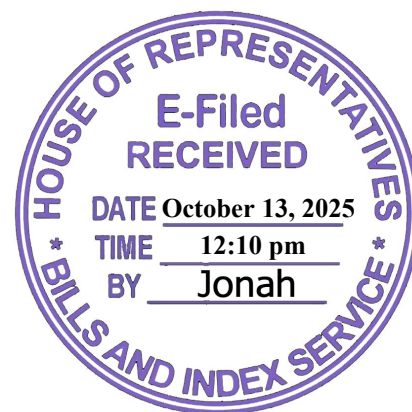


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5481



Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines' economic future is heavily reliant on the intellectual capital and leadership capabilities of its citizens. While the country has numerous scholarship programs, there remains a critical need for a premier, nationally-funded merit-based scholarship that specifically targets and retains the absolute top tier of high school graduates.

The current systems often lack the comprehensive financial package and specialized support necessary to fully unburden the most academically gifted students from financial constraints and to nurture their potential as future leaders.

This Bill seeks to address this gap by establishing the Presidential Scholarship Merit Program (PSMP). The Program is designed to be the nation's most prestigious academic award, ensuring that the top one percent (1%) of graduating students, regardless of their family's economic status, can pursue any undergraduate degree at the country's best universities with full financial and programmatic support.

The passage of this Bill is an imperative national investment that will cultivate a new generation of highly-skilled, ethical, and dedicated professionals ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

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


SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 5481

Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP MERIT PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE AND REWARD OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES, PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, 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 "Presidential Scholarship Merit Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy* - It is the policy of the State to promote quality education, encourage academic excellence, and ensure that the most talented and deserving students have access to higher education, regardless of their socioeconomic status. The Presidential Scholarship Merit Program (PSMP) is hereby established to foster a culture of meritocracy and invest in the nation's future intellectual leadership.

SEC. 3. *Definitions* - As used in this Act:

1. "Program" or "PSMP" refers to the Presidential Scholarship Merit Program.
2. "Commission" refers to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) or its equivalent regulating body, which shall administer the Program.
3. "Eligible Institution" means any public or private university or college in the country recognized by the Commission.
4. "Scholar" refers to a recipient of the scholarship under this Act.
5. "Financial Need" refers to the calculated difference between the cost of attendance at an Eligible Institution and the student's expected family contribution, as determined by the Commission's established formula.

SEC. 4. *Establishment of the Presidential Scholarship Merit Program* - There is hereby established the Presidential Scholarship Merit Program (PSMP) to provide full-cost financial assistance for undergraduate studies to a select number of highly distinguished high school graduates.

SEC. 5. *Eligibility Criteria* - To be eligible for the Program, an applicant must:

1. Be a citizen of the Republic of the Philippines.
2. Be a graduating senior or a high school graduate who graduated within the last two (2) academic years.
3. Have a General Weighted Average (GWA) or equivalent academic standing in high school that ranks them within the top one percent (1%) of the national graduating class, as certified by the Department of Education (DepEd) or the equivalent body.
4. Pass a rigorous, centralized, and non-discriminatory national qualifying examination and interview process administered by the Commission.
5. Exhibit exemplary leadership, character, and extracurricular achievement, as evidenced by application materials.
6. Be willing to enroll in a full-time undergraduate degree program at any Eligible Institution.

SEC. 6. *Scholarship Benefits* - A duly-selected Scholar shall receive the following benefits for the duration of their four-year undergraduate degree, provided they maintain the required academic performance (Section 7):

1. Full Tuition and Other School Fees: One hundred percent (100%) coverage of all mandatory tuition and miscellaneous fees.
2. Monthly Stipend: A substantial monthly allowance to cover living expenses, books, and supplies, which shall be set by the Commission and periodically adjusted for inflation.
3. Book and Materials Allowance: A one-time or annual allowance for the purchase of essential academic materials.
4. Incentive Grant: A performance incentive grant for scholars who achieve Dean's List or equivalent academic honors each semester.
5. Program Support: Participation in specialized leadership training, mentorship, and academic support programs organized by the Commission.

SEC. 7. *Maintenance of Scholarship* - To maintain the scholarship, a Scholar must:

1. Maintain a Cumulative General Weighted Average (CGWA) of at least [Insert Required Average, e.g., 2.5 on a 4.0 scale or 85%] or the equivalent grade required for Dean's List, whichever is lower, as prescribed by the Commission.
2. Enroll in and complete a minimum full-load of subjects per semester.
3. Not fail or drop any subject without a valid and approved reason from the Commission.
4. Adhere to the academic and behavioral standards of the Eligible Institution.

SEC. 8. *Administration and Oversight* - The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall be the lead agency responsible for the overall administration, monitoring, and evaluation of the Program. It shall create a Presidential Scholarship Board composed of representatives from the Office of the President, CHED, DepEd, and the academic sector to oversee the selection process and policy-making for the Program.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations* - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Commission on Higher Education.

Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued operation and maintenance of the Program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act under a separate and distinct line item for the Presidential Scholarship Merit Program.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)* - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED, in consultation with the Department of Education and other relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause*. - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause*. - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. *Effectivity*. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,