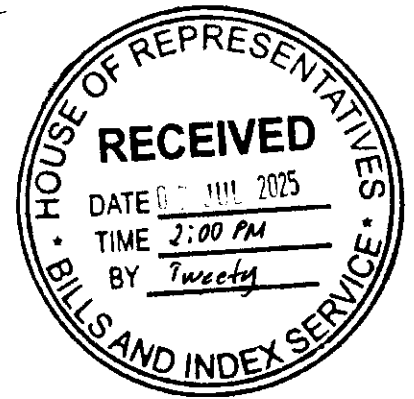


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1436



Introduced by the **Honorable ANIELA BIANCA D. TOLENTINO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is rich in natural resources. Our beloved motherland is even regarded as one of the world's mega-biodiversity countries, which are rich in both flora and fauna. Our country is gifted with very rich soil and a great climate that can be great make a flourishing agricultural industry. As such, agriculture proves to be the backbone of the Philippine economy. According to the latest data from the World Bank, the Philippine agriculture sector employs twenty-three percent (23%) of the Filipino workforce.

In 2010, the Philippines was regarded as the top rice producer in the world. However, the country is now only ranked 8th in the top rice producers in the world. In fact, the Philippines is even one of the world's top rice imports. This shows that despite the country being one of the most mega-diverse in the world, it still lacks the capacity to produce its own rice. The situation threatens the food security of the country. One way to increase the capacity of the country for agriculture is to promote agricultural education as early as in secondary school. Republic Act No. 10618, or the "Rural Farm Schools Act," mandated the Department of Education to encourage the establishment of at least one public rural farm school in every province in the country.

The bill at hand seeks to establish a national agricultural high school and agricultural secondary schools in every region of the country which shall all be integrated into one system. This includes the determination of how the current rural farm schools established under RA No. 10618 can be integrated into the system that will be formed under this bill. This proposed legislation will promote the establishment of a complete, adequate, and integrated national system of education for the agriculture sector.

For the Filipino people, the approval of the foregoing bill is earnestly being sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'A' or similar character.

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HOUSE BILL NO. 1436

Introduced by the **Honorable ANIELA BIANCA D. TOLENTINO**

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURAL
HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR**

*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 "Philippine
Agricultural High School (PAHS) System Act of 2025."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared policy of the
state:

- (a) To protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Further, the State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society; and encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent, and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs;
- (b) Promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development, through industries that make full and efficient use of human and natural resources;
- (c) 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; and

- (d) Give priority to research and development, invention, innovation, and their utilization; and to science and technology education, training, and services. The State shall support indigenous, appropriate, and self-reliant scientific and technological capabilities, and their application to the country's productive systems and national life.

To this end, the State hereby establishes the Philippine Agricultural High School ("PAHS") System that will assume a leadership role in secondary level agricultural education.

SECTION 3. *Objectives.* - In implementing the foregoing policy, the State shall pursue the following objectives:

- (a) Establish a main national agricultural high school and other agricultural secondary schools in different parts of the country and integrate them into one system of governance and management;
- (b) Integrate rural farm schools established under Republic Act No. 10618, or the "Rural Farm Schools Act," under the PAHS System;
- (c) Ensure uniformity in quality standards and systematize operations of schools under the PAHS System; and
- (d) Rationalize the establishment of agricultural high schools as defined in this Act.

SECTION 4. *Scope.* - The PAHS System shall be composed of the agricultural high schools which shall be established under this Act, and the rural farm schools established under Republic Act No. 10618 which shall be integrated under this Act.

SECTION 5. *Philippine Agricultural High School System.* - There shall be established a national agricultural high school to be known as the "Philippine Agricultural High School (Main Campus)." Agricultural high schools shall likewise be established in municipalities, cities, and provinces in the country.

These agricultural high schools shall provide on a free scholarship basis high school education with special emphasis on subjects pertaining to the agricultural sciences.

SECTION 6. *Over-all Coordinating Authority.* - The PAHS System shall be under the administrative supervision of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Education (DepEd).

