

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **11024**



Introduced by Representative LEILA M. DE LIMA

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING STANDARDS FOR RELATED LEARNING EXPERIENCES (RLE) IN NURSING EDUCATION, PROHIBITING THE COLLECTION OF RLE FEES FROM NURSING STUDENTS IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCs) AND LOCAL UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (LUCs), AND PROVIDING FUNDING SUPPORT THROUGH THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHED)

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Under the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 14, Series of 2009, students of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program are mandated to complete at least 46 units or 2,346 hours of Related Learning Experiences (RLE), which may be extended until expected competencies are satisfactorily achieved. RLE are integral to nursing education as teaching-learning opportunities designed to develop the competencies of nursing students utilizing the nursing process in varying health situations. Through RLE, Filipino nursing students are provided with hands-on clinical training and essential exposure to real-world healthcare settings.

However, despite the existence of Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (UAQTE), that provides for free tuition and institutional fees in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) and Tertiary Education Subsidies (TES) in private higher education institutions (HEIs), RLE impose substantial financial burdens on nursing students through various fees, including affiliation charges, hospital training fees, transportation expenses, and allowances for clinical instructors. These RLE fees and related expenses, which are mostly shouldered by the nursing students themselves, range from P20,000 to P80,000 per year,¹ thus creating significant barriers and placing underprivileged nursing students at a disadvantage.

¹ Bonzo, L.T. (26 May 2026). CHED rolls out financial aid for 19,000 healthcare students. GMA News. Retrieved from <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/989023/ched-rolls-out-financial-aid-for-19-000-healthcare-students/story/>.

In recognition of the noble contribution and significant role of nurses to the country's healthcare sector, and in fulfilling the State's mandate to make quality education accessible to all citizens, this bill seeks to institutionalize the non-collection of RLE fees from students in SUCs and LUCs. Under this bill, all RLE-related expenses shall be considered part of the tuition or institutional costs charged to the government through the Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST). As such, this bill mandates that all SUCs and LUCs offering nursing programs submit projected RLE expenses to CHED for funding through the UniFAST or other designated CHED mechanisms. For nursing students enrolled in accredited private HEIs, this bill also expands eligibility for the TES program to cover RLE fees.

In the 20th Congress, similar bills were filed by Representatives Walfredo "Arman" Dimaguila, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Antolin Oreta III, and Javier Benitez in the House of Representatives, and Senator Bam Aquino in the Senate. This bill fully adopts Senator Bam Aquino's Senate Bill No. 123.

In view of the foregoing, early approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


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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 “Libreng RLE Act.”
2

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to protect
4 and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and to take
5 appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all, pursuant to Article XIV,
6 Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Consistent with this mandate, and
7 recognizing the crucial role of Related Learning Experiences (RLE) in nursing
8 education, the State shall institutionalize standards for RLE and ensure that no
9 additional financial burden shall be imposed on nursing students in the country for the
10 conduct of such activities.
11

12 SEC. 3. *Coverage.* – This Act shall apply to:
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14 (a) All SUCs and LUCs offering nursing education programs duly recognized
15 by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);

16 (b) All private higher education institutions (HEIs) with nursing programs
17 recognized by CHED; and

18 (c) All nursing students enrolled in recognized nursing education programs in
19 the Philippines.

20
21 SEC. 4. *Standards for Related Learning Experiences (RLE)*. – CHED shall
22 institutionalize and enforce standards for the conduct of RLEs. These standards shall
23 guarantee the provision of quality clinical instruction and learning environments,
24 adequate clinical partnerships, and competent supervision of nursing students.

25
26 SEC. 5. *Prohibition on Collection of RLE Fees in SUCs and LUCs*. – No SUC
27 or LUC shall impose or collect any fee, charge, or assessment from nursing students
28 for the conduct of RLEs that are part of their approved academic program. All RLE-
29 related expenses shall be considered part of the tuition or institutional costs charged
30 to the government through the Unified Student Financial Assistance System for
31 Tertiary Education (UniFAST).

32
33 SEC. 6. *Budgeting and Funding of RLE in SUCs and LUCs*. – All SUCs and
34 LUCs offering nursing programs shall submit projected RLE expenses to CHED
35 annually. CHED shall evaluate and consolidate these for inclusion in its annual budget
36 proposal to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). Approved funding
37 shall be disbursed to SUCs and LUCs through UniFAST or other designated CHED
38 mechanisms.

39
40 SEC. 7. *Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) for Nursing Students in Private HEIs*.
41 – Nursing students enrolled in accredited private HEIs may apply for assistance for
42 RLE-related expenses under the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) program pursuant
43 to Republic Act No. 10931. TES guidelines shall be updated to include RLE fees as
44 allowable costs.

45
46 SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*. – Within ninety (90) days from
47 the effectivity of this Act, CHED, in coordination with DBM and UniFAST, shall
48 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions
49 of this Act.

50
51 SEC. 9. *Appropriations*. – The amounts necessary to implement the provisions
52 of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) under the
53 CHED budget and UniFAST Fund.

54
55 SEC. 10. *Separability Clause*. – If any section or provision of this Act is declared
56 invalid or unconstitutional, the sections or provisions not affected thereby shall
57 continue to be in full force and effect.

58
59 SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause*. – All laws, presidential decrees, executive and
60 administrative orders, letters of instruction, rules and regulations, or parts thereof
61 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended
62 accordingly.

64 SEC. 12. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
65 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the
66 Philippines.

Approved,