



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 8477

BY REPRESENTATIVES ACIDRE, SUANSING (M.A.), RECTO, MARCOS, DY (F.), CRUZ (A.), PLEYTO, ESCUDERO, OLIVAREZ, ROMUALDEZ (F.M.), ROMUALDEZ (Y.M.), ROMUALDEZ (A.J.), VILLAFUERTE (M.L.), VILLAFUERTE (V.R.L.), HORIBATA, RIDON, MONTES, ATAYDE, ZUBIRI, BAUTISTA (J.M.), RODRIGUEZ (E.), GATO, AMANTE, CAGAS, GALANG, ALANO, YNARES, SOLON, GATCHALIAN, HERNANDEZ (F.), CRUZADO, LOPEZ, UY (D.C.), GARIN, ORTEGA, KHONGHUN, DEFENSOR, BARONDA, DIONISIO, PANALIGAN, GONZALES (A.M.), GUINTU, ACOSTA, TEVES, GUTIERREZ, DAGOOC, BONDOC, TAN (K.M.), LAGDAMEO (M.Y.M.), MOMO, ALVAREZ (J.), ALVAREZ (M.), RODRIGUEZ (R.), TAN (J.), CORVERA, HERNANDEZ (C.A.), DIMAPORO (I.), GONZALES (A.), PANCHO, ORDANES, ARROGANCIA, GO, YAP (C.), MATUGAS, AQUINO-MAGSAYSAY, BAUTISTA-LIM, BELTRAN, CRUZ (R.), LAGDAMEO (J.M.), ODUCCADO, VALERIANO, CENIZA, YU (J.K.), GONZALES (R.), TUAN, LABADLABAD, YAP (A.), GONZALES (C.S.), DIOKNO, MARCOLETA, DIMAGUILA, MERCADO-REVILLA, SALVAME, TAN (S.J.), SINGSON-MEEHAN, SAKALURAN, ZAMORA (Y.M.), RAMA, CO-PILAR, EMANO, ESPINA, FLORES, TIANGCO, LOYOLA, CHUA-TAI, HERNANDEZ (R.), ADIONG, TUPAS, ROMUALDO, BERNOS (C.), BERNOS (J.), PUNO AND FORTES

AN ACT

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PRESIDENTIAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM,
INTEGRATING THE *BAGONG PILIPINAS* MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
INTO A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT TOP-PERFORMING
STUDENTS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

*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 “Presidential
2 Merit Scholarship Act”.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the declared policy of the State to protect
5 and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take
6 appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. The Commission on
7 Higher Education (CHED) is also mandated to develop accessible and equitable
8 educational assistance programs for deserving yet financially challenged Filipino
9 students in order to complete and earn a college degree.

10
11 To this end, the State shall establish a Presidential Merit Scholarship Program
12 that will support top-performing Filipino Senior High School graduates who qualified
13 and enrolled in CHED-identified priority programs to earn a college degree and
14 contribute to the country’s workforce and national development.

15
16 **SEC. 3. Objectives.** – The Presidential Merit Scholarship Program shall have
17 the following objectives:

- 18 (a) To provide educational support to academically talented Senior High School
19 graduates from families in need of financial assistance;
- 20 (b) To produce a highly competitive and skilled workforce that will address hard-to-
21 fill occupations; and
- 22 (c) To complement existing government scholarship programs by covering
23 academically exceptional students.

24
25 **SEC. 4. Institutionalization of the Presidential Merit Scholarship Program.**
26 – The Presidential Merit Scholarship Program is hereby institutionalized, hereinafter
27 referred to as the PMSP, to be implemented by the CHED.

28 **SEC. 5. Coverage and Eligibility of the PMSP.** – The PMSP shall be open to:

- 29 (a) Filipino citizens or dual citizens residing in the Philippines who will take an oath
30 of allegiance to the Philippines upon the age of majority;
- 31 (b) Top-performing senior high school graduates from public and private schools
32 who belong to the top one percent (1%) of their class;
- 33 (c) Top-performing senior high school graduates who passed the admission
34 requirements to a CHED-identified priority program offered by State
35 Universities and Colleges (SUC) or Local University and Colleges (LUC) with
36 Certificate of Program Compliance or Private Higher Education Institutions
37 (PHEI) with Government Recognition: *Provided*, That priority will be given to
38 applicants who obtained admission to CHED-identified priority programs
39 offered by Level 3 or 4 SUC, LUC or PHEI with autonomous or deregulated
40 status;
- 41 (d) Top-performing senior high school graduates belonging to a family with a
42 combined total annual household income of not more than PhP2,000,000.00:
43 *Provided*, That the CHED, in coordination with relevant government agencies
44 and as reflected in its issued guidelines, will have the authority to
45 periodically adjust the household income limit in consideration of the normative
46 cost of education and inflation;

