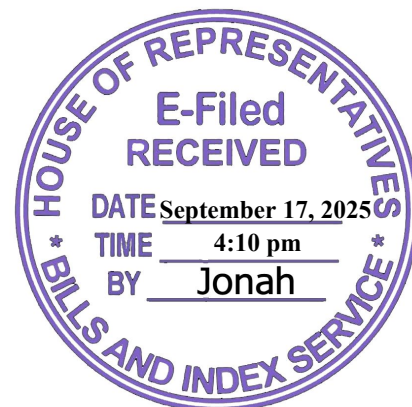


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

House Bill No. **4655**



Introduced by Representatives ERIC G. YAP AND EDVIC G. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Agriculture remains a vital pillar of the Philippine economy, providing livelihood to millions of Filipinos, especially in rural communities. However, the sector continues to face significant challenges, including declining interest among the youth, low productivity, and outdated practices.

Recent data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)¹ indicates a continued decline in employment within the agricultural and forestry sectors, with a net loss of 480,000 jobs recorded between May and June 2025 (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2025). This significant drop highlights a deepening disinterest or growing difficulty among Filipinos in pursuing agriculture as a sustainable and viable livelihood.

Moreover, Philippine Development Studies point to the diminishing size of farmlands and decreasing agricultural incomes as key drivers of the continued migration out of the sector. These economic realities push young Filipinos to explore opportunities outside farming, accelerating the decline of a sector already struggling with an aging workforce.

To reverse this trend, we must provide opportunities that will encourage the youth to consider careers in agriculture, especially those who come from farming families. This bill seeks to grant free tertiary education in agriculture and other related fields to all dependent children of qualified indigent farmers.

Building on the provisions of Republic Act No. 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, which already provides free tuition and school fees in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), this measure goes further by ensuring that eligible beneficiaries under this bill also receive full coverage of other school fees and are entitled to additional subsidies such as living and transportation allowances.

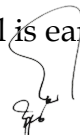
¹Philippine Statistics Authority. 2025. Participation in the labor force in June 2025 increased to 52.42 million Filipinos aged 15 years and over. Release Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025. Retrieved from: [https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/labor-force-survey/node/1684078398#:~:text=On%20the%20other%20hand%2C%20the,and%20recreation%20\(%2D214%20thousand\).](https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/labor-force-survey/node/1684078398#:~:text=On%20the%20other%20hand%2C%20the,and%20recreation%20(%2D214%20thousand).)

In doing so, this measure aims not only to uplift the lives of indigent farming families but also to revitalize the agricultural sector by equipping the next generation with modern, science-based agricultural knowledge. It will also support the growth of agricultural research, a critical element in improving productivity and ensuring sustainability in the sector.

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



HON. ERIC G. YAP



HON. EDVIC G. YAP

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

House Bill No. **4655**

Introduced by Representatives ERIC G. YAP AND EDVIC G. YAP

AN ACT
GRANTING FREE TERTIARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, AND OTHER
RELATED COURSES TO ALL DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF QUALIFIED
INDIGENT FARMERS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 Free Tertiary Agricultural Education Act.”

SEC. 2. *Statement of Policy.* - It is the declared policy of the State to promote sound agricultural development in the country and to achieve global competitiveness in the agricultural sector. Towards this end, education and trainings on Agriculture shall be encouraged among the youth to inculcate the latest agricultural principles and techniques. The State, therefore, shall extend the avenue for this learning process by providing accessible education on agriculture and other related courses.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined as:

- a. *Qualified Dependent Children* - refers to the children of indigent farmers who are enrolled or about to enroll in State Colleges and Universities (SUCs) where Agriculture and its related courses are offered.
- b. *Registered Indigent Farmers* - are those indigent individuals whose sole source of income is agriculture, who actually cultivate or till the land, whether as owner or lessee of the land, or as tenant-farmers defined under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program under the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), or who actually engage in crop production, livestock and poultry farming, and who are included in the registry of farmers of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

SEC. 4. *Implementation of Free Tertiary Agricultural Education.* - The DA, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), shall establish a

scholarship program for Tertiary Agricultural Education. Qualified dependent agricultural courses or any related field offerings in SUCs shall be exempt from payment of tuition and other school fees and shall be entitled to such other incentives or subsidies, including living and transportation allowance, as may be granted in accordance with such rules and regulations to be promulgated to carry out the provisions of this Act. Provided that they meet the admission requirements of the SUCs where they intend to enroll in.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Act, the DA and the CHED shall issue the necessary guidelines, rules, and regulations for the proper implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act, or parts thereof, is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other portions.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, implementing rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,