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Office of the Secretary

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES

Second Regular Session

'17 JUL 25 P5:26

SENATE
S.B. 1512

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

AN
ENCOURAGING YOUTH SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE AGRICULTURAL
SECTOR, ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA
AGRIKULTURA PROGRAM' AND A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA
TRUST FUND', APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Explanatory Note

Magkapatid ang kahirapan at kagutuman. According to the 2015 Family Income and Expenditure Survey, the bottom 30 percent of Filipino families spend 59.7 percent of their income on food.¹ Because a large portion of the budget of lower-income families is tied to food expenses, their overall capacity to spend sensitive to fluctuations in food prices. It is estimated that a 10 percent increase in food prices would lead to an additional 2.3 million poor Filipinos.²

A robust agricultural sector (in addition to prudent fiscal policy) is necessary to ensure food security. However, key indicators would show that our agricultural sector is far from robust. For one, the share of agriculture to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has dropped significantly from 11.6 percent in 1998 to 7.3 percent in 2016. Labor productivity has increased but it still remains low compared to the industry and services sectors.

However, the most alarming indicator is the average age of the Filipino farmer. Currently, Filipino farmers are around 57 to 70 years old. Assuming that the usual age of retirement in the country is 60 to 65, there is a possibility that a majority of our farmers will retire within this decade. This fact, combined with the 1.5 percent decrease in enrolment in

¹ Philippine Statistics Authority. *2015 Family Income and Expenditure Survey*.

² Son, H.H. "Has Inflation Hurt the Poor?" *ERD Working Paper Series No. 112*. Asian Development Bank: Philippines, 2008.

agriculture courses in SUCs from 2005 to 2010, implies that our struggling agricultural sector may soon run out of farmers. Who will feed the next generation?

Immediate and effective intervention is needed to rejuvenate our agricultural sector. As a first step, this measure proposes the establishment of a *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura* scholarship program. The program shall be a ladderized program in Diploma in Agricultural Technology (DAT), Bachelor in Agricultural Technology (BAT) and Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness (BSAgrib). At least 25 percent of the entire curriculum of the Program shall be in the form of an on-the-job training or related learning experience. The laboratory components of various agricultural subjects shall be in the form of agribusiness ventures, which are defined 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.

The program targets senior high school graduates of agricultural and fisheries tracks, and similarly situated students of agriculture and fisheries in tertiary education, who have a general weighted average of at least 80 percent or its equivalent. Beneficiaries shall be entitled to financial assistance, which shall include tuition and other school fees; an outright grant for prescribed textbooks and essential school supplies; transportation expenses; and a monthly living allowance.

Finally, to ensure the financial sustainability of this fund, this measure proposes the creation of a *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Trust Fund*, which shall come from the following sources: Fifty Million Pesos (Php 50,000,000.00) seed capital; a 10 percent annual share on the total gross collections of the travel tax and professional registration fee of the Professional Regulatory Commission; grants, donations and endowments from domestic and foreign sources, pursuant to existing laws and regulations; such amounts as may be indicated under the General Appropriations Act (GAA) for the purpose of sustaining the Fund; and all interest income of the trust fund.

In view of the foregoing, speedy approval of this measure is eagerly sought.


GRACE POE

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AN ACT
ENCOURAGING YOUTH SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE AGRICULTURAL
SECTOR, ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA
AGRIKULTURA PROGRAM' AND A 'TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA
TRUST FUND', APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

ARTICLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. *Title* - This Act shall be known as the "*Tulong Kabataan sa
Agrikultura Act of 2017*".

SEC. 2. *Declaration 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.

SEC. 3. *Objectives*.— The objectives of this Act are to:

- a) Increase youth participation in the agricultural sector;
- b) Provide opportunities to poor but deserving students to realize their potentials in
agribusiness and entrepreneurship;

- 1 c) Develop competency skills and knowledge of students in agricultural technologies
2 and agribusiness;
3 d) Increase food production;
4 e) Commercialize proven viable technologies to increase food production and
5 income of rural communities through the development of livelihoods and markets;
6 f) Provide income to students while doing experiential learning and on-the-job
7 training which form part of their degree programs;
8 g) Link young farmer-students with credit, financing, and marketing institutions; and
9 h) Contribute to the alleviation of poverty.

10 **SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.*** – For the purposes of this Act:

- 11 a) “*Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Program*” or “*The Program*” refers to the
12 scholarship program established by this Act which targets poor but deserving
13 graduates of agricultural and fisheries tracks in senior high schools and similarly
14 situated students taking up agriculture and related courses in tertiary education;
- 15 b) “*Tulong Kabataan as Agrikultura Trust Fund*” or “*The Fund*” refers to the trust
16 fund created under this Act to ensure the achievement of this Act’s incentives.
- 17 c) “*Agribusiness Venture Laboratory*” refers to agricultural subjects and classes
18 designed as business ventures in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and agri-
19 entrepreneurship including but not limited to raising of poultry, goats, corn or rice
20 or crop production and counted as satisfying the laboratory requirement of a
21 course.

