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SENATE  
S.B. 1282

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BY: *ju*

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Introduced by Senator Poe

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*Explanatory Note*

Fifty fifty (55) years old, that is the average age of the Filipino farmer today --- one of the findings reached in a study conducted by the Central Mindanao University (CMU). The conclusion is similar to a report of the Congressional Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries almost ten years ago. This is alarming considering that agriculture is considered the lynchpin of Philippine economy, with about 70% of our rural population dependent on agriculture, and most of them poor or subsistence farmers.

The high average age of the country's farming population shows that the Filipino youth are eschewing the idea of tilling the soil as a profession or business undertaking. Much of the younger generation today shun farming because of its perceived hardships, and many farming families are part of the country's poor sector. Recent statistics indicated that there has been a steady decline in the enrolment of students in the agriculture, fisheries and related courses, and the perceived low employment opportunities after graduation from these courses by both students and parents, is making the situation worse. If this scenario will continue unabated, it will eventually redound to the limited human resource capital that is badly needed to develop the agriculture sector, in the long term.

The proposed legislation is aimed at providing opportunities for high school graduates to pursue careers in agriculture management and agri-entrepreneurships. It also establishes a comprehensive scholarship program focused on agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related courses to be called the "Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura at Kabuhayan Program."

Opportunities in agriculture have to be created and made more lucrative to attract more young individuals to enroll in agriculture courses. Similarly, agriculture education policies and curricular programs have to be tilted to produce graduates who are not simply job-seekers but will become agri-business managers and entrepreneurs who will eventually generate employment for their *kababayans*. Likewise, a sustained food security policy is harnessed in the process.

*Grace Poe*  
GRACE POE



SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE PHILIPPINES

First Regular Session

13 AUG 14 P4:10

RECEIVED BY: *[Signature]*

SENATE  
S.B. 1282

Introduced by Senator Poe

AN ACT  
TO ENCOURAGE YOUTH SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURE,  
ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA  
AT KABUHAYAN PROGRAM', AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

**SECTION 1. Title** - This Act shall be known as the "Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura at Kabuhayan Act of 2013".

**SECTION 2. Statement of Policy** – The State shall give priority to education, science and technology to accelerate social progress, and promote development. Towards this end, the government shall provide opportunities for all to obtain quality education and for this purpose, scholarships in Agriculture, Agri-Entrepreneurship, Forestry and Fisheries are hereby strengthened. It is also the policy of the State to develop graduates who will become competent agribusiness managers and entrepreneurs.

**SECTION 3. Objectives** – The following are the objectives of this Act:

1. Develop competency skills and knowledge of students in agricultural technologies and agribusiness;
2. Provide opportunities to poor but deserving students to realize their potentials in agribusiness and entrepreneurships;
3. Increase food production utilizing idle lands of state universities and colleges (SUCs);
4. Commercialize proven viable technologies to increase food production and income of rural communities through the development of livelihoods and markets,
5. Provide income to students while doing experiential learning and on-the-job; training which form part of their degree programs;
6. Link young farmer-students with credit, financing and marketing institutions; and
7. Contribute to the alleviation of poverty.

**SECTION 4. Definition of Terms** – In this Act, the following terms shall have the following meaning:

- 4.1. Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura at Kabuhayan – a scholarship program designed to benefit poor but deserving graduates of agricultural and vocational high schools including similarly situated freshmen students in agriculture and related courses.

4.2. Agribusiness Venture Laboratory – refers to agricultural subjects and classes designed as business ventures in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and agri-entrepreneurship including but not limited to raising of poultry, goats, corn or rice or crop production and counted as satisfying the laboratory requirement of a course.

4.3. Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SET-UP) – a technology transfer program being implemented by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) designed to assist small and medium enterprises by providing packages of technologies and interest free capital for the acquisition of technologies

**SECTION 5. Establishment of a Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura at Kabuhayan p Program in State Universities and Colleges.** – A scholarship program in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related areas shall be established. A ladderized program in Diploma in Agricultural Technology (DAT), Bachelor in Agricultural Technology (BAT) and Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness (BSAgrib) will be prescribed to the student-scholars. The DAT-BAT curriculum will be enhanced with agribusiness and entrepreneurship components consistent with the minimum standards and guidelines prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Target beneficiaries are high school graduates from agricultural and vocational high schools with general weighted average of at least eighty percent (80 %): Provided, that currently enrolled students in agricultural courses in State Universities and Colleges (SUC) may be considered for scholarships with grades equivalent to eighty percent (80 %).

**SECTION 6. Entrepreneurship Components of the Program** – To enhance the entrepreneurship components of the curriculum about 25% of the entire curriculum shall be in the form of on-the-job training or related learning experience. Laboratory components of various agricultural subjects shall be in the form of agribusiness ventures. Proven viable agribusiness ventures shall be packaged for students to engage in, and these shall serve as their laboratory classes under a supervised farming scheme. Each agribusiness venture shall be under the supervision of a faculty who is also a technology expert in the chosen commodity.

The agribusiness venture laboratory to be developed must have short gestation, 3 to 12 months, should be science and technology based agribusiness, the end products should be highly marketable and the facilities needed are present/existing within the SUC.

**SECTION 7. Scholarships and Agri-Business and Agri-Entrepreneurship Assistance.** Consistent with the Law Creating the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) under RA 8178 as amended by RA 9586, the Department of Agriculture and the Commission on Higher Education shall come up with a strengthened scholarship program in agribusiness, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary medicine, and graduate studies in environmental and marine sciences, hydrology, renewable energy and agribusiness management programs. Provided, That the ACEF shall also be utilized for feasible, or outstanding or viable agribusiness and agri-entrepreneurship proposals submitted by students and graduates.

The Department of Science and Technology shall assist the Program by providing additional technology packages and making available funds allocated for the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SET-UP).

**SECTION 8. Use of Idle Lands for the Agribusiness Venture Laboratory** – The SUCs shall provide the lands and facilities to be used by the students under the Program. Where appropriate and viable the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall make available untenured public lands under its jurisdiction for the use of students in their agribusiness ventures under appropriate arrangements with CHED and the participating SUCs.

**SECTION 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations** – The CHED in coordination with the DA, DOST, and DENR and relevant private sector stakeholders shall prepare the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of this Act and promulgate it within ninety (90) days after approval of this Act.

**SECTION 10. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue to have force and effect.

**SECTION 11. Repealing Clause.** All laws, decrees, orders, rules or regulations thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby modified or repealed accordingly.

**SECTION 12. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier

Approved,