The DA together with the DepEd shall institutionalize high standards of quality assurance in the PAHS System. These standards shall involve prescribing guidelines and policies on the operation and management of agricultural schools as well as basic curricula content to ensure the credibility and academic integrity of such agricultural schools.

SECTION 7. *Board of Regents.* - The PAHS (Main Campus) and the agricultural high schools established under this Act shall have the general powers set

out under Republic Act No. 11232, or the "Revised Corporation Code," and the exercise of its powers is hereby vested exclusively in the Board of Regents of the PAHS System. The Board of Regents shall be composed of the Secretary of Agriculture as *ex-officio* Chairperson, the Secretary of Education as *ex-officio* Vice Chairperson, and the following members: the President of the University of the Philippines, the Executive Director of PAHS (Main Campus), and the Director of the Science Education Institute (SEI) as *ex-officio* Members; and one (1) representative each from the private sector representing higher education, agriculture, and new and emerging technologies as regular Members. The private sector representatives shall be appointed by the Chairperson subject to the confirmation of the Board of Regents, and shall serve for a term of four (4) years, unless sooner removed from office for cause.

The Board shall exercise the following powers:

- (a) To determine the site of the PAHS (Main Campus) and the agricultural high schools to be established municipalities, cities, and provinces in the country;
- (b) To receive and appropriate in trust to the ends specified by law such legacies, gifts, sums, and donations of real and personal property of all kinds and to administer the same in accordance with the directions and instructions of the donor, and in default thereof, in such manner as the Board of Regents may in its discretion determine, for the benefit of the High School or for aid to any of its students;
- (c) To approve appointments made and contracts entered into by the Executive Director and Campus Directors in connection with the employment of professors, instructors, lecturers, and other employees of the school, subject to Section 14 of this Act; to fix their compensation, promotion, renewal, retention, rewards, incentives, and other conditions of employment; and to remove them for cause after due investigation and hearing;
- (d) To formulate its own rules of procedure, policies, and guidelines, and to prescribe for the administration of the PAHS System such general rules and regulations, not contrary to law, as are consistent with the purposes of this Act;
- (e) Approve the curricula and course of study submitted by the Executive Director;
- (f) Approve the criteria for the selection and admission of students;
- (g) Approve the grant of scholarship, stipend, and such allowances to students;
- (h) Approve the graduation of successful candidates from the various PAHS campuses;
- (i) Formulate policies and rules of discipline for students, faculty, and staff;
- (j) Approve the PAHS System budget and appropriate to the ends specified by law such sums as may be provided by law for the support of the System;
- (k) Receive grants whether cash, land, buildings and improvement thereof; donations, contributions, bequest, gifts, and to formulate policies for the administration thereof;
- (l) Develop policies for the expansion of enrollment in the campuses under the PAHS System;

- (m) Set policies and criteria to rationalize the establishment of agricultural high schools under the System, for its evaluation and approval thereof; and
- (n) Prepare strategic plans to enhance the capability of the System in developing human resources with focus on youth with special talents in agriculture science.

A quorum of the Board shall consist of a majority of all members holding office at the time of meeting of the Board is called. All processes against the Board of Regents shall be served on the Executive Director or the Secretary thereof.

SECTION 8. *Executive Director.* - There shall be an Executive Director of the PAHS (Main Campus) who shall be appointed by the Chairperson, subject to the approval of the Board and shall be conferred the rank equivalent to a bureau director with a fixed term of six (6) years, renewable for another term. The Executive Director shall coordinate the implementation of policies and guidelines set by the Board of Regents. As a member of the Board of Regents, the Executive Director shall articulate to the Board the mutual concerns of all the campuses.

The Executive Director shall perform the following roles and functions:

- (a) Coordinate curriculum planning activities for the PAHS System;
- (b) Oversee research projects related to agricultural science;
- (c) Coordinate publication of research outputs of teachers, administrators, and students from the PAHS System;
- (d) Coordinate exchange programs with other educational institutions both local and foreign;
- (e) Develop and coordinate linkages and networking among the campuses of the PAHS System with other institutions;
- (f) Coordinate the implementation of the program for the identification and selection of scholars for the PAHS System;
- (g) Provide secretariat services to the Board of Regents; and
- (h) Perform such other functions as may be deemed necessary.

