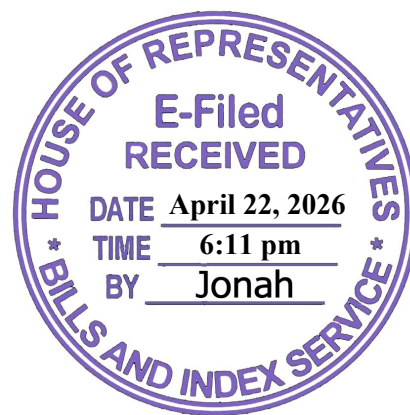


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8958**



Introduced by Representative ERIC G. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to provide full educational scholarship to the children and dependents of farmers and fisherfolks, ensuring their access to quality education from basic education up to the completion of tertiary level, while establishing a dedicated fund to support this program and promote inclusive and equitable development in the agricultural sector.

Farmers and fisherfolks remain among the most economically vulnerable sectors in the country, despite their indispensable role in ensuring food security and sustaining the national economy. Limited access to education continues to hinder opportunities for their families, perpetuating cycles of poverty and limiting social mobility.

This measure grants comprehensive scholarship benefits covering tuition and other school fees, as well as essential support such as board and lodging, transportation, allowances for books, clothing, and food. It ensures that financial constraints will not prevent qualified beneficiaries from pursuing and completing their education, whether in public or private institutions.

To guarantee the sustainability of the program, the bill establishes the "Educational Benefits for Farmers and Fisherfolks Fund," with an initial allocation of Fifty Million Pesos (₱50,000,000.00), to be used exclusively for the implementation of the scholarship program.

The measure designates the UniFAST Governing Board, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and representatives from the sector, to administer and manage the fund, as well as to formulate the necessary guidelines to ensure efficient and transparent implementation.

This proposed legislation strengthens the State's policy of promoting social justice, improving access to education, and uplifting the living conditions of farmers and fisherfolks. It recognizes that education is a powerful tool in breaking the cycle of poverty and in building a more resilient and productive agricultural sector.

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



HON. ERIC G. YAP

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **8958**

Introduced by Representative ERIC G. YAP

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP OF CHILDREN AND DEPENDENTS
OF FARMERS AND FISHERFOLKS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “*Children and Dependents of Farmers and Fisherfolks Scholarship Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Full scholarship for Children and Dependents of Farmers.* – Children and dependents of farmers listed in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) shall be entitled to full scholarship from basic education until their completion of tertiary education, subject to rules and regulations as mandated by this Act. The benefits shall include all expenses for education, whether in public or private school, such as but not limited to tuition fees, miscellaneous and other fees, board and lodging, transportation expenses, allowances for books, clothing, food and other similar expenses.

SEC. 3. *Special Fund for Educational Benefits.* – There is hereby established a Special Fund, to be known as the “*Educational Benefits for Farmers and Fisherfolks Fund*”, hereinafter referred to as the “*Fund*”, in the amount of Fifty million pesos (P50,000,000.00). Such fund shall be perpetually maintained and shall be used exclusively to provide educational benefits to the children and dependents of farmers and fisherfolk; *Provided*, That not more than five percent (5%) of the Fund shall be allocated for administrative expenses related to the implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Administration of the Fund.* – The Unified Student Financial Assistance for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Governing Board, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture (DA), and three (3) representatives from the farmers and fisherfolks selected from a verified procedure of selection as agreed upon by the farmers and fisherfolks, shall have the primary responsibility of managing and supervising the Fund. It shall also be responsible in formulating the mechanics,

scope and limitations, and requirements for the scholarship program. The UniFAST Secretariat shall serve as the Secretariat providing administrative support to the Board and shall perform functions as authorized by the UniFAST Board.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the UniFAST Board, in consultation with the DA, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to, or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,