



Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City



**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 6733**

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**Introduced by Hon. Jonathan Keith T. Flores**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The State, under the 1987 Philippine Constitution, recognises education as a basic right and enshrines the policy of providing equal access to quality tertiary education for all Filipinos. In line with this, the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (RA 10931) was enacted to provide free tuition and other school fees in public state universities and colleges (SUCs) and local universities and colleges (LUCs), extend subsidies and student-loan programs, and strengthen the unified student financial assistance system for tertiary education.

However, while the law made significant strides in expanding access, persistent gaps remain. The proposed amendment to the RA 10931 passed on third reading by the 19th Congress, seeks to expand access to quality tertiary education for all Filipinos, especially for poor and academically qualified students seeking to enroll in private higher education institutions (HEIs) and private technical-vocational institutions (TVIs). The bill introduces a portable voucher system that allows eligible students to use government subsidies in private (HEIs) and (TVIs), prioritizing areas without comparable public institutions and households identified as poor under the DSWD Listahanan.

Key provisions also include revisions to the definitions of qualified students, allocation of Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) to eligible private institutions, along with the administration of the voucher program by the UniFAST Board. The value of the voucher covers tuition and miscellaneous fees, subject to periodic review, while participating private institutions must maintain retention and quality standards to maintain eligibility under the program. These reforms aim to decongest public institutions, promote equity and choice, and ensure efficient use of public funds. The UniFAST Board is also mandated to commission funding studies, promulgate rules and ensure that the subsidy levels are aligned with actual fee costs.

In conclusion, the proposed measure advances the State's commitment to universal, equitable access to quality tertiary education by expanding the scope of support to include private institutions through a voucher system, strengthening targeting of subsidies toward the poor and academically able, and reinforcing the complementary roles of public and private education providers. In view of the foregoing, the prompt approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

**JONATHAN KEITH T. FLORES**  
2nd District, Bukidnon



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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING A VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY**  
**QUALIFIED STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND**  
**PRIVATE TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE**  
**PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10931, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “UNIVERSAL**  
**ACCESS TO QUALITY TERTIARY EDUCATION ACT”**

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

**SECTION 1.** Section 3 of Republic Act No. 10931 or the “Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act” is hereby amended to read as follows:

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

xxx

*I) POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENT* REFERS TO A STUDENT WHO BELONGS TO A HOUSEHOLD RANKED AS “POOR” BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT BASED ON PROOF OF INCOME AS PRESENTED TO THE UNIFAST BOARD, AND WHO CONSISTENTLY MEETS THE ACADEMIC RETENTION REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONCERNED HEI OR TVI FOR A REGULAR UNIT LOAD;

xxx

*(L) PROOF OF INCOME* REFERS TO ANY DOCUMENTATION USED TO VERIFY, AUTHENTICATE, OR ASSESS THE ANNUAL INCOME OF A PERSON OR HOUSEHOLD;

*(M) PROPORTIONAL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION* REFERS TO A BUDGETARY ALLOCATION WHICH SHALL SUBSIDIZE THE FULL COST OF TUITION AND MISCELLANEOUS FEES IN THE FORM OF PORTABLE VOUCHERS FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS;

xxx

(Y) *VOUCHER SYSTEM* REFERS TO A SYSTEM THAT GRANTS PORTABLE VOUCHERS TO POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS PRIOR TO THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR TO ALLOW THEM TO STUDY OR TRANSFER TO PRIVATE HEIs OR PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs, AND PUBLIC TVIs.”

**SECTION 2.** Section 3 (i) and (j) are amended to be denominated as Section 3 (j) and (k) respectively. Section 3 (k) to (u) are amended to be denominated as Section 3 (n) to (x).

