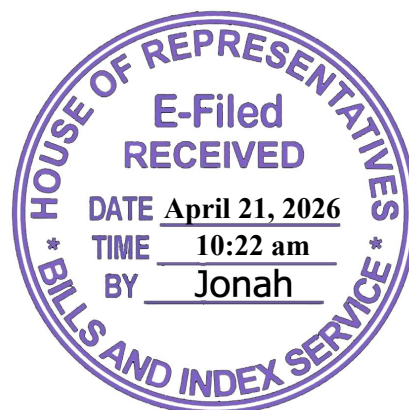




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8908



Introduced by Representatives Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Yedda Marie K. Romualdez, Andrew Julian K. Romualdez, and Jude A. Acidre

AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10533, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
THE ENHANCED BASIC EDUCATION ACT OF 2013, FOR THE
INTEGRATION OF AN AGRICULTURAL STRAND IN THE
ACADEMIC TRACK OF THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 1, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education and to establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education responsive to the needs of national development. As agriculture remains a cornerstone of the Philippine economy and a critical pillar of national food security, the basic education curriculum must be responsive to the long-term sustainability and modernization of this sector.

Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, established the K-12 program in the Philippines, mandating one year of kindergarten, six years of elementary, and six years of secondary education. It aimed to make education learner-oriented, globally competitive, and flexible through reforms to specialized tracks in senior high school. The current K to 12 Program provides two (2) years of Senior High School (SHS) to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills to become lifelong learners and to

prepare graduates for tertiary education, middle-level skills development, employment, and entrepreneurship. While the existing SHS curriculum offers Agri-Fishery Arts and related specializations (i.e., Aquaculture) under the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track, these programs are primarily structured for skills certification and immediate employability. They do not provide a dedicated academic preparatory pathway for students who intend to pursue higher education, research, innovation, agribusiness development, agricultural economics, food systems management, and agricultural policy.

The absence of an Agricultural Strand under the Academic Track creates a structural gap in the curriculum. Students who aspire to become agricultural scientists, researchers, farm technologists, agribusiness leaders, or public sector experts in food security are compelled to enroll in general strands such as Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) or Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM), which do not provide focused foundational exposure to agricultural systems, rural development, climate-resilient farming, and agri-innovation.

This bill seeks to institutionalize and promote agriculture as a viable academic pathway for SHS students by integrating an Agricultural Strand under the Academic Track. It aligns with the State policy to sustain and provide support to the agricultural industry through appropriate technology, research, adequate financial and production support systems, and comprehensive education and training. By strengthening agricultural education at the secondary level, the State develops a sustained pipeline of future professionals capable of modernizing the sector and ensuring intergenerational continuity.

The Philippine agricultural sector continues to face structural challenges, including an aging farmer population, declining youth participation, productivity constraints, and increasing pressures on food security. Elevating agriculture to the Academic Track recognizes it not merely as a vocational occupation but as a science-based, innovation-driven, and strategically vital discipline essential to national survival and economic resilience.

In the long term, this measure contributes to national food security and rural economic development by cultivating a new generation of agriculturists,

researchers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers equipped with both theoretical foundations and strategic competencies.

This measure has been filed since the 18th Congress and remained pending with the Committee on Basic Education and Culture during the 19th Congress.

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



FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ



YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ



ANDREW JULIAN K. ROMUALDEZ



JUDE A. ACIDRE



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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 “*Senior High School Agricultural Strand Act.*”

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to sustain and provide support to the agricultural industry through the provision of appropriate technology and research; adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services; and, comprehensive education and training to agriculturalists, their families, and other interested individuals to enable them to utilize resources to their full potential and enable them to participate in the planning, organization, and management of the programs affecting them.

It is the policy of the state to ensure food security for the country through the modernization of agricultural systems, the creation and improvement of agricultural educational institutions, and the encouragement of youth to engage, sustain, and develop the agricultural industry.

To this end, the State shall integrate an Agricultural Strand under the Academic Track of the Senior High School curriculum in all educational institutions.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act:

- (a) *Agricultural Strand* – refers to the basic course subjects in the field of agriculture.
- (b) *Academic Track* – refers to one of the fields in the curricula of Senior High School level preparatory to earning a degree in college.

Section 4. *Amendment.* – Section 6 of Republic Act No. 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 6. Curriculum Consultative Committee. – There shall be created a curriculum consultative committee chaired by the DepEd Secretary or his/her duly authorized representative and with members composed of, but not limited to, a representative each from the CHED, the TESDA, the DOLE, **THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**, the PRC, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and a representative from the business chambers such as the Information Technology–Business Process Outsourcing (IT-BPO) industry association. The consultative committee shall oversee the review and evaluation on the

implementation of the basic education curriculum and may recommend to the DepEd the formulation of necessary refinements in the curriculum.

THE DEPARTMENT AND THE COMMITTEE SHALL GIVE PRIORITY TO AGRICULTURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM. TO THIS END, THERE SHALL BE AN AGRICULTURAL STRAND INTEGRATED UNDER THE ACADEMIC TRACK IN THE CURRICULA OF THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN ALL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. FUTURE AMENDMENTS OF THE CURRICULA MUST INCLUDE AN AGRICULTURAL STRAND.”

Section 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the date of effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd) shall formulate and design the agricultural strand subjects, modules, and other necessary details to implement this Act.

Section 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be appropriated from the budget of the DepEd. Subsequently, the appropriations shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 7. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, rules, and regulations inconsistent with any provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Section 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,