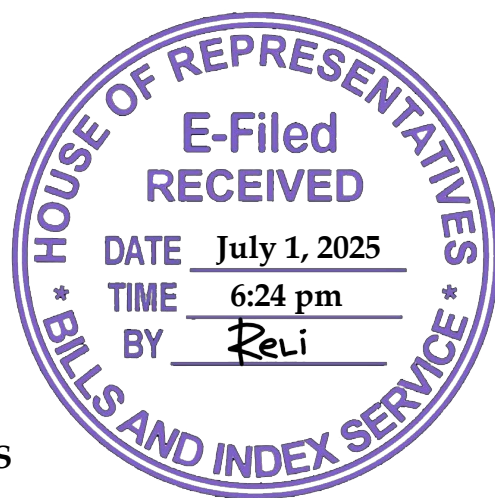




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1040

Introduced by 4Ps Partylist Representative
JC M. ABALOS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The pursuit of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger remains a paramount goal for nations worldwide. As stated in Millennium Development Goal 1, which focuses on "Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger," member states have diligently worked towards devising viable means and mechanisms to achieve this overarching objective. The gravity of this endeavor is further underscored by the country's President during his 2022 State of the Nation Address by articulating our commitment to achieving a single-digit poverty rate by 2028.

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) Act, or Republic Act No. 11310, is one such mechanism. It is the country's foremost poverty reduction strategy and a human capital investment program designed to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty by investing in children's health and education. The program provides conditional cash transfers to qualified household beneficiaries for a maximum period of seven (7) years.

Notably, extensive research conducted by institutions such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)¹ and the

¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization . *Reducing Global Poverty through Universal Primary and Secondary Education*. June 2017.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)² consistently underscores education's transformative impact on combating poverty. Local studies further support these findings, revealing improved academic performance, reduced dropout rates, increased attendance and enrollment,³ and enhanced healthcare and educational outcomes among beneficiary children⁴. Further, over the academic years spanning 2010-2023, the 4Ps program has yielded substantial results, with 11,436,938 elementary graduates and 3,254,002 high school graduates.

Notwithstanding these commendable achievements of the 4Ps program, a notable discrepancy exists in the number of college graduates relative to elementary and high school graduates among 4Ps beneficiaries. The number of college graduates is relatively modest at 32,556. This discrepancy may be attributed to the program's focal demographic, which spans children from infancy to eighteen years of age. Consequently, households are delisted from the program when they no longer have eligible members (having children of 0-18 years old children or pregnant members), or when the last child completes high school. Given the expenses associated with tertiary education, households may choose not to continue their children's education but instead encourage them to enter the workforce. Nonetheless, recognizing the pivotal role of sustained access to education in poverty alleviation and the realization of individual potential, it becomes imperative to broaden the scope of support extended to beneficiaries.

In this regard, the bill aims to establish the 4Ps Support to Tertiary Education and Employment Program (4Ps STEEP) designed to facilitate the education of 4Ps children-beneficiaries into tertiary education, including technical-vocational courses, and provide assistance in employment.

The bill seeks to mandate that public or private institutions and organizations offering educational assistance prioritize 4Ps STEEP-beneficiaries. Private or public higher tertiary education and technical vocational institutions shall allocate not less than ten percent (10%) of their available enrollment slots to prioritize qualified 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries pursuing tertiary-level education within their institution. Further, recognizing the multifaceted nature of educational expenses, the bill empowers beneficiaries to avail themselves of various forms of educational assistance, including scholarships, grants, student loans, subsidies, financial aid, and other incentives.

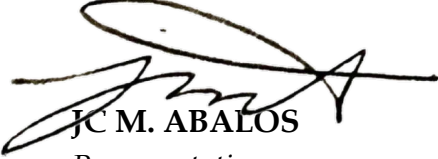
² Junjunia, Zubair, and United Nations Development Programme. "The Future of Education." *UNDP*, 23 Jan. 2024, www.undp.org/blog/future-education.

³ Flores, M. J. S., Espinoza, C. A. B., Enrico, H. C., & Casimiro, R. R. (2019). Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps): Its effect on the academic performance of student-beneficiaries in Calaba National High School in the Philippines. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 9(2), 193-208.

⁴ Braganza, C., Goozee, H., & Peres, A. (2018). The healthcare and education impacts of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Programme.

The bill also integrates measures for employment facilitation to secure long-term sustainability for beneficiaries post-graduation. It prioritizes at least ten percent (10%) of all contractual and casual positions within governmental entities for 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries. Priority enlistment status is also granted to beneficiaries seeking roles in the military, uniformed personnel services, and other governmental institutions crucial for national defense and security. Moreover, the legislation incentivizes private sector involvement by offering tax deductions to entities hiring 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries who meet the prescribed qualifications. This provision is intended to foster collaboration between the public and private sectors in advancing poverty reduction initiatives to further strengthen the 4Ps Act. By encouraging the engagement of both sectors, the bill seeks to bolster employment opportunities for beneficiaries and fortify their economic resilience beyond the educational realm of the program.

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



JC M. ABALOS
Representative
4Ps Partylist



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1040

Introduced by 4Ps Partylist Representative
JC M. ABALOS

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING SUPPORT TO TERTIARY EDUCATION AND
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO
PROGRAM STUDENT BENEFICIARIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

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 “4Ps Support to Tertiary Education and Employment Program (4Ps STEEP)”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State shall ensure its commitment to social justice through the creation of economic opportunities grounded in the freedom of initiative and self-reliance. The State shall accord the highest priority in safeguarding and enhancing the fundamental right of all individuals to human dignity, specifically targeting the reduction of social, economic, and political inequalities.

