



13 JUL -1 P2:29

SENATE
S. B. 141

RECEIVED BY: *ja*

Introduced by SENATOR CYNTHIA VILLAR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is a prevalent view that the usual path a person takes in order to land a good job or be successful in one's career is by acquiring a college diploma. Sending children who finished high school to technical-vocational school is not the usual option being taken even by traditional families, even with meager resources, because of the common view that finishing tech-voc courses would not be enough for the graduates to land good-paying jobs and improve the quality of their families' life. Besides, they think that if they opt to acquire college education afterwards, tech-voc graduates have to start taking the curriculum of first year college again and the subjects taken in the tech-voc institutions will not be credited. Hence, many parents work truly hard just to send their children to college and finally acquire the much-coveted college diploma.

Of recent times, our country produces around 500,000 fresh college graduates yearly. Yet, it is sad reality that most of these fresh college graduates experience severe difficulty in finding jobs in accord with the field of their education. Surprisingly, statistics showed that most of our fresh college graduates do not have the skills needed for the available vacancies in the job market. This results to "structural unemployment" or the situation where there is a mismatch between the actual qualifications and competencies of workers looking for jobs, and the qualifications and competencies that industries and companies need for their available job vacancies.

As one of the solutions to this structural unemployment, the ladderized interface between technical-vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education (HE) has been introduced. Through the ladderized system, tech-voc graduates of technical-vocational institutions will be able to pursue higher educational courses offered in colleges and universities without having to lose credit on what they have already earned or completed in a tech-voc program. Even after 1 to 2 years of technical-vocational education and training where graduates are armed with the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values needed to get into a job or establish their own business, they could pursue higher education if they so desire without having to start all over again as appropriate credits will be given. This system will articulate tech-voc to a number of higher education options with the attendant credits earned. It is a flexible mechanism which provides for an efficient and effective mechanism to allow individuals to continuously improve themselves (life-long learning) without being hampered of their initial choice in the past regarding their educational career or even by their socio-economic conditions.

The purpose of this Ladderized Education is to open up pathways of opportunities for career and educational progression of students and workers. It intends to create a seamless and borderless education and training that allows mobility in terms of flexible entry and exit into the educational system. In essence, ladderized education is an empowering tool because it provides options or choices to the students and workers on when to enter and to exit in the educational ladder. Significantly, it creates

job platforms at every exit and provide students with opportunities to get jobs and earn income.

This bill seeks to strengthen the Ladderized Education in the country which offers education responsive to the needs of the present times and of our people.

In view of the foregoing, I recommend the approval of this bill.


CYNTHIA A VILLAR



'13 JUL -1 P2:29

SENATE

S. B. 141

BY: 

Introduced by SENATOR CYNTHIA VILLAR

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE LADDERIZED INTERFACE BETWEEN
TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

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 “Ladderized
2 Education Act of 2013.”

3
4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – In line with the Constitutional guarantee of the
5 State to promote the right of all citizens to quality and accessible education at all levels
6 and to establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of
7 education relevant to the needs of the people and contributory to national development,
8 it is hereby declared the policy of the State to institutionalize the ladderized interface
9 between technical-vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education to
10 open the pathways of opportunities for career and educational progression of students
11 and workers, create a seamless and borderless education, empower students and
12 workers to exercise options or to choose when to enter and exit in the educational
13 ladder, and provide job platforms at every exit as well as the opportunity to earn income.

14
15 The State likewise recognizes and supports the promotion and protection of the
16 inherent academic freedom enjoyed by all institutions of higher learning. For this
17 purpose, the government shall have due regard to the academic standards, equity
18 principles, promptness and consistency of the applications/admissions and equivalency
19 policies of higher education institutions (HEIs).

20
21 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are
22 hereby defined:

23

- 1 (a) *Articulation* refers to a process which allows students to make the smooth
2 transition from one course, program or educational level to the next
3 without experiencing duplication of learning. The guiding principle of
4 articulation is that no student should repeat the same course content for
5 which credit has already been received, even if elsewhere or from another
6 institution. In general, an articulated program allows a student to move
7 from technical-vocational (Tech-Voc) course to a College Degree
8 Program, using the principle of Credit Transfer;
- 9
- 10 (b) *Credit* refers to the value given to a course;
- 11
- 12 (c) *Credit Transfer* refers to the recognition and carrying forward of credits
13 that constitute overlapping learning, from TVET to a degree program;
- 14
- 15 (d) *Embedded Tech-Voc Qualification in a Ladderized Degree Program* refers
16 to the process of determining the TVET competencies/qualifications that
17 lead to job platforms in the relevant higher education or bachelor's degree
18 program. A student of a ladderized degree program can earn full TVET
19 qualification should he/she choose to exit from the program and get a job;
- 20
- 21 (e) *Qualification* refers to a formal certification that a person has successfully
22 achieved specific learning outcomes relevant to the identified academic,
23 industry or community requirements;
- 24
- 25 (f) *Equivalency* refers to a process that involves assigning equivalent
26 academic credits to the competencies demonstrated by a student through
27 assessment tests, thereby providing entry points to the next higher level
28 qualification, the purpose of which is to provide opportunities to the
29 student to continue to learn and/or to re-enter the educational program at
30 a higher level without having to unnecessarily retake courses in which a
31 student already has demonstrated competence and knowledge;
- 32 (g) *Recognition of Prior Learning* refers to the acknowledgment of a persons'
33 skills and knowledge through previous training, work or life experience,
34 which may be used to grant status or credit for acquired competencies;
- 35
- 36 (h) *Job Platform* refers to the gateway in the ladderized curriculum which one
37 reaches upon acquiring enough skills and knowledge to seek and find
38 employment;

1
2 (i) *Ladderized Education* refers to the harmonization of all education and
3 training mechanisms that allow students and workers to progress between
4 Tech-Voc and College courses and programs, or vice-versa. It opens
5 opportunities for career and educational advancement to students and
6 workers, creates a seamless and borderless education and training
7 system that will allow transfers in terms of flexibility entry and exit between
8 Tech-Voc and College Degree Programs in the post-secondary school
9 educational system.