**SECTION 3.** Section 7 of Republic Act No. 10931 is hereby amended to read as follows:fx

“SEC. 7. *TERTIARY EDUCATION SUBSIDY (TES) for Filipino Students.* – To support the cost of tertiary education or any part or portion thereof, a TES is hereby established IN ALL SUCs, LUCs, PRIVATE HEIs AND TVIs for all Filipino students who [shall] enroll in THE FIRST undergraduate-post-secondary TERTIARY EDUCATION program[s] [of SUCs, LUCs, private HEIs and all TVIs] OF THEIR CHOICE. The TES shall be administered by the UniFAST Board and the amount necessary to fund the TES shall be included in the RESPECTIVE budgets of the CHED and the TESDA: *Provided*, That prioritization shall be given to students in the following order: (a) students who are part of households included in the UPDATED *Listahanan* [2.0] 3, LAUNCHED ON AUGUST 1, 2022 BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income; and (b) students not part of the *Listahanan* [2.0] 3, ranked according to estimated per capita household income based on [submitted documentation of] THE proof of income to be determined by the UniFAST Board: *Provided*[,] *further*, That such prioritization shall not apply to Filipino students in cities and municipalities with no existing SUC or LUC campus AND PUBLIC TVI: *PROVIDED, FINALLY*, THAT FILIPINO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS IN PRIVATE HEIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE AN SUC OR LUC EXISTS, BUT DOES NOT OFFER COMPARABLE OR EQUIVALENT DEGREE PROGRAMS, SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR TES.

TO SUPPORT THE COST OF TERTIARY EDUCATION OR ANY PART OR PORTION THEREOF, [T]he TES may, among others, [and to support the cost of tertiary education or any part or portion thereof,] cover the following:

(a) Tuition and other school fees in private HEIs, and private [or LGU-operated] TVIs, which shall be equivalent to the tuition and other school fees of the nearest SUC or state-run TVI in their respective areas;

(b) [An] [a]AllowanceS for books, SCHOOL supplies, transportation TO AND FROM SCHOOL, and [miscellaneous personal expenses including a] reasonable allowance for the documented rental or purchase of a [personal computer or laptop] DESKTOP OR PORTABLE COMPUTER, WHEN APPLICABLE [and other education-related expenses];

(c) An allowance for room and board costs TO BE incurred by the student, WHEN APPLICABLE;

(d) xxx

(e) xxx

ALL TES BENEFICIARIES SHALL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE SUCH BENEFITS OR SUBSIDY UNTIL THEY COMPLETE THEIR POST- SECONDARY TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL COURSE OR HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAM: *PROVIDED*, THAT THEY COMPLY WITH RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE HEIs AND TVIs.

**SECTION 4.** A new Section denominated as Section 7A is hereby inserted after Section 7 of Republic Act No. 10931 to read as follows:

“SEC. 7A. *VOUCHER SYSTEM FOR POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HEIs AND TVIs.* – THERE SHALL BE A PROPORTIONAL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION TO SUPPORT POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS THROUGH A PORTABLE VOUCHER SYSTEM TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE UNIFAST BOARD THAT SHALL ALLOW BENEFICIARIES TO STUDY IN PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs, AND PUBLIC TVIs.

THE ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS UNDER THE VOUCHER SYSTEM SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE UNIFAST BOARD, BASED ON REASONABLE ECONOMIC AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, NOT LATER THAN THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR AS DETERMINED BY THE CHED, AND, IN THE CASE OF TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL STUDENTS, NOT LATER THAN THE PERIOD DESIGNATED BY THE TESDA, AND PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAM OR COURSE.

STUDENTS OF PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs WHO ARE TES GRANTEES CAN NO LONGER QUALIFY FOR THE VOUCHER SYSTEM. ALL VOUCHERS ISSUED UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING POOR AND ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS WHO OPT TO STUDY IN PRIVATE HEIs AND PRIVATE TVIs IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES WHERE THERE ARE EXISTING SUCs, LUCs AND PUBLIC TVIs.”

FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND WITHIN SIXTY (60) DAYS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE UNIFAST BOARD SHALL COMMISSION A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE COST OF TUITION AND MISCELLANEOUS FEES FOR PRIVATE HEIs AND TVIs IN THE COUNTRY, WHICH SHALL BE THE NOMINAL VALUE OF THE VOUCHER UNDER THE SYSTEM. THE AMOUNT OF TUITION AND MISCELLANEOUS FEES SHALL BE REVIEWED EVERY THREE (3) YEARS TO ALLOW FOR ADJUSTMENTS DUE TO INFLATION.”

**SECTION 5.** Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall issue the rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

**SECTION 6.** Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the “Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act”, is hereby amended. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 7.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved.*