

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

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SENATE  
S.B. No. 1728

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 17, provides:

The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.

The quality of education depends primarily on the quality of our teachers.

Hence, the government must expend efforts to encourage talented individuals interested in teaching to maintain their interest. This can be done by raising the status of the teaching profession, through increased recognition of professional opportunities for teachers, so that the best teachers remain in the classroom and talented individuals are attracted to teaching.

The purpose of this Act is to establish a teacher corps program to strengthen the teaching profession.

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING A TEACHER CORPS PROGRAM IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THE  
TEACHING PROFESSION

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “National Teachers Act.”

SECTION 2. *Teacher Corps Authorized.* –

(1) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED – The Commission on Higher Education, hereinafter referred to as “the Commission,” shall make grants, in accordance with the provisions of this title, to State colleges and universities to conduct teacher corps activities.

(2) DESIGNATION – (A) A scholarship awarded under this part shall be referred to as a “Teacher Corps Scholarship.”

(B) A recipient of a scholarship under this part shall be referred to as a “Teacher Corps member.”

SECTION 3. *Use of Funds.* – (1) The Commission on Higher Education shall use funds provided pursuant to this part to –

(A) disseminate information nationally about the availability of scholarships;

(B) conduct activities which foster communication among, and bring together, members of the Teacher Corps including activities such as written communications, meetings, or training sessions.

(C) provide technical assistance to educational institutions in establishing and operating Teacher Corps programs;

(D) provide guidelines in the evaluation of application for Teacher Corps membership and award scholarships to Teacher Corps members;

(E) make Teacher Corps awards to individuals in training to become a school psychologist, school social worker, or a school counselor;

(F) ensure that Teacher Corps members understand the obligation to repay such scholarships upon failure to comply with the conditions of the scholarship;

(G) assist in employment placement of Teacher Corps members; and

(H) establish, operate, and expand programs for new Teacher Corps members and other new teachers, including –

(i) orientation;

(ii) using mentor teachers to work with new teachers;

(iii) curriculum guidance; and

(iv) increasing the preparedness of all classroom teachers for the participation of particular populations of students, such as disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students from diverse cultural backgrounds, in the classrooms of such teachers.

(2) PRIORITY – In carrying out the provisions of subsection (1) (A), the Commission shall give priority in awarding grants to State colleges and universities with the greatest proportion of disadvantaged students.

#### SECTION 4. *Teacher Corps.* –

(1) SELECTION – The respective state colleges and universities, in cooperation with the Commissioner on Higher Education, shall select Teacher Corps members.

(2) CRITERIA – The Commission shall establish the criteria to select Teacher Corps members, intended to attract highly qualified individuals to teaching, and to meet the needs of the country in addressing teacher shortages, including –

(A) in the case of students or recent graduates, strong academic promise, or in other cases contributions which can be made by individuals working in other careers; and

(B) a demonstrated interest in teaching, or skill or professional experience in substantive fields of expertise in which the country is experiencing teacher shortages.

(3) SPECIAL CONSIDERATION – The Commission shall give special consideration in the selection of Teacher Corps members to individuals who –

(A) intend to teach or provide related services to students with disabilities; and

(B) intend to teach pre-school age children.

(4) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION – The Commission shall give priority consideration in the selection of Teacher Corps members to individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, including minorities and individuals with disabilities, who are underrepresented in the teaching profession or in the curricular areas in which they are preparing to teach.

SECTION 5. *State Application.* – Each State college or university desiring a grant under this part shall submit an application to the commission at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the commission may reasonably require. Each application shall describe teacher shortages in the region including shortages in specific substantive fields of expertise and geographic areas, and shall describe steps to be taken to place Teacher Corps members in areas experiencing teacher shortages.

SECTION 6. *Scholarships.* –

(1) ELIGIBILITY – (A) An individual is eligible to receive Teacher Corps scholarships for a maximum of four (4) years during enrollment in any program of study leading to a baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate degree.

(B) An individual pursuing a program of study leading to a post-baccalaureate degree is eligible to receive a Teacher Corps scholarship during any of the first four (4) years that such individual is employed as a teacher to defray the costs of pursuing such post-baccalaureate instruction.

