority for employment as personnel to assist in the management of the NCST in HEIs and TVIs. They may also be granted authority, subject to rules to be issued by the CHED and TESDA, to be NCST Program lecturers, instructors and implementers.

ARTICLE XIII FINAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 46. *Repealing Clause.* – Republic Act No. 9163, otherwise known as the National Service Training Program Act of 2001, is hereby repealed. The relevant provisions of Republic Act No. 7707, otherwise known as the Citizen Armed Forces of the Philippines Reservist Act, which are inconsistent with the relevant provisions of this Act are hereby amended. All other laws, orders, rules regulations and other issuances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the relevant provisions this Act are likewise hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 47. *Separability Clause.* – Any provision of this Act declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not affect the validity of the other provisions thereof.

SEC. 48. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,