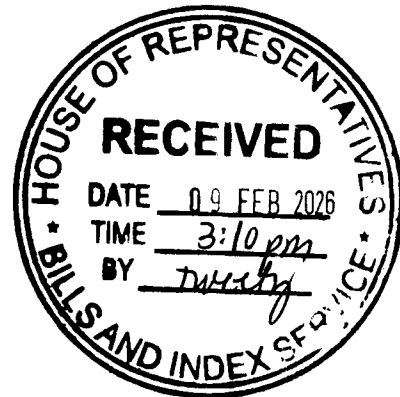




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7679

Introduced by **HON. YEVGENY VINCENTE B. EMANO**

AN ACT PROVIDING A TARGETED AND COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR THE CHILDREN AND DEPENDENTS OF FARMERS AND FISHERFOLK, HARMONIZING EXISTING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND EDUCATIONAL SUBSIDY PROGRAMS, ESTABLISHING THE FARMERS AND FISHERFOLK EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Farmers and fisherfolk remain among the most economically marginalized sectors in the country despite their indispensable role in ensuring national food security and rural stability. Persistent poverty, income volatility, climate vulnerability, and limited access to basic services continue to constrain their capacity to invest in the education and future of their children. These structural challenges necessitate a more deliberate, coordinated, and sector-responsive form of social protection that directly addresses intergenerational poverty within farming and fishing communities.

While the State has instituted several social protection and educational subsidy programs—such as conditional cash transfers, tertiary education assistance, and skills development initiatives—these programs are often fragmented and insufficiently tailored to the specific realities of farmers' and fisherfolk households. As a result, many qualified beneficiaries either fall through coverage gaps or receive assistance that does not adequately respond to their educational needs. This measure seeks to address these deficiencies by establishing a targeted and complementary educational assistance program that harmonizes existing interventions, maximizes public resources, and strengthens accountability while ensuring that no eligible child of a farmer or fisherfolk is left behind.

This proposed measure is firmly anchored on the constitutional mandate of the State to promote social justice and human development. The Constitution recognizes the vital role of farmers and

fisherfolk in national development and obliges the State to protect their welfare, enhance their quality of life, and provide equitable access to opportunities, including education. It likewise affirms education as a primary tool for social mobility and poverty reduction and directs the State to make quality education accessible to all. By framing educational assistance as a form of social protection and human capital investment, this bill reinforces the State's duty to address inequality at its roots.

Consistent with the development agenda espoused by Cong. Yevgeny Emano, this measure advances inclusive and sustainable rural development by investing in the next generation of farmers' and fisherfolk families. Education-enabled children are better positioned to contribute to agricultural modernization, community resilience, and local economic growth, whether within or beyond the agricultural sector. Ultimately, strengthening educational access for these sectors not only uplifts individual families but also reinforces food security, social equity, and long-term national development.

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


BAMBI B. EMANO
2ND DISTRICT, MISAMIS ORIENTAL 



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EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

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 “Educational Assistance for Children and Dependents of Farmers and Fisherfolk Act.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to promote social justice and inclusive human development by ensuring that vulnerable and marginalized sectors, particularly farmers and fisherfolk, are adequately supported through integrated social protection programs. The State recognizes that education is a primary instrument for poverty reduction, rural development, and social mobility.

Consistent with the State’s social protection framework, this Act shall complement and harmonize existing conditional cash transfer, scholarship, and skills training programs to ensure that the children and dependents of farmers and fisherfolk are not excluded, duplicated, or disadvantaged in the delivery of educational assistance.

SECTION 3. *Legal Basis.* -

This Act is grounded on the following provisions of the 1987 Philippine Constitution:

- (a) Article II, Section 9 – on the promotion of a just and dynamic social order and freedom from poverty;
- (b) Article II, Section 10 – on the promotion of social justice in all phases of national development;

- (c) Article XIII, Section 1 – on the reduction of social, economic, and political inequalities;
- (d) Article XIII, Section 4 – on the provision of support services to farmers and farmworkers;
- (e) Article XIII, Section 7 – on the protection and support of subsistence fisherfolk; and
- (f) Article XIV, Section 1 – on the protection and promotion of the right to quality education at all levels.

SECTION 4. *Definition of Terms.* -

- (a) Farmers refer to individuals directly engaged in agricultural production, including small-scale farmers, tenant farmers, and farmworkers;
- (b) Fisherfolk refer to individuals directly engaged in fishing and fisheries-related activities, including subsistence and small-scale fishers;
- (c) Children and Dependents refer to legitimate, illegitimate, adopted children, or legal dependents who rely primarily on farmers or fisherfolk for support;
- (d) Educational Assistance refers to financial or material support provided under this Act that is complementary to existing national programs.

SECTION 5. *Farmers and Fisherfolk's Beneficiaries Educational Assistance Program (FFBEAP).*-

There is hereby established the Farmers and Fisherfolk's Beneficiaries Educational Assistance Program (FFBEAP), which shall serve as a targeted and complementary educational support mechanism for qualified beneficiaries.

The FFBEAP shall not duplicate benefits already provided under existing laws and programs, but shall fill identified gaps in coverage, adequacy, or accessibility affecting the children and dependents of farmers and fisherfolk.

SECTION 6. *Harmonization with Existing Programs.*-

- (a) Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). – Beneficiaries who are covered under the 4Ps shall continue to receive conditional cash grants. Educational assistance under this Act may be provided only to the extent that existing 4Ps education grants are insufficient, subject to guidelines issued by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).
- (b) Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST). – For tertiary-level beneficiaries, assistance under this Act shall be aligned with the UniFAST law and programs, and shall be limited to support not otherwise covered by free tuition, scholarships, or grants-in-aid administered through UniFAST.
- (c) TESDA Tulong Trabaho and Skills Training Programs. – For technical-vocational education, this Act shall complement existing TESDA programs by providing ancillary support such as allowances, learning materials, transportation, or assessment fees, where such costs are not already subsidized.

SECTION 7. *Coverage and Benefits.*- The Program shall cover beneficiaries enrolled in basic education, technical-vocational education, and higher education. Benefits may include tuition and school fees, allowances, learning materials, transportation or connectivity support, and other assistance necessary to ensure educational participation and completion, subject to harmonization rules.

SECTION. 8. *Targeting and Prioritization* .- Priority shall be given to children and dependents of small-scale, subsistence, and marginalized farmers and fisherfolk, including those residing in rural, coastal, and geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. Targeting shall be aligned

with the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR).

SECTION. 9. *Implementing Agencies.*- The Program shall be jointly implemented by the DSWD, DepEd, CHED, and TESDA, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. Local government units shall assist in beneficiary identification and monitoring.

SECTION. 10. *Appropriations.*- The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued operation, maintenance, and expansion shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SECTION. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*- Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the concerned agencies shall jointly issue the implementing rules and regulations, ensuring harmonization with existing social protection and educational assistance laws.

SECTION. 12. *Separability Clause.*- If any part or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION. 13. *Repealing Clause.*- All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION. 14. *Effectivity.*- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,