

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8507**



**Introduced by Representatives JOCELYN P. TULFO and
RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO**

This bill seeks to provide accessible tertiary education to the children of indigent Filipino farmers to encourage the youth to take part in agricultural development in the country and to achieve global competitiveness in the agricultural sector.

According to the March 2023 Labor Force Survey of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) the agricultural sector is one of the top five sectors with the largest drop in the number of employed persons from March 2022 to March 2023¹.

The agricultural sector – agriculture, forestry, fishing and aquaculture industries had its share of total employment fall from 24.5% (9.7 million) in October 2020, 24.6% (10.77 million) in October 2021, to 22.5% (10.60 million) during the same month in 2022. According to Roehlano Briones, a senior fellow at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, population growth, as well as diminishing farm size and declining incomes in agriculture, have incentivized the “shift out of agriculture”.²

Pursuant to Section Section 1, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution, the State has the obligation to 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. The State shall also provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services³.

Thus, to encourage employment in the agricultural sector and aid in achieving agricultural global competitiveness, this proposed measure will provide opportunities to

¹ <https://psa.gov.ph/content/employment-rate-march-2023-estimated-953-percent>

² <https://www.pids.gov.ph/details/news/in-the-news/ph-farms-getting-empty-agriculture-job-loss-a-worrying-trend>, December 8, 2022.

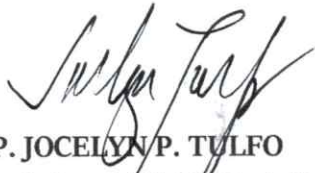
³ Section 5, Article XIII of the Constitution states:

“SECTION 5. The State shall recognize the right of farmers, farmworkers, and landowners, as well as cooperatives, and other independent farmers’ organizations to participate in the planning, organization, and management of the program, and shall provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services.”

the children of indigent farmers who will continue to work on farms and encourage the next generation to continue the cultivation of soil, planting of crops, growing of fruit trees, and raising of livestock in their hometowns.

Moreover, this bill will uplift and motivate agricultural research which is vital to the development of the agricultural sector.

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



REP. JOCELYN P. TULFO
Representative, ACT-CLB Partylist



REP. RALPH WENDEL P. TULFO
Representative, 2nd District of Quezon City

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**Introduced by Representatives JOCELYN P. TULFO and
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AN ACT
GRANTING FREE TERTIARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, AND OTHER
RELATED COURSES TO ALL DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF QUALIFIED INDIGENT
FARMERS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1
2 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “*The Free Tertiary*
3 *Agricultural Education Act*”.

4
5 **Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the declared policy of the State to promote sound
6 agricultural development in the country and to achieve global competitiveness in the
7 agricultural sector. Towards this end, education and training in Agriculture shall be
8 encouraged among the youth to inculcate the latest agricultural principles and
9 techniques. The State, therefore, shall extend the avenue for this learning process by
10 providing accessible education on agriculture and other related courses.

11
12 **Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined
13 as:

1 a. Qualified Dependent Children – refers to the children of indigent farmers who are
2 enrolled or about to enroll in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) where
3 Agriculture and its related courses are offered.

4
5 b. Registered Indigent Farmers – are indigent individuals whose sole source of
6 income is agriculture; who actually cultivate or till the land, whether as owner or
7 lessee of the land; or who actually engage in crop production, livestock, and
8 poultry farming; and who are included in the registry of farmers of the
9 Department of Agriculture (DA).

10
11 **Sec. 4. *Implementation of Free Tertiary Agricultural Education.*** – The DA, in
12 coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall establish a
13 scholarship program for Tertiary Agricultural Education. Qualified dependent
14 children of registered indigent farmers intending to enroll or already enrolled in
15 agricultural courses or any related field offerings in state colleges and universities
16 shall be exempt from payment of tuition and other school fees and shall be entitled
17 to such other incentives or subsidies, including living and transportation allowance,
18 as may be granted in accordance with such rules and regulations to be promulgated
19 to carry out the provisions of this Act. Provided, that they meet the admission
20 requirements of the SUCs where they intend to enroll in.

21
22 **Sec. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within six (6) months after the
23 effectivity of this Act, the DA and the CHED shall issue the necessary guidelines, rules,
24 and regulations for the proper implementation of the provisions of this Act.

25
26 **Sec. 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act, or parts thereof, is
27 declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of other
28 portions.

1 **Sec. 7. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
2 implementing rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or
3 modified accordingly.

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5 **Sec. 8. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
6 in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

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8 *Approved,*

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