Towards this end, the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education across all levels and shall establish mechanisms to make education accessible to all. The State shall likewise promote full employment and ensure equality of work opportunities for all.

SEC. 3. *Establishment of 4Ps Support to Tertiary Education and Employment Program (4Ps STEEP).* – The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall establish a 4Ps Support to Tertiary Education and Employment Program (4Ps STEEP) as a mechanism for children of household-beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) to develop interest in postsecondary education, assist in the access and completion of tertiary education, and ensure prioritization of 4Ps STEEP beneficiary in employment.

The 4Ps STEEP shall continuously advance the objectives of Republic Act No. 11310, or the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), as a national strategy in breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty by facilitating the pursuit of education and employment of its student beneficiaries.

SEC. 4. *Scope.* – The 4Ps STEEP established under this Act shall be available to children of former and current 4Ps household beneficiaries who wish to pursue tertiary education in a postsecondary non-degree certificate or diploma course, or an undergraduate degree program in any state university or college (SUC), local university or college (LUC), or private higher education institute (PHEI), or a public or private technical-vocational institution (TVI).

The 4Ps STEEP shall provide assistance to a qualified beneficiary including:

- (a) Cultivation of interest in postsecondary education;
- (b) College readiness assessment and developmental session;
- (c) Access to and completion of tertiary education;
- (d) Course and academic counseling;
- (e) Mentorship;
- (f) Vocational guidance and counseling; and
- (g) Employment facilitation.

SEC. 5. *Qualified Beneficiary.* – A 4Ps STEEP beneficiary shall possess the following qualifications:

- (a) Must be a child of a current 4Ps household beneficiary or a child of a former 4Ps household beneficiary: *Provided, That, at the time of application to the 4Ps STEEP, the child is part of a household included in the poverty data under Republic Act No. 11315, otherwise known as the Community-Based Monitoring System Act, or any law establishing a monitoring and targeting system for poor households that may be enacted in the future; and*
- (b) Must be a graduating or graduated senior high school student, or an undergraduate student who wants to pursue tertiary education.

SEC. 6. *Accommodation in educational assistance.* – A 4Ps STEEP beneficiary may apply for any educational assistance such as, but not limited to, scholarship, grant, student loan, subsidies, financial aid, or other incentives. Public or private institutions and organizations offering educational assistance shall prioritize the 4Ps STEEP-beneficiary applicant: *Provided*, that the 4Ps STEEP beneficiary applying for educational assistance satisfactorily meets the qualifications, requirements, or conditions set forth by the institution or organization.

SEC. 7. *Database Services.* – The DSWD, in coordination with the Department of Education (DEPED), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), shall establish a comprehensive database of all available tertiary educational assistance and services to streamline the process of delivering essential educational support to beneficiaries by facilitating easy access to relevant information and services.

SEC. 8. *Institutional accommodation in enrollment.* – Educational institutions, public and private offering educational assistance such as, but not limited to, scholarship, grant, student loan, subsidies, financial aid, or other incentives, shall allot not less than ten percent (10%) of their available slots for enrollment in prioritizing qualified 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries pursuing tertiary-level education in their institution: *Provided*, That the 4Ps STEEP beneficiary shall pass or fulfill the qualification requirements of the educational institution.

A 4Ps STEEP beneficiary shall be given priority status upon enlistment in the military and uniformed personnel services, such as the service branches of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Bureau of Corrections (BuCor), and other government institutions involved national defense, enforcement of laws, and in the maintenance of peace, order, and security of the country.

SEC. 9. *Accommodation for Employment.* – Ten percent (10%) of all contractual and casual positions in agencies, offices or corporations of the government shall be prioritized for 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries: *Provided*, That the 4Ps STEEP applying for the position shall meet the terms and conditions of employment.

All qualified 4Ps STEEP employees shall be subject to the same compensation, privileges, benefits, fringe benefits, incentives or allowances as those given to all other employees holding the same position.

SEC. 10. *Incentives for Employers.* – To encourage the participation of the private sector in the poverty reduction program of the government, private entities that employ 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries who meet the skills and qualifications required by the positions applied for shall be entitled to an additional deduction for five (5) years, from their gross income, equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the total amount paid as salaries and wages to 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries: *Provided, That* such private entities present proof certified by the DOLE and the DSWD that such 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries are under their employ.

SEC. 11. *Employment Service.* – The 4Ps STEEP shall assist 4Ps STEEP beneficiaries to have access to employment. It shall help the beneficiaries find jobs that match their skill sets: *Provided, That* a 4Ps STEEP beneficiary who availed of an educational assistance shall adhere to the stipulated terms of the educational assistance program such as, but not limited to, a return service obligation.

SEC. 12. *Appropriations.* – The amount required for the implementation of the provisions outlined in this Act shall be incorporated into the annual budget of the DSWD as stipulated in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 13. *Review and Annual Report of the Program.* – Within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act and subsequently on an annual basis, the DSWD, in collaboration with the DEPED, CHED, TESDA, and DOLE, shall furnish an annual report detailing the execution of this Act. Further, a compulsory review shall be undertaken every three (3) years following the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DSWD, in coordination with DEPED, CHED, TESDA, DOLE, and other pertinent government agencies and stakeholders, shall undertake the formulation and issuance of rules and regulations to comprehensively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* – If for any reason or reasons, any portion or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining portions or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules, regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 17. *Effectivity.* — The Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation/ or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,