



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4055



Introduced by

HON. ATTY. GERVILLE “JINKY BITRICS” R. LUISTRO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Education plays a critical role in nation building. It helps our people gain knowledge as they become active citizens of our country contributing to its growth and development.

As mandated by the Constitution, the State shall promote and make quality education accessible to all Filipino citizens. With the enactment of Republic Act No. 10533, the Philippine basic education was lengthened from ten to thirteen years. The Department of Education (Dep-Ed) then developed the Senior High School Voucher Program (SHS VP) aimed to provide financial assistance in form of vouchers to qualified senior high school students. Such voucher program was made available only to students enrolled into private educational institutions and would only cover the tuition fees.

According to the Dep-Ed's report for School Year 2020-2021, there are at least 3.2 million enrolled students in public and private SHS education institutions. Approximately 1.189 million were enrolled in private schools, 1.987 million students were enrolled in public schools, while around fifty-eight thousand two hundred (58,200) were enrolled in SUC and Local University.¹

Secondary education is a crucial part in the educational life of our young constituents wherein it is the stage in which a child will figure out what career path he or she will be taking going forward. Likewise, accomplishing the senior high school level will enable our students to acquire the necessary skills wherein they may complement our labor force in case they may decide to

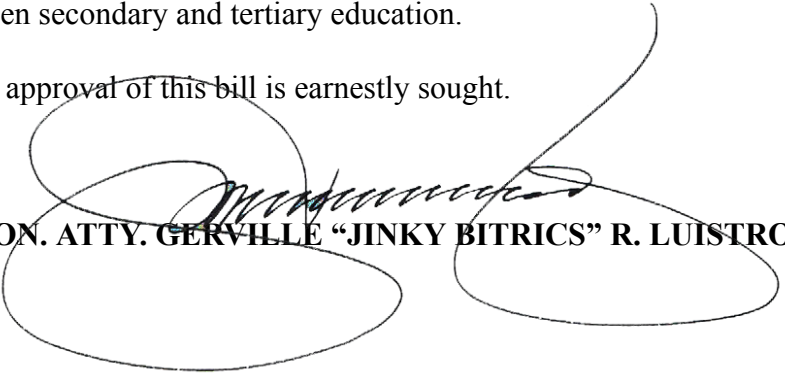
¹ Historical Enrollment Senior High School (Public, Private and SUCsLUCs) SY 2010-2011 to 2020-2021
<https://www.deped.gov.ph/alternative-learning-system/resources/facts-and-figures/datasets/>

work and not pursue tertiary education due to a lot of factors.

Such is envisioned when Republic Act No. 10533 also known as the Enhance Basic Education Act of 2013 or the K to 12 Law, was enacted. The said law received mixed responses in its implementation - primarily, because the extension of the years in basic education would entail additional cost to families. While the Dep-Ed's effort to augment the cost of additional years of schooling for our young generation, it is only reserved for students enrolled in private schools and does not cover the cost of food, transportation and lodging, if necessary.

In our government's effort to ensure that its citizens have greater access to education, there is still a gap which may discourage our young generation and their families to continue pursuing their dreams of finishing their education and be part of our community as effective and active citizens contributing to our progress and nation-building. Unlike the various scholarships and grant-in-aid programs the State has provided for students in tertiary education which also cover the cost of living allowance, there is still a need to provide further assistance to our students in the senior high school level to augment the cost of additional two years of education level, especially now that the prices of basic commodities and cost of transportation is on the rise, notwithstanding the economic difficulties brought about by the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic and other global factors. This bill seeks to provide our students enrolled in senior high school with additional assistance from the government regardless of their families' financial standing. Like the Universal Healthcare Law, this measure aims to lessen the out-of-pocket expenses of families while ensuring that their children will have greater access to education. Lastly, if enacted into a law, it shall help encourage our young generation and their families to continue their education and bridge the gap between secondary and tertiary education.

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



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AN ACT GRANTING UNIVERSAL EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ALL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS 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 “Universal Educational Assistance to Senior High School Students Act.”

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – Article XIV, Section 1 of the Constitution guarantees the right of every Filipino to accessible and quality basic education. The Constitution further mandates the State to establish a system of, among others, subsidies, and incentives to deserving individuals in both public and private schools (Article XIV, Section 2.3).

Section 2 of Republic Act No. 10533 also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 states that the State shall establish a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people, the country and society-at-large.

The State shall recognize the right of its citizens to quality education and its corresponding obligation to provide students with utmost assistance to complete their education. Therefore, the State shall undertake steps to extend financial assistance to all Senior High School students regardless of their families’ financial capabilities.

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

- a) Universal Educational Assistance for Senior High School refers to the assistance the government shall provide that may be used for necessary expenses for food, transportation and lodging that Senior High School, students incur while studying.
- b) Senior High School (SHS) Students refers to those enrolled in Grade 11 or Grade 12 whether in public or private institutions.
- c) Senior High School Voucher Program (SHS VP) refers to the voucher program the Department of Education (Dep-Ed) developed wherein subsidies in a form of vouchers are provided to qualified Senior High School learners enrolled in SHS-VP participating Senior High Schools.

Section 4. Universal Educational Assistance for Senior High School. All Filipino Senior High School enrolled in senior high school educational institution in the Philippines shall receive in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00) as educational assistance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), who shall be the primary implementor of the program. The assistance shall be divided into two (2) tranches in every school year.

Section 5. Eligibility for Universal Educational Assistance. –

- a) Learners who completed Junior High School in public high schools operated by Dep-Ed, including private educational institutions with a permit or granted with government recognition to operate and enrolled for Senior High School level;
- b) Learners who completed Grade 10 as passers of the Alternative Learning System Accreditation and Equivalency (ALS A&E) and enrolled for Senior High School level; and
- c) Passers of the Presentation Portfolio Assessment, and of the Philippine Education Placement Test (PEPT) enrolled for Senior High School level.

Senior High School Students are entitled to receive the benefits of this Act for a maximum period of two (2) years.

Section 6. Implementation. – The DSWD, in coordination with the Dep-Ed, shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations of this Act. The DSWD shall coordinate with the Dep-Ed in verifying and validating the documents that will be submitted by the beneficiary and shall maintain a database of enrolled students under the jurisdiction of their respective regional offices.

Section 7. Penalties. – The following acts shall be punished by:

- a) *Prision correccional* or imprisonment ranging from six (6) months and 1 day to six (6) years and a fine of Twenty-Five Thousand Pesos (Php 25,000.00) for parents who availed of the program for their child using falsified documents;
- b) *Prision correccional* or imprisonment ranging from six (6) months and 1 day to six (6) years and a fine of Twenty-Five Thousand Pesos (Php 25,000.00) for public officers and employees who committed acts of falsification defined under the Revised Penal Code of the Philippines in order to include beneficiaries disqualified from the provisions of this Act, without prejudice to other administrative charges as may be filed against such persons.

Section 8. Appropriations – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the budget of concerned government agencies in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

Section 9. Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, executive orders, administrative orders or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly

Section 10. Separability Clause - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 11. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