1 The CHED may determine other eligibility requirements as provided in
2 its guidelines: *Provided*, That these will not be in contradiction with any of the
3 existing provisions of the Act.
4

5 **SEC. 6. Grounds for Disqualification of Applicants.** – An applicant shall
6 be disqualified from the application due to the following:
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- 8 (a) Submission of false or fraudulent documents during the application process;
- 9
- 10 (b) Failure to meet the minimum eligibility requirements; and
- 11
- 12 (c) Other eligibility requirements as determined by CHED.
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14 **SEC. 7. Scholarship Benefits.** – The educational assistance for the PMSP
15 scholar, which shall be administered by the CHED, shall cover any of the following:
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- 17 (a) Tuition subsidy: *Provided*, That for SUC and LUC, tuition and other school
18 fees and 13 identified miscellaneous fees will be covered under Republic
19 Act No. 10931 or the “Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act”;
- 20
- 21 (b) Stipend;
- 22
- 23 (c) Other education-related allowances, subject to availability of funds;
- 24
- 25 (d) Certificate of Presidential Recognition signed by the President of the
26 Republic of the Philippines, attesting to the scholar’s exemplary academic
27 achievement.
28

29 The CHED is authorized to determine the amount for education assistance
30 based on its issued guidelines: *Provided*, That the amount shall be adjusted
31 periodically by the CHED and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to
32 account for the normative cost of education and inflation.
33

34 **SEC. 8. Retention and Accountability.** – *The PMSP scholars shall:*
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- 36 (a) Maintain a minimum grade point average as prescribed by CHED; and
- 37
- 38 (b) Complete the program within the prescribed timeframe.
- 39

40 **SEC. 9. Grounds for the Termination of Scholarship.** – The following are
41 grounds for termination of scholarship:
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- 43 (a) Obtaining multiple scholarship or grants, whether public or private, and
44 concurrently receiving the full benefits of multiple scholarships or grants;
- 45
- 46 (b) Failure to maintain academic performance required by the CHED, including
47 Absence Without Official Leave, abandonment, dropping out or shifting from
48 another degree program or transfer to another delivering higher education
49 institution;
- 50
- 51 (c) Gross misconduct in a manner that would bring significant damage to the
52 SUC, LUC, or PHEI concerned or to the community as a whole; and
- 53 (d) Other grounds determined by the CHED.

PMSP scholars who are terminated for reasons outside of *force majeure*, or as determined by the CHED, shall be required to return the educational benefits received from the scholarship in full or staggered payment.

SEC. 10. Extension Service. – In order to cultivate civic responsibility and nation-building, PMSP scholars shall be encouraged to engage and participate in extension service of its university for the duration of scholarship.

SEC. 11. Advocating for Bayanihan and Nationalism. – To fulfill the intent of this Act, PMSP scholars shall not be eligible for foreign employment until fulfillment of in-country employment proportional to the years of educational support received from the government.

SEC. 12. Administration and Monitoring. – The CHED shall create a Presidential Merit Scholarship Unit under the Office of Student Development and Services responsible for program administration, monitoring, and evaluation. The Secretariat shall maintain a national registry of scholars, ensure timely disbursement of benefits, and submit an annual report to the Office of the President and to Congress on the implementation, performance, and impact of the program.

SEC. 13. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of CHED. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 14. Transitory Provision. – Upon the effectivity of this Act, current scholars under the *Bagong Pilipinas* Merit Scholarship Program (BPMSP) of the CHED shall be deemed eligible to avail of the benefits under this Act and shall continue to enjoy their scholarship benefits until completion of degree, subject to the prevailing rules, regulations, and guidelines in force at the time of the grant of the scholarship: *Provided*, That no beneficiary shall receive duplicative scholarship benefit under both programs for the same period.

SEC. 15. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall, in coordination with relevant government agencies including the Department of Education, DBM, National Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Immigration, and Department of Labor and Employment, issue rules and regulations to fully implement the provisions of this Act: *Provided*, That the absence of the implementing rules and regulations shall not affect the effectivity of this Act and the grant of benefits provided therein.

SEC. 16. Separability Clause. – If any part or provisions of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 17. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, and rules and regulations, or any parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act shall be revoked, repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 18. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,