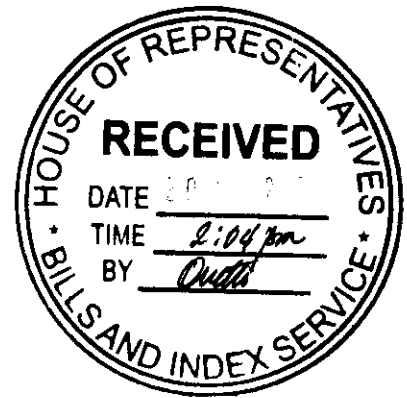


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 473



Introduced by **Representative Jaime R. Fresnedi**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to mandate all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to provide students and their families with clear, written multi-year schedules or non-binding estimates of tuition and other school fees at the time of enrollment.

Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution guarantees the right to accessible and affordable education. The measure aims to support this by making tuition and school fee information transparent, accessible, and predictable. By requiring higher education institutions to provide multi-year tuition schedules or, where applicable, non-binding estimates, families will have the opportunity to plan their finances and make informed decisions about higher education. The goal is to foster a more sustainable and equitable education system where students are not blindsided by sudden fee hikes but are empowered to budget and seek financial assistance if needed.

In the Philippines, tuition fees have been increasing annually, with an average rise of 7% per year¹. Additionally, the expiration of the tuition fee hike moratorium in 2024 has led to uncertainty regarding future fee increases². The continuous rise in costs of living, coupled with tuition hikes, places undue stress on households already struggling with inflation and other financial pressures. The pandemic, too, has highlighted the need for more transparent, flexible, and predictable financial planning in education as many students and their families had to adjust to remote learning and financial challenges, further aggravating the burden of unexpected tuition increases.

By requiring HEIs to disclose projected tuition and fee schedules, this piece of legislation aims to promote transparency, enable informed financial planning, and uphold the constitutional right to accessible and affordable quality education for all Filipinos.

¹ Making cost of college education affordable (<https://business.inquirer.net/274159/making-cost-of-college-education-more-affordable>)

² Philippines: Tuition fee hike moratorium expires in 2024, what happens next (<https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/philippines/philippines-tuition-fee-hike-moratorium-expires-in-2024-what-happens-next-1.1712318562384>)

Moreover, this bill promotes financial preparedness, student welfare, and ultimately aims to make higher education more accessible and inclusive for all Filipinos. Through these reforms, the proposed measure aligns with the state's commitment to provide quality education for every Filipino, regardless of their financial background.

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



JAIME R. FRESNEDI
Representative
Lone District, Muntinlupa City

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 473

Introduced by **Representative Jaime R. Fresnedi**

AN ACT
REQUIRING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO PROVIDE PROJECTED
COSTS OF TUITION AND OTHER SCHOOL FEES

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Truth in Tuition Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to uphold the right of all Filipinos to accessible, affordable, and quality education at all levels, as enshrined in Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which 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."

In line with this constitutional mandate, the State recognizes the importance of enabling students and their families to make informed financially sound decisions in pursuit of higher education. It acknowledges that sudden increases in tuition and other school fees impose undue hardship, limit educational access, and disproportionately burden students from low- and middle- income households.

To this end, the State shall ensure that all higher education institutions (HEIs) are required to provide timely, clear, and accurate information on the projected tuition and other school fees for the duration of a degree program, or where exact figures are not feasible, to provide fair and reasonable non-binding estimates. This is essential to promote financial preparedness, to protect student welfare, and to advance equity and inclusivity in the Philippine higher education system.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

a) Tuition and Other School Fees refer to all fees regularly charged by HEIs for enrollment and attendance, including but not limited to laboratory fees, miscellaneous fees, and other instructional fees.

b) Multi-Year Tuition and Fee Schedule refers to a document outlining the projected tuition and other fees for the normal duration of a degree program.

c) Non-Binding Estimate is a forecast of possible tuition and other fees, which is not legally enforceable but is provided for planning purposes.

SEC. 4. *Provision of Multi-Year Tuition Schedules and Non-Binding Estimates.* – To promote transparency and empower students to make informed decisions about the cost of their education, all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) shall be required to disclose the projected costs of tuition and other fees at the outset of a student's academic journey.

a) HEIs shall provide a multi-year tuition and other fee schedule covering the standard number of years required to complete a degree program.

b) If an institution cannot provide a fixed schedule, it shall issue a non-binding estimate of projected tuition and other fees per academic year for the duration of the program.

c) All information shall be provided in writing, be presented in a clear and comprehensible format, and made publicly available through the institution's official website, admissions materials, and other applicable communication channels.

SEC. 5. *Application and Coverage.* – This Act shall apply to all private and public Higher Education Institutions operating in the Philippines and duly authorized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

SEC. 6. *Exceptions.* – Institutions offering short-term programs or certificate courses of less than one (1) year are exempt from the multi-year disclosure requirement but must still provide full disclosure of tuition and other school fees at the time of enrollment.

SEC. 7. *Penalties.* – Any HEI that willfully fails to comply with the provisions of this Act shall be subject to the following administrative sanctions by CHED.

a) For the first violation, a written warning and mandatory compliance order.

b) For the second violation, a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php 50,000.00) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 100,000.00), and temporary suspension of authority to increase tuition and other school fees.

c) For the third and subsequent violations, a fine of not less than One Thousand Pesos (Php 100,000.00) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 500,000.00), and recommendation for revocation or non-renewal of permit or recognition for non-compliant programs, subject to due process.

Penalties shall be without prejudice to other legal or administrative actions under existing laws, rules, or regulations.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of CHED. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Commission on Higher Education, in coordination with the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) and Commission on Audit (COA) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, ordinances, administrative order, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act are repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,