

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1970



Introduced by Representative **MARCELINO R. TEODORO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 10931, or the "Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act," affirms the State's obligation to make quality higher education accessible to all, especially to underprivileged Filipinos. It established mechanisms such as scholarships, student loans, and subsidies to support this mandate.

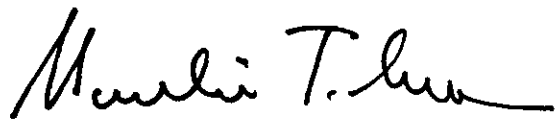
Recognizing the significant role of private institutions in the country's education system, this bill seeks to expand the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) by implementing a voucher system. This will allow financially disadvantaged but academically qualified students to pursue their studies in private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Technical-Vocational Institutions (TVIs).

As of 2020, 87.5% of the 1,975 higher education institutions in the Philippines are privately owned, accounting for more than half of the total student enrollment. Similarly, 90% of TVET institutions are private, enrolling a substantial share of learners. These figures underscore the importance of enabling students to access both public and private institutions under a more inclusive support framework.

Through this expanded TES coverage, the bill aims to strengthen public-private partnerships, broaden educational choices, and ensure that students are not limited by geographic or institutional constraints. It enhances equity and promotes a more balanced and responsive higher education system.

This version of the measure was the one approved on the Third and Final Reading during the Nineteenth Congress.

Given its significance, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly recommended.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marcelino R. Teodoro'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

MARCELINO R. TEODORO

Representative

1st District, Marikina City

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 1970

Introduced by **REP. MARCELINO R. TEODORO**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY
QUALIFIED STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND
PRIVATE TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10931, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
"UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO QUALITY TERTIARY EDUCATION ACT"

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

SECTION 1. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 10931, or the "Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act," is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 3. Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act:

xxx

1) POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENT REFERS TO A STUDENT WHO BELONGS TO A HOUSEHOLD RANKED AS "POOR" BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT BASED ON PROOF OF INCOME AS PRESENTED TO THE UNIFAST BOARD AND WHO CONSISTENTLY MEETS THE ACADEMIC RETENTION REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONCERNED HEI OR TVI FOR A REGULAR UNIT LOAD;

xxx

(L) *PROOF OF INCOME* REFERS TO ANY DOCUMENTATION USED TO VERIFY, AUTHENTICATE, OR ASSESS THE ANNUAL INCOME OF A PERSON OR HOUSEHOLD;

(M) *PROPORTIONAL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION* REFERS TO A BUDGETARY ALLOCATION WHICH SHALL SUBSIDIZE THE FULL COST OF TUITION AND MISCELLANEOUS FEES IN THE FORM OF PORTABLE VOUCHERS FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS;

XXX

(Y) *VOUCHER SYSTEM* REFERS TO A SYSTEM THAT GRANTS PORTABLE VOUCHERS TO POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS PRIOR TO THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR TO ALLOW THEM TO STUDY OR TRANSFER TO PRIVATE HEIs OR PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs, AND PUBLIC TVIs.”

SEC. 2. Section 3 (i) and (j) are amended to be denominated as Section 3 (j) and (k) respectively. Section 3 (k) to (u) are amended to be denominated as Section 3 (n) to (x).

SEC. 3. Section 7 of Republic Act No. 10931 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“**SEC. 7. TERTIARY EDUCATION SUBSIDY (TES) for Filipino Students.** - To support the cost of tertiary education or any part or portion thereof, a TES is hereby established IN ALL SUCs, LUCs, PRIVATE HEIs, AND TVIs for all Filipino students who [shall] enroll in THE FIRST undergraduate-post-secondary TERTIARY EDUCATION program[s] [of SUCs, LUCs, private HEIs, and all TVIs] OF THEIR CHOICE. The TES shall be administered by the UniFAST Board and the amount necessary to fund the TES shall be included in the RESPECTIVE budgets of the CHED and the TESDA: *Provided*, That prioritization shall be given to students in the following order: (a) students who are part of households included in the UPDATED *Listahanan* [2.0] 3, LAUNCHED ON AUGUST 1, 2022 BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income; and (b) students not part of the *Listahanan* [2.0] 3, ranked according to estimated per capita household income based on [submitted documentation of] THE proof of income to be determined by the UniFAST Board: *Provided*[,] *further*, That such prioritization shall not apply to Filipino students in cities and municipalities with no existing SUC or LUC campus AND PUBLIC TVI: **PROVIDED FINALLY, THAT FILIPINO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS IN PRIVATE**

HEIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE AN SUC OR LUC EXISTS, BUT DOES NOT OFFER COMPARABLE OR EQUIVALENT DEGREE PROGRAMS, SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR TES.

TO SUPPORT THE COST OF TERTIARY EDUCATION OR ANY PART OR PORTION THEREOF, [T]he TES may, among others, [and to support the cost of tertiary education or any part or portion thereof,] cover the following:

- (a) Tuition and other school fees in private HEIs, and private [or LGU-operated] TVIs, which shall be equivalent to the tuition and other school fees of the nearest SUC or state-run TVI in their respective areas;
- (b) [An] [a]AllowanceS for books, SCHOOL supplies, transportation TO AND FROM SCHOOL, and [miscellaneous personal expenses including a] reasonable allowance for the documented rental or purchase of a [personal computer or laptop] DESKTOP OR PORTABLE COMPUTER, WHEN APPLICABLE [and other education-related expenses];
- (c) An allowance for room and board costs TO BE incurred by the student, WHEN APPLICABLE;
- (d) xxx
- (e) xxx

ALL TES BENEFICIARIES SHALL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE SUCH BENEFITS OR SUBSIDY UNTIL THEY COMPLETE THEIR POST-SECONDARY TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL COURSE OR HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAM: *PROVIDED*, THAT THEY COMPLY WITH RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE HEIs AND TVIs.

SEC. 4. A new Section denominated as Section 7A is hereby inserted after Section 7 of Republic Act No. 10931 to read as follows:

SEC. 7A. VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HEIs AND TVIs. - THERE SHALL BE A PROPORTIONAL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION TO SUPPORT POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS THROUGH A

PORTABLE VOUCHER SYSTEM TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE UNIFAST BOARD THAT SHALL ALLOW BENEFICIARIES TO STUDY IN PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs, AND PUBLIC TVIs.

THE ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS UNDER THE VOUCHER SYSTEM SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE UNIFAST BOARD, BASED ON REASONABLE ECONOMIC AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, NOT LATER THAN THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR AS DETERMINED BY THE CHED, AND, IN THE CASE OF TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL STUDENTS, NOT LATER THAN THE PERIOD DESIGNATED BY THE TESDA, AND PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAM OR COURSE.

STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs WHO ARE TES GRANTEES CAN NO LONGER QUALIFY FOR THE VOUCHER SYSTEM. ALL VOUCHERS ISSUED UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS WHO OPT TO STUDY IN PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs AND PUBLIC TVIs.”

FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND WITHIN SIXTY (60) DAYS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE UNIFAST BOARD SHALL COMMISSION A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE COST OF TUITION AND MISCELLANEOUS FEES FOR PRIVATE HEIs AND TVIs IN THE COUNTRY, WHICH SHALL BE THE NOMINAL VALUE OF THE VOUCHER UNDER THE SYSTEM. THE AMOUNT OF TUITION AND MISCELLANEOUS FEES SHALL BE REVIEWED EVERY THREE (3) YEARS TO ALLOW FOR ADJUSTMENTS DUE TO INFLATION.”

SEC. 5. Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall issue the rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the "Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act", is hereby amended. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,