22 **ARTICLE II**

23 **THE TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA PROGRAM**

24 **SEC. 5. *Establishment of a Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Program.*** –A *Tulong*
25 *Kabataan sa Agrikultura* scholarship program in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related
26 areas to be administered by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is hereby
27 established. The program shall be a ladderized program in Diploma in Agricultural
28 Technology (DAT), Bachelor in Agricultural Technology (BAT) and Bachelor of Science in

1 Agribusiness (BSAgrib). The program shall initially be offered by the University of the
2 Philippines-Los Baños College of Agriculture in the first two (2) years of this Act's
3 effectivity. The program shall be offered in SUCs which provide courses in agriculture,
4 forestry, fisheries, and other allied fields.

5 **SEC. 6. *Target Beneficiaries.***- The Program shall target senior high school graduates
6 of agricultural and fisheries tracks, and similarly situated students of agriculture and fisheries
7 in tertiary education, who have a general weighted average of at least eighty percent (80%) or
8 its equivalent: *Provided*, that beneficiaries who complete the agriculture and fisheries tracks
9 of senior high and who enroll in an agriculture, forestry, fisheries, or other similar course in
10 tertiary education shall continue to be covered by the Program.

11 **SEC. 7. *Assistance to Grantees.***- Beneficiaries of the Program shall be entitled to
12 financial assistance, which shall include the following:

- 13 a) Tuition and other school fees;
- 14 b) Outright grant for prescribed textbooks and essential school supplies;
- 15 c) Transportation expenses; *and*
- 16 d) Monthly living allowance.

17 **SEC. 8. *Curriculum Formulation.***- There is hereby established a technical committee
18 which shall design the curriculum of the Program. The Committee shall be composed of the
19 following:

- 20 a) The Chairperson of the CHED, or his permanent representative, as Chairperson of
21 the Committee;
- 22 b) The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA), or his permanent
23 representative, as the Vice Chairperson;
- 24 c) The Dean of the University of the Philippines-Los Baños College of Agriculture;
25 *and*
- 26 d) One (1) representative each from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao from other
27 colleges of agriculture, who shall be appointed by the President, and who shall
28 each serve a term of one (1) year.

1 At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the entire curriculum of the Program shall be in
2 the form of on-the-job training or related learning experience. Laboratory components of
3 various agricultural subjects shall be in the form of agribusiness ventures.

4 **SEC. 9.** *Strengthening Agri-Fisheries Tracks in Senior High.*- To achieve the
5 objectives of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd) is hereby directed to ensure that
6 agri-fisheries tracks are offered in as many senior high school programs in appropriate areas
7 nationwide.

8 **SEC. 10.** *Agribusiness Venture Laboratories.*- Each agribusiness venture shall be
9 under the supervision of a faculty who is also a technology expert in the chosen commodity.
10 The agribusiness venture laboratory to be developed must have short gestation, around three
11 to twelve (3 to 12) months, should be science and technology based agribusiness, the end
12 products should be highly marketable and the facilities needed should be present within the
13 SUC.

14 **SEC. 11.** *Use of Idle Lands for the Agribusiness Venture Laboratory.* -The
15 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall make available untenured
16 public lands under its jurisdiction for the use of students in their agribusiness ventures under
17 appropriate arrangements with CHED and the participating SUCs.

18 ARTICLE III

19 THE TULONG KABATAAN SA AGRIKULTURA TRUST FUND

20 **SEC. 12.** *Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Trust Fund.*- To ensure the financial
21 sustainability of this Act, a Tulong Kabataan sa Agrikultura Trust Fund is hereby created.
22 The Fund shall be used exclusively to fund the Program, and shall be funded from the
23 following sources:

- 24 a) The amount of Fifty Million Pesos (Php 50,000,000.00) as seed capital;
25 b) The equivalent of ten percent (10%) annual share on the total gross collections of
26 the travel tax;

- 1 c) The equivalent of ten percent (10%) annual share on the total gross collections
2 from the Professional Registration Fee of the Professional Regulatory
3 Commission;
4 d) Grants, donations and endowments from domestic and foreign sources, pursuant
5 to existing laws and regulations;
6 e) Such amounts as may be indicated under the General Appropriations Act (GAA)
7 for the purpose of sustaining the Fund; and
8 f) All interest income of the trust fund.

9 **SEC. 13. *Administration of the Fund.***- The CHED shall administer the fund and shall
10 make available all records of how the funds are utilized, disbursed, and invested, in
11 accordance with existing laws.

12 **ARTICLE IV**
13 **FINAL PROVISIONS**

14 **SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The CHED in coordination with the
15 DA, and DENR and relevant private sector stakeholders shall prepare the Implementing
16 Rules and Regulations (IRR) of this Act and promulgate it within ninety (90) days after
17 approval of this Act.

18 **SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision of this Act is declared
19 unconstitutional or invalid, the provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue to
20 have force and effect.

21 **SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules or regulations thereof,
22 inconsistent with this Act are hereby modified or repealed accordingly.

23 **SEC. 17. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete
24 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation,
25 whichever comes earlier.

Approved.