




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

'16 AUG 17 P3:11

RECEIVED BY: 

SENATE

SENATE BILL NO. 1040

Introduced by SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA

**AN ACT GRANTING FREE TERTIARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, AND
OTHER RELATED COURSES TO ALL DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF
REGISTERED INDIGENT FARMERS IN THE COUNTRY, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is primarily an agricultural country. It still remains the major source of food security for our people, with the vast fertile land of the country producing various agricultural products.

According to the official data released by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), "In 2014, the country's Gross National Income (GNI) grew by 5.78 percent. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) registered a 6.13 percent increment. Gross Value Added (GVA) in agriculture and fishing went up by 1.60 percent. This sector accounted for 10 percent of the GDP."

Even in terms of employment, labor in the agriculture sector dominates the scene.

"Excluding Western Visayas, labor force in 2014 totaled 40.05 million persons. Employment rate was 93 percent. About 11.21 million persons were employed in the agriculture sector and this comprised 30 percent of the national employment. In the first half of 2014, the daily nominal wage rates received by palay and corn farmers were P287.52 and P230.36, respectively." (*Selected Statistics on Agriculture 2015, Philippine Statistics Office, Quezon City, June 2015*).

Despite this encouraging scenario, however, the agricultural sector has greatly suffered a major setback in the recent years caused by environmental damage, the rampant conversion of agricultural land into golf courses, residential subdivisions, and industrial parks or resorts, lack of efficient irrigation system, to name a few.

“Agriculture posted a 4.53 percent drop in production in the first three (3) months of 2016. The output increments in the livestock and poultry subsectors were not enough to offset the downturn in the performance of the crops and fisheries subsectors due to prolonged dry spell and damages caused by typhoons ‘Lando’ and ‘Nona’. Gross earnings amounted to P375.2 Billion at current prices or 1.49 percent lower than the last year’s level.” (*Performance of the Philippine Agriculture January to March 2016, Philippine Statistics Authority*).

This downfall has certainly affected the country’s numerous farmers and other agricultural workers.

Farmers hold a distinct and important role in the country as the main driver of economy. But it is ironic that farmers, as food production workers, are the ones suffering from extreme hunger and food insufficiency. In fact, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority, the poverty incidence among farmers registered at 38.3% (2012).

Naturally, families of farmers are adversely affected by this economic fallback. As a grim consequence, children of farmers face the risk of not being able to attend school for lack of sufficient funds for their education.

In order to provide the much needed succor to the country’s farmers, this bill proposes free tertiary agricultural education to their qualified dependent children. This is in recognition of the indispensable role of farmers in the Philippine economy, and the country’s way of showing gratitude to them for their sacrifices in providing food security for our people.

This legislative proposal will likewise encourage the young people to consider agriculture as their alternative career and prepare them for advance agricultural job. This will not only enhance public perception of agriculture as a vital component of development, but will likewise nurture fresh breed of farmers and agriculturists that will introduce constructive innovations to the agricultural sector. Thus, the legacy of traditional farming will be passed on to, and reinvented by, the young agriculturists of the country.

With a more informed citizenry on agriculture, this initiative will accelerate agricultural growth, not just in the countryside, but the whole nation as well.

In view thereof, it is earnestly requested that this bill be approved at the soonest time possible.


LEILA M. DE LIMA

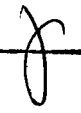
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SENATE BILL NO. 1040

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA

AN ACT
GRANTING FREE TERTIARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, AND OTHER
RELATED COURSES TO ALL DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF REGISTERED
INDIGENT FARMERS IN THE COUNTRY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 Free Tertiary*
2 *Agricultural Education Act.*

3 **SEC. 2. Statement of Policy.** It is the declared policy of the State to promote sound
4 agricultural development in the country and to achieve global competitiveness in the
5 agricultural sector. Towards this end, agriculture education and trainings shall be
6 encouraged among the youth in order to inculcate the basic agricultural principles and
7 techniques. The State, therefore, shall extend the avenue for this learning process by
8 providing free education on agriculture and other related courses.

9 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined
10 as:

11 1. *Agriculture* refers to the practice of agricultural land utilization and management,
12 crop production, livestock and poultry.

- 1 2. *Agricultural Education* involves academic program focused on the principles and
2 techniques on agricultural land management, crop production, livestock and
3 poultry offered in State Colleges and Universities.
- 4 3. *Qualified Dependent Children* refers to the legitimate or illegitimate children of
5 indigent farmers who are enrolled or about to enroll in State Colleges and
6 Universities where Agriculture and its related courses are offered.
- 7 4. *Registered Indigent Farmers* are those individuals whose sole source of income is
8 agriculture, who actually cultivate or till of the land, whether as owner or lessee of
9 the land, or who actually engage in crop production, livestock and poultry farming,
10 and who are included in the registry of farmers of the Department of Agriculture.
- 11 5. *Other related agricultural courses* include agro-forestry, agricultural engineering,
12 agribusiness/management, agricultural entrepreneurship, agri-tech, and animal
13 health management.

14 **SEC. 4. *Qualified Students.*** All qualified dependent children of registered indigent
15 farmers are entitled to free tertiary agricultural education in all State Colleges and
16 Universities offering agricultural courses and its related field.

17 For this purpose, students whose parents have no visible means of income other
18 than agriculture, as identified by the Department of Agriculture, based on specific criteria,
19 shall be considered qualified to avail of the free tertiary agricultural education provided
20 for under this Act.

21 **SEC. 5. *Appropriations.*** For the initial implementation of this Act, an amount of
22 Fifty Billion Pesos (P50,000,000,000.00) is hereby allotted for this purpose. Thereafter,
23 the sum necessary for its implementation shall be in the Annual Appropriations Act.

1 **SEC. 6. *Implementing Agencies.*** The Department of Agriculture, Department of
2 Social Welfare and Development, together with the Commission on Higher Education,
3 shall jointly implement the provisions of this Act.

4 **SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** Within ninety (90) days after the
5 effectivity of this Act, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Social Welfare and
6 Development and the Commission on Higher Education shall issue the necessary
7 guidelines, rules and regulations for the proper implementation of the provisions of this
8 Act.

9 **SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, and rules and
10 regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby
11 repealed or modified accordingly.

12 **SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.*** - If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act
13 is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof shall not be
14 affected and thereby remain in full force and effect.

15 **SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
16 complete publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,