



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10853



Introduced by **HON. ATTY. GERVILLE “JINKY BITRICS” R. LUISTRO**

**AN ACT PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO THE CHILDREN AND
DEPENDENTS OF FARMERS AND FISHERFOLKS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Education is a fundamental right of every child, and it is a sustainable investment that would empower children and communities to break the cycle of poverty, leading to a more prosperous and equitable society¹. However, in the Philippines, access to education is among the challenges, with reported data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) that nearly 11 million Filipino children and youth are out of school.²

In the country, agriculture is a significant part of the economy. Regrettably, challenges relative to farming and financial risks burden Filipino farmers and fisherfolks, eventually trapping them in a cycle of debt, and impoverished situations.³ The role of our farmers and fisherfolks is crucial for the entire Filipino population as food security emanates from their labor.

Enhancing the quality of life for Filipinos and ensuring access to education are key responsibilities of the State as promulgated by the Constitution:

¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, “The Right to Education.” *UNESCO*, August 06, 2024, Accessed on August 23, 2024, www.unesco.org/en/right-education.

² Louella Desiderio, “Nearly 11 Million Children, Youth not in School – PSA,” *PhilStar Global*, May 15, 2024, Accessed on August 23, 2024, [Nearly 11 million children, youth not in school – PSA | Philstar.com](http://Nearly%2011%20million%20children,%20youth%20not%20in%20school%20-%20PSA%20|%20Philstar.com).

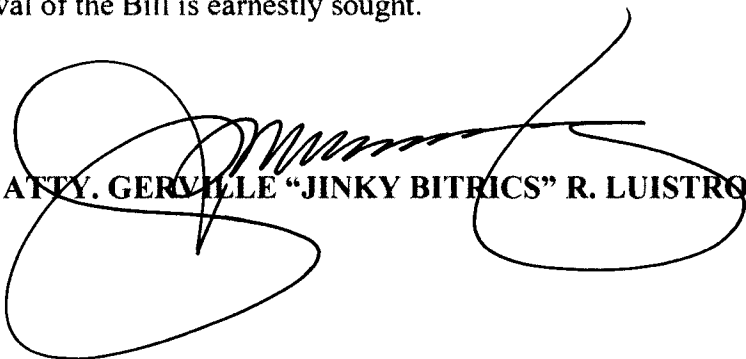
³ Winston Uy, “Transforming Philippine Agriculture,” *Inquirer*, August 22, 2024, Accessed on August 23, 2024, [Transforming Philippine agriculture | Inquirer Opinion](http://Transforming%20Philippine%20agriculture%20|%20Inquirer%20Opinion).

“The State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all”⁴ and

“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.”⁵

This bill aims to improve the access to education of children and dependents of Filipino farmers and fisherfolks by granting them scholarship grants. Through the provisions under this bill, the endeavor to break the cycle of poverty and enhance the quality of life of farmers and fisherfolks is underscored.

In view of the foregoing, approval of the Bill is earnestly sought.



HON. ATTY. GERVILLE “JINKY BITRICS” R. LUISTRO

⁴ The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, “Article 2, Section 9,” Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, Accessed August 23, 2024, [The Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines | Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines](#).

⁵ The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, “Article 14, Section 1,” Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, Accessed August 23, 2024, [The Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines | Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines](#).



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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Educational Scholarship for Children and Dependents of Farmers and Fisherfolks Act.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to ensure access to quality education, recognizing the fundamental right to education of every child.

SECTION 3. *Full scholarship for Children and Dependents of Farmers and Fisherfolks.* – Children and dependents of farmers listed in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) shall be entitled to a full scholarship from basic education until they complete tertiary education subject to rules and regulations, as mandated by this Act.

The benefits shall include all expenses for education, whether in public or private school, such as but not limited to tuition fees, miscellaneous and other fees, board and lodging, transportation expenses, allowances for books, clothing, food, and other similar expenses.

SECTION 4. *Special Funds for Educational Benefits.* – In order to carry out the provisions of this Act, there is hereby established a Special Fund, to be known as the “Education Benefits for Farmers and Fisherfolks Fund,” in the amount of Fifty Million Pesos (P50,000,000.00). Such fund shall be perpetually maintained and used exclusively for the benefit of children and dependents of farmers; Provided, that not more than 5% of this Fund shall be used for the administration of this Special Fund.

SECTION 5. *Administration of the Fund.* – The Unified Student Financial Assistance for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Governing Board, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and three (3) representatives from the farmers and fisherfolks selected from a verified procedure of selection as agreed upon by the farmers and fisherfolks, shall have the primary responsibility of managing and supervising the Fund. It shall also be responsible in formulating the mechanics, scope and limitations, and requirements of the scholarship program.

The UniFAST Secretariat shall serve as the Secretariat providing administrative support to the Board and shall perform functions as authorized by the UniFAST Board.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the UniFAST Board in consultations with the Department of Agriculture shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* – If for any reason, any section, clause, or term of this Act is held to be illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *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,