



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 4519

Introduced by Representative Howard A. Guintu

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 2, Article 14 of the Constitution states that “[t]he State shall establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidies, and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged.” Furthermore, “[t]he State shall also establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.”

According to data from the Commission on Higher Education, there were 115,458 enrollees in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries programs for Academic Year 2019-2020. On the other hand, there were 33,429 enrollees in the natural sciences, including geology and meteorology.

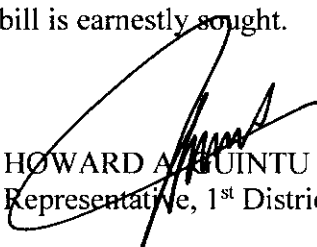
Agriculture is considered to be the backbone of our country. Filipinos living in rural areas rely on agricultural activities to support themselves and to provide food on our plates. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing industry contributed 9.6 percent to our Gross Domestic Product in 2021. However, the agricultural sector in the country is at risk. According to former agriculture secretary William Dar, the Philippines will face a critical shortage of farmers in just 12 years if the government will not encourage Filipinos to take up farming.

Meanwhile, being situated in the “Pacific Ring of Fire,” our country has always been prone to volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Along with this, as we are located in the Northwestern Pacific Basin, there are about 20 typhoons that enter our area of responsibility per year. Since 1990, the Philippines has faced 565 such disasters, killing thousands and costing us billions of

pesos in damages. The frequency of natural disasters that strike the country underscore the need for preparedness, and in order to do so, the country needs more experts in geosciences.

Considering the critical importance of agriculture and fisheries, geology, and meteorology in the Philippines, it is regrettable that there is a low number of enrollees in these programs. It is essential that the State shall encourage more enrollees in these programs.

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



HOWARD A. QUINTU
Representative, 1st District of Capiz



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AN ACT

**EXPANDING THE BENEFITS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP
GRANTEES OF AGRICULTURE, GEOLOGY, AND METEOROLOGY PROGRAMS,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7687, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE “SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP ACT OF 1994”**

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 “Expanded Benefits of Science and Technology Scholarship Grantees of Agriculture, Geology, and Meteorology Programs Act.”

SEC. 2. Section 7 of Republic Act No. 7687, otherwise known as the “Science and Technology Scholarship Act of 1994” is hereby amended to read as follows:

Section 7. Assistance to Grantees. — The grantee of the scholarship program under this Act is entitled to financial assistance which may include tuition and other school fees, outright grant for prescribed textbooks and essential school supplies, outright grant for prescribed military science and physical education uniform, transportation expenses and monthly living allowance: Provided, however, That in the granting of financial assistance, the availability of funds, purchasing power of the peso and rate of financial assistance given under other government scholarship programs must be considered.

**SECTION 7-A. ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
SCHOLARSHIP GRANTEES ENROLLED IN AGRICULTURE, GEOLOGY, AND
METEOROLOGY PROGRAMS - IN ADDITION TO THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

AND OUTRIGHT GRANTS THAT ARE ENTITLED TO GRANTEES OF THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP, GRANTEES ENROLLED IN THE AGRICULTURE, GEOLOGY, AND METEOROLOGY PROGRAMS ARE ENTITLED TO AN ADDITIONAL MONTHLY STIPEND: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT IN THE GRANTING OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, PURCHASING POWER OF THE PESO AND RATE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GIVEN UNDER OTHER GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS MUST BE CONSIDERED.

SEC. 3. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 4. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,