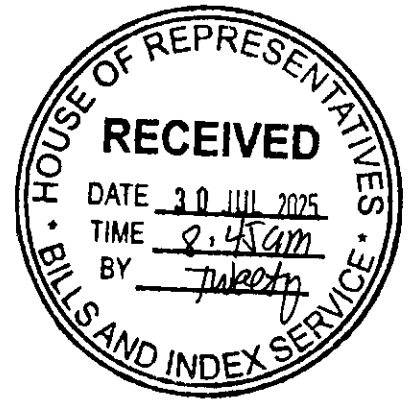


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2583



Introduced by **Representative Ryan S. Recto**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This legislative measure seeks to establish the Presidential Merit Scholarship Program for the top one (1%) of students in all public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) nationwide. These outstanding students shall be automatically granted Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) per academic year to help with additional educational expenses.

Data from the Second Congressional Commission on Education's (EDCOM II) Year-end report reveals a concerning trend in the Philippine education landscape, with the national college dropout rate for school year 2023-2024 reaching a high of 39%. This means that at least 4 out of 10 college students either temporarily or permanently leave school. Compounding this issue is the significant reduction in tertiary education subsidies for the poorest students, which plummeted from 74.24% in 2018 to a mere 30.74% in 2022.

Financial constraints, more often than not, significantly impede even the most academically gifted students. This hinders them from fully realizing their full potential and deprives them of the success they rightfully deserve. While tuition is subsidized by the State through the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, the law does not cover miscellaneous fees and expenses. When high-achieving individuals, particularly those from socio-economically challenged backgrounds, are forced to delay or abandon their studies due to costs not covered by free tuition, the nation loses out on potential doctors, engineers, scientists, educators and public servants. This not only

perpetuates cycles of poverty but also undermines the country's capacity for innovation and sustained development.

This law aims to address such issues by giving financial relief to the top performing students from each college or university, regardless of their socio-economic background. The law ensures that no student is left behind as academic excellence is truly rewarded and supported.

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



RYAN S. RECTO
Representative
6th District, Batangas

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 2583

Introduced by **Representative Ryan S. Recto**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENTIAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the "*Presidential Merit*
2 *Scholarship Act of 2025.*"

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
4 promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels. The State recognizes
5 the crucial role of academic excellence in nation-building and shall endeavor to identify,
6 nurture and empower exceptionally talented students. This Act aims to provide financial
7 assistance and incentivized public service opportunities to the most outstanding college
8 students, ensuring that their potential is maximized for the greater good and the
9 advancement of the Philippines.

10 **SEC. 3. *Establishment of the Presidential Merit Scholarship Program.*** – There is
11 hereby established the Presidential Merit Scholarship Program (PMSP), a national
12 scholarship program to be administered by the Commission on Higher Education
13 (CHED).

14 **SEC. 4. *Eligibility and Automatic Scholarship.*** – The top one percent (1%) of
15 students enrolled in public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) duly
16 accredited by CHED shall be eligible for the PMSP, based on their academic
17 performance at the end of each academic year, in each college or department within an
18 HEI, and shall automatically qualify as Presidential Merit Scholars for the succeeding
19 academic year, subject to the availability of funds and continued academic excellence.
20 For purposes of this Act, academic performance shall be determined by the cumulative
21 General Weighted Average (GWA) or the equivalent grading system of the students
22 within their respective college or department, as certified by the Registrar of the HEI.
23 The CHED shall establish the guidelines for the ranking of students.

24 **SEC. 5. *Scholarship Benefits.*** – Each qualified Presidential Merit Scholar shall
25 receive a scholarship grant of Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) per academic year:

1 *Provided*, That it shall be used to cover tuition and other school fees, books, supplies,
2 and other education-related expenses: *Provided, further*, That it shall be disbursed
3 directly to the scholar or their HEI, as may be determined by CHED, in accordance with
4 its implementing rules and regulations.

5 SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*. – Within ninety (90) days from the
6 effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall, in consultation with the other relevant agencies,
7 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

8 SEC. 7. *Appropriations*. – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
9 this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of CHED. Thereafter,
10 such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be
11 included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

12 SEC. 8. *Separability Clause*. – If any provision or part hereof is declared
13 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall
14 remain in full force and effect.

15 SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause*. – All laws, acts, decrees, executive orders, issuances,
16 and rules and regulations or parts thereof which are contrary to and inconsistent with
17 this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

18 SEC. 10. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
19 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,