

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8120



Introduced by Rep. Paolo Henry M. Marcoleta

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution expressly mandates the State to make quality education accessible to all at all levels¹. Republic Act No. 11861, or the *Expanded Solo Parents' Welfare Act*, significantly strengthened social protection for solo parents and their families, however, its provisions on educational benefits remain largely priority-based and discretionary, providing a full scholarship to only one (1) child and prioritization for other children under existing assistance programs.

This measure addresses a continuing policy gap by institutionalizing guaranteed educational support across the full education cycle for children of solo parents, from basic education to tertiary education where financial vulnerability is most acutely felt.

This measure (a) anchors free tertiary education in public higher educational institutions on the existing framework of Republic Act No. 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, thereby ensuring access without creating a new funding mechanism or duplicating existing programs; (b) provides reasonable and proportionate tuition discounts in private educational institutions through discount grants in private elementary and secondary schools together with enhanced discounts at the tertiary level, consistent with long-standing social legislation that recognizes education as imbued with public interest; and (c) transforms priority-based assistance into enforceable statutory entitlements, ensuring that children of solo parents are not excluded from education due to financial constraints at critical stages of learning.

¹1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Art. XIV, Sec. 1: "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."

By amending the Expanded Solo Parents' Welfare Act, this measure reinforces the State's commitment to social justice and inclusive growth while maintaining fiscal prudence and respecting the regulatory framework governing private educational institutions.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PHM', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

PAOLO HENRY M. MARCOLETA
Representative, SAGIP Party-List

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AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF SOLO PARENTS BY PROVIDING FREE TERTIARY EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND MANDATORY TUITION DISCOUNTS IN PRIVATE BASIC AND HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8972, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11861 OR THE EXPANDED SOLO PARENTS' WELFARE ACT

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Solo Parent*
2 *Children’s Education Support Act*”.

3
4 **Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to:

- 5 a. Ensure access to quality education at all levels as mandated by Article
6 XIV of the 1987 Constitution;
- 7 b. Provide enhanced and sustained social protection to solo parents and
8 their dependent children as a recognized vulnerable sector under the
9 law;
- 10 c. Promote intergenerational social mobility by reducing the financial
11 barriers to basic and tertiary education for children of solo parents; and
12 d. Harmonize educational assistance for solo parent families with existing
13 education and social welfare laws.

14
15 **Sec. 3. Amendment to Republic Act No. 8972,** as amended by Republic
16 Act No. 11861. Republic Act No. 8972, as amended by Republic Act No. 11861,
17 is hereby further amended by inserting a new section after Section 9, to read as
18 follows:

19
20 “SEC. 9-A. Educational Benefits for Dependent Children of Solo Parents.
21 —

22 (a) **Tuition Discounts in Private Elementary and Secondary**
23 **Educational Institutions.** Dependent children of duly registered solo
24 parents who are enrolled in private elementary and secondary
25 educational institutions, including junior high school and senior high
26 school, shall be entitled to a twenty percent (20%) discount on tuition
27 and other mandatory school fees.

28 (b) **Tuition Discounts in Private Higher Educational Institutions.**
29 Dependent children of solo parents enrolled in private higher
30 educational institutions shall be entitled to a fifty percent (50%)
31 discount on tuition and other mandatory school fees.

32 (c) **Free Tertiary Education in Public Higher Educational Institutions.**
33 All dependent children of solo parents shall be entitled to free tuition
34 and other mandatory school fees when enrolled in State Universities
35 and Colleges (SUCs), Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs), and
36 other public higher educational institutions, in accordance with
37 Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the Universal Access to
38 Quality Tertiary Education Act.

39 (d) **Application and Non-Exclusivity of Benefits.** The discounts and
40 benefits provided under this section shall:

- 41 1. Apply only to tuition and other mandatory school fees;
42 2. Be applied after all applicable scholarships, grants, or subsidies; and
43 3. Be availed of without prejudice to other education assistance
44 programs under existing laws.

45 (e) **Eligibility Requirements.** To qualify for the benefits under this
46 section, the dependent child must:

- 47 1. Be a dependent child as defined under this Act;
48 2. Present a valid Solo Parent Identification Card; and
49 3. Comply with the admission, retention, and academic policies of the
50 educational institution concerned.

51 (f) **Implementing Agencies.** The Department of Education (DepEd), the
52 Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Unified Student
53 Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST), and
54 the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall
55 jointly promulgate the implementing rules and regulations within ninety
56 (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.”**

57
58 **Sec. 4. Appropriations.** — The amounts necessary to implement this Act
59 shall be included in the annual General Appropriation Act. Free tertiary education
60 benefits shall be integrated into existing appropriations under Republic Act No.
61 10931.

62
63 **Sec. 5.** Separability Clause. – If for any reason, any section or provision of
64 this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining sections or
65 provisions hereof shall not be affected and shall thereby remain in full force and
66 effect.

67
68 **Sec. 6.** Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules, or
69 regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified
70 accordingly.

71
72 **Sec. 7.** Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
73 after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national
74 newspapers of general circulation.

75
76 Approved,