

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2380**



Introduced by **Representative RAYMOND ADRIAN SALCEDA**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN
COMMUNITY COLLEGES AS CRITICAL ACCESS POINTS TO HIGHER
EDUCATION, ENHANCING CURRICULUM OFFERINGS, IMPROVING
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY, AND PROMOTING UPWARD MOBILITY
THROUGH LOCALIZED FLAGSHIP MODELS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine education system faces significant challenges, particularly in providing equitable access to higher education. A large segment of the population, particularly those from rural areas, underserved regions, and low-income backgrounds, encounters barriers to enrollment and completion of higher education degrees. The existing tertiary institutions, especially in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, are often inaccessible due to financial constraints, long distances, or a lack of locally relevant educational offerings.

Many students are forced to leave their communities to access education, placing further financial and personal burdens on their families. This issue is particularly prominent among youth from low-income families and geographically isolated communities, where opportunities for educational attainment and upward mobility are scarce.

Community colleges, as locally managed institutions, are well-positioned to address these gaps by providing affordable, flexible, and locally relevant educational pathways. These institutions are critical access points for students who otherwise would be excluded from traditional higher education pathways. By offering associate degrees, technical-vocational programs, and hybrid tracks, community colleges serve as steppingstones to broader employment opportunities and skills development.

This bill aims to institutionalize a national strategy to strengthen community colleges by improving their institutional capacity, aligning curricula with labor market needs, and enhancing upward mobility for underserved learners. It recognizes the role of Local Government Units (LGUs) in providing accessible education and seeks to empower them to establish or upgrade community colleges.

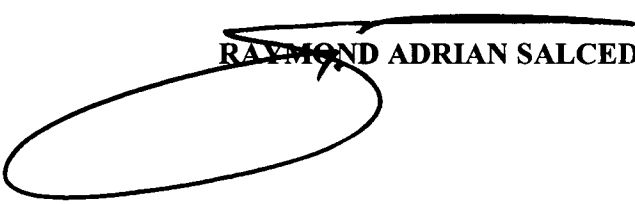
The bill proposes several key measures:

1. Founding Grants to support the establishment or upgrading of community colleges, including funding for faculty hiring, curriculum development, and accreditation.
2. Curriculum Alignment Funds to support labor-responsive programs that match regional development plans and local labor market needs, particularly in fields like agriculture, renewable energy, and digital employment.
3. Flagship Model Recognition, designating community colleges as benchmarks for innovation, curriculum relevance, and student outcomes. These Flagship Models will serve as hubs for replication and best practices, encouraging the expansion of successful educational models across the country.
4. Geographic Expansion Incentives for LGUs in underserved areas to establish new community colleges, prioritizing regions with low tertiary enrollment rates and high poverty incidence.
5. Performance-Based Funding and targeted incentives for community colleges that demonstrate innovation and high student outcomes, which will be continuously monitored and reported to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

The bill also mandates the creation of a national program for the advancement of community colleges, supported by appropriate funding to ensure that no LGU-run institution is excluded from national higher education programs solely due to its structure.

With this bill, we aim to create a more inclusive and accessible higher education system that caters to the unique needs of Filipinos from all regions and socio-economic backgrounds. By supporting the growth and strengthening of community colleges, we will enhance the capacity of these institutions to provide relevant, high-quality education that responds to local needs, empowers marginalized communities, and facilitates upward social and economic mobility.

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



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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 "Community College Advancement and Equity Act of 2025."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to broaden access to higher education by strengthening community colleges as inclusive, affordable, and labor-responsive tertiary institutions. Community colleges are essential bridges for rural youth, working students, and underserved learners to access economic and social mobility through localized, high-quality education. The State shall promote innovation and replicability in these institutions through targeted incentives, performance-based funding, and institutional recognition.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

(a) "Community College" refers to any tertiary institution operated, established, or supported by a Local Government Unit (LGU), duly authorized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and offering associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees, technical-vocational programs, or hybrid tertiary tracks;

(b) "Flagship Model" refers to an LGU-run community college designated by CHED as a benchmark for institutional innovation, curriculum relevance, affordability, and student outcomes;

(c) "CHED" refers to the Commission on Higher Education;

- (d) "DBM" refers to the Department of Budget and Management;
- (e) "DOLE" refers to the Department of Labor and Employment;
- (f) "TESDA" refers to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;
- (g) "LGUs" refer to Local Government Units.

SEC. 4. *National Program for Community College Advancement.* – The following initiatives are hereby established to support the long-term development of community colleges:

(a) **Founding Grant.** — There is hereby created a Community College Founding Grant, administered by CHED, to support the establishment or upgrading of LGU-run community colleges. The grant shall cover faculty hiring, curriculum development, accreditation support, and instructional infrastructure. CHED shall issue guidelines that incentivize cost-sharing with LGUs.

(b) **Center of Excellence Track.** — Community colleges may qualify for Center of Excellence or Center of Development status under CHED's academic recognition programs. CHED shall provide technical and financial support to assist eligible institutions in achieving said status, including access to mentoring partnerships with higher education institutions (HEIs) and academic consortia.

(c) **Curriculum Alignment Fund.** — A Curriculum Alignment Fund shall be created under CHED to provide grants for labor-responsive programs in agriculture, renewable energy, digital employment, logistics, creative industries, and other high-potential fields identified by CHED, DOLE, and TESDA. Grantees shall demonstrate alignment with regional development plans and local labor market needs.

(d) **Geographic Expansion Incentive.** — LGUs in underserved areas—defined as fifth- and sixth-class municipalities, upland municipalities, and geographically isolated communities—shall be eligible for expansion incentives to establish new community colleges. CHED shall develop a scoring system to prioritize areas with low tertiary enrollment and high poverty incidence.

(e) **Flagship Model Recognition.** — CHED may designate up to five (5) Flagship Models at any given time. Flagship Models shall serve as training, replication, and innovation hubs and shall be prioritized for grants, technical assistance, and academic consortia. Designated institutions shall submit a replication toolkit within one (1) year and an implementation report within three (3) years of designation.

SEC. 5. *Funding.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of CHED. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. No community college shall be disqualified from any national higher education program solely by reason of its being LGU-run.

SEC. 6. *Oversight and Performance Reporting.* – CHED shall submit to the Committees on Higher and Technical Education of both Houses of Congress an annual report on the implementation of this Act, which shall include:

- (a) Number and profile of grantee institutions;
- (b) Enrolment, graduation, and licensure data, disaggregated by gender and region;

(c) Graduate employment and wage outcomes; and

(d) Institutional performance and compliance metrics.

Flagship Models shall submit a comprehensive impact report to CHED within three (3) years of designation.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, CHED, in consultation with DBM, DOLE, TESDA, and relevant LGU associations, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,