

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



NINETEENTH (19th) CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 9539

Introduced by: Hon. Ma. Victoria Co - Pilar

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Humanities and Social Sciences play a crucial role in fostering critical thinking, cultural understanding, and social cohesion. However, despite their significance, students opting for these courses often face financial constraints that limit their access to quality education. This proposed scholarship seeks to bridge this gap by providing financial support to deserving students, enabling them to pursue their academic aspirations without the burden of exorbitant tuition fees.

The scholarship program outlined in this bill is designed to be inclusive and merit-based, ensuring that talented individuals from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds have equal opportunities to excel in their chosen fields. By alleviating financial pressures, the scholarship aims to attract and retain bright minds in Humanities and Social Science disciplines, thereby contributing to a more informed, empathetic, and culturally aware society.

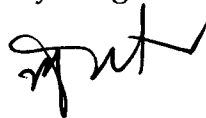
Moreover, investing in the education of students in these fields is an investment in the future of our nation. Graduates with a strong foundation in Humanities and Social Sciences contribute significantly to various sectors, including education, public policy, media, and community development. The proposed bill reflects a commitment to nurturing a well-rounded citizenry capable of addressing complex societal challenges with empathy, critical thinking, and cultural sensitivity.

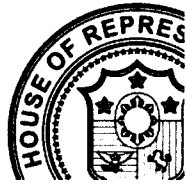
The study of humanities in the Philippines is instrumental in preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of the nation. Courses in literature, history, and the arts help students appreciate the country's diverse cultural traditions, indigenous knowledge, and historical narratives.

Social sciences, including disciplines like sociology and political science, play a vital role in addressing contemporary challenges in the Philippines. Scholars and researchers in these fields contribute to the understanding of social issues, policy development, and community engagement.

In conclusion, this proposed bill for a scholarship program dedicated to Humanities and Social Science courses is a strategic investment in the intellectual and cultural capital of our nation. It aligns with our commitment to fostering a society that values diverse perspectives and encourages the pursuit of knowledge in disciplines that shape our understanding of the human experience. I urge your esteemed committee to consider and support this bill, recognizing its potential to empower students, strengthen our educational system, and contribute to the overall well-being of our society.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly "R. Duterte", written in a cursive script.



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**AN ACT INSTITUTING A SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR DISCIPLINES
UNDER THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “*Iskolar ng Humanidades at*
2 *Soksay Act of 2023*”.

3
4 **SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – The significance of humanities and social sciences
5 and its role in achieving national progress are often undermined as compared to other fields
6 of knowledge. This creates uneven opportunities and hinders students from pursuing a career
7 in this field. Thus, the state ought to also give priority to humanities and social science’s
8 development and practice as a means of building the state's capacity to better manage and
9 respond to the current socio-political challenges that are faced by the nation.

10
11 Moreover, the state recognizes the vital role of youth in nation-building, hence the promotion
12 of quality education that not only inculcates nationalism but also encourages their
13 involvement in public and civic affairs — the very core of humanities and social science
14 studies, and ensuring equal access to it. Therefore, the state shall provide for scholarships,
15 grants-in-aid, or other forms of incentives to economically-challenged and deserving
16 humanities and social science students to enable them to pursue their education and build a
17 career as applied social science practitioners that shall be in direct service to the country and
18 the people.

1 **SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – The following terms below, as used herein shall mean:

- 2
- 3 (a) *Educational needs* - shall refer to student’s financial necessities in fulfilling school-
- 4 related requisites;
- 5
- 6 (b) *Fund* - shall refer to a sum of money made available for scholarship purposes;
- 7
- 8 (c) *Grants-in-Aid* - shall refer to a modality of financial assistance for deserving and
- 9 underprivileged students;
- 10
- 11 (d) *Humanities and Social Sciences* - shall refer to the field which focuses on programs
- 12 and subjects such as Politics, Economics, History, Psychology, Philosophy,
- 13 Literature, and Arts;
- 14
- 15 (e) *Private Universities* - shall refer to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that are not
- 16 primarily funded or operated by the government but are still subject to government
- 17 regulation;
- 18
- 19 (f) *Pro tanto* - shall refer to partial payment made only to a certain extent of a larger
- 20 obligation for a set period of time;
- 21
- 22 (g) *Scholars* - shall refer to students who are eligible to receive financial grants in
- 23 meeting their educational needs;
- 24
- 25 (h) *Scholarship Program* - shall refer to the financial aid given to scholars in order to
- 26 provide assistance for their educational needs;
- 27
- 28 (i) *State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)* - shall refer to Public Higher Education
- 29 Institutions (HEIs) that are legally required to exist, supported financially by the
- 30 government, and administered by an independent board of regents;
- 31
- 32 (j) *Student Financial Assistance Programs (StuFAPs)* - shall refer to a system of
- 33 scholarship, grants-in-aid, student loan and other financial assistance and incentives
- 34 which are or shall be made available to eligible students;
- 35
- 36 (k) *Tertiary Education* - shall refer to a level of education after Senior High School, a
- 37 post-secondary education which includes colleges, universities, and vocational
- 38 training courses and institutions;
- 39

