

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6867



Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is one of the country's most vulnerable to climate change. Stronger typhoons, floods, landslides, droughts, and rising seas threaten lives, homes, and livelihoods. Forest loss and shrinking green spaces weaken our natural defenses and put food, water, and energy security at risk.

Our Constitution recognizes the right to a balanced and healthful ecology and affirms the duty of each generation to protect the environment for the next. The Supreme Court has upheld this principle, emphasizing that every Filipino is a trustee and guardian of nature. Laws such as Presidential Decree 1153 and the Arbor Day Act (R.A. 10176) already make tree planting a civic duty, establishing clear responsibilities, penalties, and implementation structures through LGUs, schools, and national agencies.

Despite these efforts, deforestation and environmental degradation persist. What is needed is a simple, universal, and meaningful way to engage citizens at a formative stage in life.

This bill requires graduating senior high school and college students to plant at least two trees each. The trees may be fruit-bearing, shade, ornamental, or forest species, planted in school grounds, public lands, parks, or reforestation areas identified by LGUs and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Planting will be integrated into school programs and coordinated with Arbor Day activities, using existing mechanisms for seedlings, technical support, and maintenance.

Schools will document compliance through simple records, photos, or reports. Incentives and support will encourage participation, while reasonable exemptions ensure inclusivity for students with disabilities or other constraints.

With hundreds of thousands of students graduating each year, this requirement can result in millions of trees over time, restoring forests, protecting watersheds, greening urban areas, and reducing disaster risks. More importantly, it instills environmental stewardship in the youth, strengthens the intergenerational responsibility recognized by the Supreme Court, and transforms education into direct action for climate resilience.

The modest cost of seedlings, logistics, and technical support is far outweighed by the long-term benefits for our communities, ecosystems, and future generations.

In the Nineteenth Congress, the House of Representatives approved a similar measure on Third Reading as House Bill No. 9588 on December 12, 2023.

In view of the foregoing, **ug sa ngalan sa SERBISYONG TINUORAY**, the undersigned respectfully requests the immediate passage of this measure.


CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6867

Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP

AN ACT
REQUIRING ALL GRADUATING SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS
TO PLANT TWO (2) TREES EACH AS A CIVIC DUTY FOR ENVIRONMENT
PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION, 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 “*Graduation Legacy for Reforestation Act.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is the declared policy of the State to protect and advance the right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature. Towards this end, the State shall promote and pursue reforestation programs and encourage tree planting as a means of involving the youth in public and civic affairs.

SECTION 3. Tree Planting as a Mandatory Requisite for Graduation. — As an act of public service before they join the country’s labor force, all graduating students in senior high school and college, except physically handicapped and students with special needs, shall plant two (2) trees each as a prerequisite for graduation.

SECTION 4. Tree Planting Sites. — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the concerned local government units (LGUs) shall determine the appropriate tree planting sites within the LGU territories, in coordination with schools, colleges and universities.

SECTION 5. Preference for Indigenous Species. — The species of trees to be planted should be appropriate to the location, climate and topography of the area, with preference for the planting of indigenous species.

SECTION 6. Partner Agencies and Stakeholders and Their Responsibilities. — The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall implement the provisions of this Act, in partnership with the following agencies:

- (a) DENR;
- (b) Department of Agriculture (DA);
- (c) Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- (d) Department of Science and Technology (DOST); and
- (e) National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

The responsibilities of these agencies shall include:

- (1) Establishment of nursery and seedling preparation;
- (2) Site identification and preparation;
- (3) Technical support and extension services; and
- (4) Monitoring and evaluation.

SECTION 7. Provision of Seedlings. — The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of the DENR and the DA, in partnership with LGUs throughout the Philippines, shall maintain a seedling bank that will serve as a ready source of seedlings to be used in the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd and CHED shall, in coordination with the DENR and DILG, and in consultation with other agencies, promulgate and issue the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SECTION 9. Appropriations. — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the departments and agencies concerned. Thereafter, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The LGU concerned may set aside funds from any local revenue an amount deemed appropriate for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 10. Separability Clause. — If any portion or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. Repealing Clause. — All laws, executive orders, proclamations, rules, regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,