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THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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SENATE

S. No. 525

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines provides that the State shall establish and maintain a system of scholarship grants, student loan programs, subsidize and other incentives which shall be available to deserving students in both public and private schools, especially to the underprivileged. (Sec. 2 (3), Art. XIV)

It will be noted that there are existing scholarship programs for the specially gifted students; a study grant for members of the National Cultural Communities, and the study-now-pay-later plan for deserving but poor students. However, such programs provide only limited slots.

To date, there is no ambitious government program that takes care of the mass of secondary level graduates who want to pursue higher education but fail to do so due to poverty or financial difficulties.

For this reason, this bill on student financial assistance program is being conceived and proposed to provide educational assistance to secondary graduates who, because of poverty or financial difficulties, could not pursue higher education. This educational assistance program is designated for students of financially disadvantaged families and is intended more as an economic aid rather than a merit award.

The proposed bill, which is supportive of the Constitutional mandate, appropriates a sum of P350,000,000 to initially underwrite the educational cost of an estimated thirty-five thousand (35,000) students under this student financial assistance program.

In view of the foregoing, the early approval off this bill is requested.


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR
STUDENTS OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED FAMILIES AND
AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE**

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

SECTION. 1. There shall be established a student financial assistance program in the collegiate level for poor but deserving students to be administered by an appropriate body to be determined, by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS).

SEC. 2. The term "economically disadvantaged but deserving students" who are qualified under this program shall mean those students of underprivileged families falling below the poverty line as determined by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) who have the ability to continue and finish a degree course.

SEC. 3. The beneficiaries under this program shall be entitled to a reasonable monthly stipend depending on costs of living in a particular educational institution, free tuition, book allowance and other miscellaneous fees to be determined by the administering agency:

SEC. 4. The sum of Three Hundred Fifty Million Pesos (P350,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated initially out of the funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated to finance this program. Such other amounts as may be necessary to continue the program shall be sourced in succeeding budgetary appropriations.

SEC. 5. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) is hereby authorized to formulate the rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SEC. 6. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,