



SENATE
S. No. 214

'19 JUL -2 P6:14

Introduced by Senator Francis "Tol" N. Tolentino

AN ACT
AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10533, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
ENHANCED BASIC EDUCATION ACT OF 2013, FOR THE INTEGRATION OF AN
AGRICULTURAL STRAND IN THE ACADEMIC TRACK OF THE SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL PROGRAM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

"The Philippines is an agricultural country."

This is a statement that has been echoed throughout our history. With a land area of 30 million hectares, 47 percent of which is agricultural land, the Philippines has all the natural resources to live up to this declaration. As a matter of fact, in 1974, agriculture accounts for 31 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Fast forward to 2019, however, the figure drastically dropped to a mere seven percent of the GDP with a growth rate of only 0.67 percent in the first quarter of the year. Even for 2018, agricultural production grew at only 0.56 percent, greatly missing the annual target of four percent and this has been identified to be one of the major causes of the high inflation rate for that year. Demand for food continues to rise as agricultural production slows while population skyrockets exponentially.

With all this information, there is an urgent need to develop the agriculture industry. To ensure the country's food security, there is a need to encourage more young people to engage in this sector. To ensure that resources are fully utilized to their maximum potential, there is a need to produce more knowledgeable and better

equipped agriculturists to use modern technology to their advantage and apply the results of recent studies to the industry. To achieve this goal, we need to incorporate agricultural studies into our educational system.

Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013," was initially implemented through Department Order No. 15 series of 2015 during the School Year 2016-17 with the following tracks, namely: (1) Academic, (2) Technical-Vocational-Livelihood, (3) Sports, and (4) Arts and Design.

The Academic Track will help students prepare for the subject specialization of the college course they will take in the future. Strands under this track are Accountancy Business and Management (ABM), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) and Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and General Academic Strand (GAS).

The Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Track will equip the student with job-ready skills in the future. This applies to students who are uncertain between pursuing a degree after Senior High School and earning money immediately after graduation.

The Sports Track aims to give students an understanding of the basic principles and techniques in relation to physical education and recreation. Professions that are related in this track are fitness trainers, game officials, tournament manager, recreation attendant, masseur and gym instructor, among others.

The Arts & Design track will prepare students as they wander around the design, performative and creative industry. This track aims to get students a career in the creative field after graduating. Part of the curriculum of this track is to expose the students to various forms of media such as architecture, interior design, industrial design, graphic design, animation, painting, fashion design, photography and film.

After a careful perusal of the different tracks and strands mentioned above, it has been noticed that there is no track or strand that would prepare students who would opt to specialize in agriculture as a college course. Subjects related to agriculture are offered through TESDA Training Regulations-Based Specializations

such as Agricrop Production, Animal Production and Fish Production under the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Track, which are not enough.

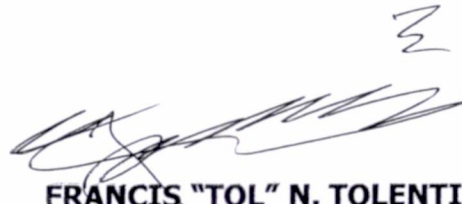
Section 2 of the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 provides:

Declaration of Policy. — The State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education RELEVANT to the needs of the people, the country and society-at-large.

Considering this declared policy, the fact that the Philippines is still and should be an agricultural country and that there is a pressing need for food security, it is IMPERATIVE and RELEVANT to include agricultural studies in as early as Senior High School in order to prepare those who are interested in pursuing a career in agriculture. Moreover, this will encourage more students to explore and discover this field, particularly those from provinces where agriculture is the major source of income and the foundation of economic activities.

This bill, therefore, seeks to integrate an Agricultural Strand in the Academic Track of the Senior High School Level Curricula in all educational institutions.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO
Senator



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*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 "Senior High School
2 Agricultural Strand Act."

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to sustain
4 and provide support to the agricultural industry through the provision of appropriate
5 technology and research; adequate financial, production, marketing and other support
6 services; and comprehensive education and training to agriculturalists, their families,
7 and other interested individuals to enable them to utilize resources to their full
8 potential and enable them to participate in the planning, organization and
9 management of the programs affecting them.

10 It is the policy of the state to ensure food security for the country through the
11 modernization of agricultural systems, the creation and improvement of agricultural
12 educational institutions as well as the encouragement of the youth to engage, sustain
13 and develop the agricultural industry.

1 Towards this end, the government shall include the agricultural strand in the
2 academic track to prepare students who are interested in pursuing a college degree
3 in agriculture and encourage others to engage and participate in this nationally critical
4 industry.

5 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms* – For purposes of this Act:

6 a) *Agriculture Strand* – refers to the basic course subjects in the field of
7 agriculture.

8 b) *Academic Track* – refers to one of the fields in the curricula of Senior High
9 School level preparatory to earning a degree in college.

10 Sec. 4. *Amendment.* – Section 6 of Republic Act No. 10533 or the Enhanced Basic
11 Education Act of 2013, is hereby amended to read as follows:

12 "Sec. 6. Curriculum Consultative Committee. — There shall be created a
13 curriculum consultative committee chaired by the DepED Secretary or
14 his/her duly authorized representative and with members composed of, but
15 not limited to, a representative each from the CHED, the TESDA, the DOLE,
16 **the Department of Agriculture**, the PRC, the Department of Science
17 and Technology (DOST), and a representative from the business chambers
18 such as the Information Technology – Business Process Outsourcing (IT-
19 BPO) industry association. The consultative committee shall oversee the
20 review and evaluation on the implementation of the basic education
21 curriculum and may recommend to the DepED the formulation of necessary
22 refinements in the curriculum.

23 **The Department and the Committee shall give priority to**
24 **agriculture in the development and review of the curriculum. To**
25 **this end, there shall be an Agricultural Strand integrated under the**
26 **Academic Track in the curricula of the Senior High School in all**
27 **educational institutions. Future amendments of the curricula must**
28 **include an agricultural strand."**

29 Sec. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the
30 date of effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education (DepEd) shall formulate

1 and design the agricultural strand subjects, modules and other necessary details to
2 implement this act.

3 Sec. 6. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this
4 Act shall be appropriated from the budget of the DepEd. Subsequently, the
5 appropriations shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

6 Sec. 7. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act
7 is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected
8 shall remain in full force and effect.

9 Sec. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All other laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
10 rules and regulations inconsistent with any provisions of this Act are hereby repealed,
11 amended or modified accordingly.

12 Sec. 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its
13 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least one (1) newspaper of general
14 circulation.

Approved,