(C) An individual in possession of a bachelor's degree, who wishes to enter teaching from another profession, is eligible to receive a Teacher Corps scholarship to enable such individual to receive the instruction necessary to enter the teaching profession, as determined by the State college or university in which the individual wishes to teach. Such instruction may be provided while the individual is employed as a provisional teacher, at the discretion of such State college or university.

(2) LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT AND DURATION – Subject to subsection (3), each Teacher Corps member shall receive a Twenty-five Thousand Pesos (P25,000.00) scholarship for each academic year of postsecondary education, except that no individual shall receive scholarship assistance for more than four (4) years of post-secondary education (including post-baccalaureate), as determined by the Secretary.

(3) CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY – Each individual who receives a Teacher Corps scholarship shall continue to receive such scholarship payments only during such periods that the State college or university finds that such individual is –

(A) enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited post-secondary institution; and

(B) maintaining satisfactory progress as defined by such State college or university.

#### SECTION 7. *Scholarship Conditions.* –

(1) SCHOLARSHIP AGREEMENT – Each individual receiving a scholarship under this part shall enter into a written agreement with the State college or university in which such individual is enrolled, which shall provide assurances that each such individual –

(A) will pursue a course of study which meets requirements for teacher preparation;

(B) will maintain satisfactory academic progress and participate in teaching-related activities while in undergraduate or post-baccalaureate programs;

(C) will work as a teacher upon completion of such individual's education for five (5) years in public educational institutions;

(D) will repay all or part of a Teacher Corps scholarship received, plus interest and, if applicable, reasonable collection fees, in the event that the conditions of this section are not complied with;

(E) will participate in an induction program for new teachers during the fifth year of employment, by serving as a mentor to a new Teacher Corps member, or to other new teachers, or by making some other contribution to the induction program.

(2) SCHOLARSHIP REPAYMENT – (A) Individuals found to be in non-compliance with the agreement entered into under the preceding section shall be required to repay to the State college or university from which such individual granted a pro rata amount of the scholarship awards received, plus interest and, where applicable, reasonable collection fees.

(B) Each individual found by the State to be in non-compliance with the agreement entered into under the preceding section shall be required to repay –

(i) One Hundred percent (100%) of the total amount of scholarships awarded under this part if such individual does not teach pursuant to the agreement described in the preceding section or teaches pursuant to such agreement for less than one (1) year;

(ii) Ninety percent (90%) of the total amount of scholarships awarded under this part if such individual teaches pursuant to such agreement for at least one (1) year but less than two (2) years;

(iii) Eighty percent (80%) of the total amount of scholarships awarded under this part if such individual teaches pursuant to such agreement for at least two (2) years but less than three (3) years;

(iv) Sixty percent (60%) of the total amount of scholarships awarded under this part if such individual teaches pursuant to such agreement for at least two (2) years but less than three (3) years;

(v) Thirty percent (30%) of the total amount of scholarships awarded under this part if such individual teaches pursuant to such agreement for at least four (4) years but less than five (5) years.

(C) If a portion of a scholarship made to the appropriate State college or university pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be used by such institutions to award additional scholarships in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(D) Any repayments of scholarships made to the appropriate State college or university pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be used by such institutions to award additional scholarships in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(3) WAIVER – The Secretary may provide for the partial or total waiver or suspension of any service obligation or repayment by an individual who received a Teacher Corps scholarship whenever compliance by such individual is impossible or would involve extreme hardship to such individual, or if enforcement of such obligation with respect to such individual would be unconscionable.

SECTION 8. *Publication and Recruitment.* – The commission shall publicize the availability of, and procedure to apply for, Teacher Corps scholarships, particularly among students participating in teaching-related activities through summer teaching institutes, future teacher clubs, and other teaching-related activities, at institutions of higher education throughout the country.

SECTION 9. *Authorization of Appropriations.* – There are authorized to be appropriated Fifty Million Pesos (P50,000,000.00) for every fiscal year and such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this part.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision, or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SECTION 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,