For the efficient and effective implementation of the foregoing functions, the Executive Director shall be provided with a staff.

SECTION 9. *Campus Director* - The agricultural high schools established under this Act different from the PAHS Main Campus shall each be headed by a Campus Director who shall be appointed by the Board, upon recommendation of the Executive Director on the basis of a search process. He/she shall have a fixed term of six (6) years, renewable for another term at the option of the Board. The Campus Director shall not be removed from office except for cause.

The Campus Director shall be the administrative and academic head. of his/her campus and shall be responsible for its smooth operations. The Campus Director may constitute a consultative body which may act as a citizen's arm to interpret the educational needs of the service area of the campus.

SECTION 10. *Executive Committee.* - There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the Executive Director, the Campus Directors in all the agricultural high schools included in the PAHS System, the heads of departments, and such other ranking faculty members or officials of the PAHS System as may be determined by the Executive Director, as members. The Committee shall be collegial in character. It shall have the power to screen and select the students to be admitted to the high schools; to select students who shall be recipients of scholarship, stipends, and other allowances in accordance with duly promulgated criteria and rules; and to develop the curricula, course of study, and rules of discipline, all subject to the approval of the Board. The Committee shall have the exclusive power to recommend studies eligible for graduation.

The Committee shall implement and execute the policies laid down by the Board of Regents and exercise such other functions, powers, and duties as the Board may prescribe.

SECTION 11. *Registrar.* - The PAHS (Main Campus) shall have a Registrar who shall also act as Secretary of the Board of Regents. The Registrar shall be appointed by the Executive Director with the approval of the Board of Regents. He/She shall keep such records as may be prescribed by the Board.

All other Registrars of the agricultural high schools in the PAHS System shall be appointed by their respective Campus Directors with the approval of the Board of Regents.

SECTION 12. *Treasurer.* - The PAHS (Main Campus) shall have a treasurer who shall be appointed by the Executive Director with the approval of the Board of Regents. All accounts and expenses shall be audited by the Commission on Audit (COA).

SECTION 13. *Professors, Instructors, and other Faculty Members.* - Professors, instructors, and other faculty members of the PAHS System shall be exempt as such from any civil service examination or regulations as a requisite to appointment. They shall be selected in accordance with such criteria as may be established by the Board of Regents which shall include, if necessary and practicable, competitive screening examination.

SECTION 14. *Donations, Legacies, Gifts, and Other Contributions.* - All donations, legacies, gifts, and other contributions for the benefit of the PAHS System or its support and maintenance or for aid to any of its students shall be tax-exempt and shall be an allowable deduction from the gross income of the donors. For the purpose of the income tax, the PAHS System shall be exempt from the payment of all taxes, fees, assessments, and other charges of the Government, its branches, and subdivisions.

SECTION 15. *Philippine Agricultural High School (PAHS) System Fund.* - All income and donations to the PAHS (Main Campus) or the agricultural high schools created under this Act shall constitute a special fund to be known as the

Philippine Agricultural High School (PAHS) System Fund. This fund shall be expended by the Board of Regents exclusively for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 16. *Funding.* - To carry out the purposes of this Act, Including the operation of the PAHS (Main Campus) and agricultural high schools established under this Act, Including the operations of the schools, the acquisition, improvement, and development of the land on which the schools shall be built, the construction, maintenance, and repair of buildings and improvements, and the acquisition of furniture, fixtures, and equipment, an initial appropriation of Five Hundred Million Pesos (Php500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated. Thereafter, such amounts as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) of the Department of Agriculture as a separate and distinct item.

SECTION 17. *Implementing Rules and Regulations,* - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Board of Regents shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 18. *Separability Clause.* - If any part or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 19. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or portions thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 20. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,