1 (l) *Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST)* -
2 shall refer to the state-run and administered system of Higher Education and
3 technical-vocational Scholarships, Grants-in-Aid, Student Loans, and other modalities
4 of StuFAPs as outlined in R.A 10687.

5
6 **SECTION 4. *Humanities and Social Sciences Scholarship Fund.*** – There is hereby created
7 a Humanities and Social Sciences Scholarship Fund, hereinafter known as the Fund, to be
8 administered by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Budget and
9 Management (DBM), and by the respective members of the UniFAST Board mentioned in
10 Section 14, Article IV of the R.A. 10687.

11
12 **SECTION 5. *Scholarship Coverage.*** – The grant of any scholarship award from the Fund
13 shall be applied only in the field of Political Science, International Studies, Journalism,
14 Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, and such other areas in the undergraduate
15 or postgraduate humanities and social sciences courses as may be provided for in the rules
16 and regulations to be promulgated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the
17 Department of Education (DepEd), and other members of the UniFAST Board, provided,
18 however, that the scholarship grant for the postgraduate level shall not be limited to those
19 scholars or recipients who are graduates of the undergraduate scholarship program.

20
21 **SECTION 6. *Assistance to Grantees.*** – The fund for this program shall cover expenses
22 ranging from tuition and other school fees, textbooks and equipment, board and lodging,
23 clothing, traveling expenses, research requirements, and miscellaneous allowances. Grantees
24 shall be entitled to scholarships, Grants-in-Aid, and government programs in partnership with
25 other stakeholders, among others, and which are nationally funded and/or implemented by
26 national and local government agencies, branches, and instrumentalities.

27
28 **SECTION 7. *Eligibility.*** – In order to avail for the scholarship, the applicant(s) must possess
29 the following qualifications:

- 30 (a) a natural born Filipino citizen;
31 (b) must be coming from an indigent family with an average annual gross income not
32 more than P200,000.00;
33 (c) be currently enrolled in any of the State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), or in
34 private universities and other educational institutions duly recognized and accredited
35 by Commission on Higher Education (CHED), under any of the identified priority
36 Humanities and Social Science related courses;
37 (d) must be in good health and excellent moral character;
38 (e) must have the minimum general weighted average and pass the aptitude test both to
39 be determined by the UniFAST Board.

1 **SECTION 8. *Service Obligation.*** – Upon completion of a baccalaureate and postgraduate
2 degree, a scholar shall render his service to the country in his field of specialization on a full-
3 time basis for a minimum period equivalent to the length of time a scholar enjoyed the
4 scholarship. This may be fulfilled through occupying a government or educational post, or
5 other service related to their course or training in their province or municipality, serving as a
6 specialist or researcher, publishing academic journals, and contributing to the development of
7 Humanities and Social Science in the country. For this purpose, there shall be a contract
8 signed between the Government and the scholar incorporating the details of the
9 aforementioned service obligation.

11 **SECTION 9. *Implementing Body.*** – The Commission on Higher Education (CHED)
12 together with the members of the UniFAST Board shall directly implement the scholarship
13 program.

15 **SECTION 10. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to carry out the initial
16 implementation of this Act, shall be charged against the current Fiscal Year Appropriations
17 given to the StuFAPs as provided by the UniFAST. The amount necessary for its continued
18 implementation shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

20 **SECTION 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Commission on Higher
21 Education (CHED) and Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education
22 (UniFAST) in close coordination with State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), private
23 universities, and all other concerned bodies shall promulgate within sixty (60) days upon its
24 approval, the rules and regulation for the implementation of the Act.

26 **SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or
27 portions thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

29 **SECTION 13. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act or part thereof is held
30 invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected
31 shall remain valid and subsisting.

33 **SECTION 14. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date
34 of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
35 circulation in the Philippines.

37 **Approved,**