10
11 SEC. 4. *National Qualifications Framework.* – The Commission on Higher
12 Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
13 (TESDA) are hereby mandated to closely coordinate and effectively implement a unified
14 national qualifications framework that establishes equivalency pathways and access
15 ramps in ladderized education, allowing for easier transitions and progressions between
16 TVET and higher education. The framework shall include qualifications and articulation
17 mechanisms, such as, but not necessarily limited to the following: credit transfer;
18 embedded TVET qualification in ladderized degree programs; post-TVET bridging
19 programs; enhanced equivalency; adoption of ladderized curricula/programs; and
20 accreditation and/or recognition of prior learning.

21
22 For this purpose, CHED and TESDA shall design harmonized guidelines and
23 equivalency competency courses to enhance the delivery of high-quality tech-voc and
24 higher education courses, synchronize standards and upgrade curriculum design per
25 discipline and adopt a strategic implementation scheme, including a massive
26 consultation and information dissemination scheme. In so doing, CHED and TESDA
27 shall continue exploring and developing other mechanisms and systems that will allow
28 the interface between TVET and higher education with the end in view of creating a
29 seamless and borderless education system.

30
31 SEC. 5. *Priority Disciplines.* – To ensure a more focused implementation of the
32 said program, CHED and TESDA, in consultation with the industry, the Department of
33 Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the
34 National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Science and
35 Technology (DOST), the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) and other related
36 agencies, are directed to identify priority disciplines and programs for ladderization,
37 taking into account labor market realities. Thereafter, CHED and TESDA shall
38 implement the ladderization of other disciplines, other than those presently being

1 implemented, should it be found necessary and beneficial to do so based on a
2 comprehensive study on the viability of such move.

3
4 *Sec. 6. Enhancement of the Ladderized Education Program (LEP).* – CHED
5 and TESDA, in consultation with the PRC, are directed to jointly devise systems,
6 procedures, and mechanisms as well as to issue, amend and update existing
7 implementing guidelines, as necessary, for the efficient and effective implementation of
8 LEP and to ensure that the objectives of the program are met. Incentives may be given
9 to HEIs and Technical-Vocational Institutions to further encourage wider participation in
10 the LEP.

11
12 For this purpose, a permanent, LEP National Coordinating Technical Committee,
13 composed of CHED and TESDA personnel, is hereby established.

14
15 The CHED and TESDA shall ensure that there are designated personnel at the
16 regional and provincial levels responsible for the implementation, monitoring and
17 evaluation of LEP nationwide.

18
19 *SEC. 7. Support from Other Government Agencies.* – The PRC, DOLE,
20 Department of Education, DOST, DTI, the Department of Budget and Management and
21 the NEDA are hereby mandated to extend the necessary support and provide relevant
22 inputs towards the effective implementation of the ladderized system of education.

23
24 *SEC. 8. Scholarships, Grants and Loans.* – To ensure the effective
25 implementation and greater nationwide impact of the program and its accessibility to the
26 students and workers, CHED and TESDA shall endeavor to include in their respective
27 budgets the provision of scholarships, grants and loans to deserving students and
28 workers availing themselves of the ladderized system of education, in addition to the
29 present scholarship programs being implemented by CHED and TESDA.

30
31 *SEC. 9. Enabling Clause for HEIs.* – To encourage application of ladderized
32 education and to ensure greater nationwide impact of the program and its accessibility
33 to students and workers, HEIs that have been granted government recognition to its
34 curriculum by CHED may opt to ladderize said recognized programs without need for
35 permit either from CHED or TESDA: *Provided,* That, the proposed ladderized program
36 is within the purview of the curricular matter and that the minimum curricular
37 requirements under the relevant guidelines of CHED and TESDA are complied with.

1 For this purpose, however, the HEI shall be required to submit to the LEP
2 National Technical Committee the copy of the curriculum for the proposed ladderized
3 program for monitoring and for potential objective inputs from the technical experts in
4 the said LEP National Technical Committee.

5
6 SEC. 10. *Academic Freedom.* – Nothing in this bill shall be construed to restrict
7 the HEI in the exercise of its academic freedom. The HEI shall retain the right to assess
8 the level and standard of previously completed TVET programs by an applicant-student
9 in a manner that is transparent and objective, incorporating therein its own admission
10 requirements. The applicant-student must gain admission to the HEI's undergraduate
11 program by meeting all the usual criteria and program requisites and such other
12 requirements by the HEI.

13
14 SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation
15 of this Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and development funds of CHED
16 and TESDA. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of
17 this Act in the ensuing years shall be included in the annual respective appropriations of
18 CHED and TESDA in the General Appropriations Act.

19
20 SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CHED and TESDA, in
21 consultation with relevant stakeholders in higher and tech-voc education, shall issue
22 within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the rules and regulations for the
23 effective implementation of this Act.

24
25 SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act or any part thereof
26 be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are separable
27 from the invalid ones, shall remain in force and effect.

28
29 SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations
30 or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
31 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

32
33 SEC. 15. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
34 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
35 circulation.

36
37 *Approved,*