



SENATE

S. No. 830

'19 JUL 30 P4:09

Introduced by Senator Ralph G. Recto

RECEIVED BY

AN ACT
CREATING THE PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ACADEMY, ESTABLISHING
THE PHILIPPINE MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 12, Article XII (Social Justice and Human Rights) of the Constitution provides that: *The State shall establish and maintain an effective food and drug regulatory system and undertake appropriate health manpower development and research, responsive to the country's health needs and problems.*

Various health advocate organizations claim that hospitals in rural areas in Visayas and Mindanao face a crisis and even imminent closure because of the lack of doctors. Even prestigious medical institutions find it difficult to attract fresh graduates to fill up slots for doctors. The government has acknowledged the reality that, indeed, the country is facing an alarming shortage of medical doctors and other medical professionals.

The prohibitive cost of medical studies has become beyond the reach of Filipino families even of those belonging to the upper middle class. In the past few years, the situation has been aggravated by doctors taking up nursing and leaving the country for more lucrative jobs abroad.

Since medical doctors constitute the core of a country's public health service system, the shortage of doctors severely prejudices the capacity of the government to deliver timely, adequate, competent and affordable medical and health care services to our people. This affects especially the poor who need such services but can hardly afford them.

Thus, there is an urgent need to create a steadily expanding pool of medical doctors to strengthen the core of our public health service system. This should be done through institutional mechanisms and programs that will enable a greater number of qualified and public-service oriented young people to pursue medical education, while at the same time, effectively integrating them into the public health service system. In such manner, their talents would be harnessed within an optimum time for the benefit of our country and people.

This bill seeks to address that need by creating a Philippine Medical Academy and establishing a Philippine Medical Scholarship and Service Program.

The Academy shall provide the institutional mechanism for the envisioned sustained human resource development for the Philippine public health care system. The scholarship program shall provide the financial and other educational resource support mechanisms for the pursuit of studies in the field of medicine by deserving and qualified young people. The University of the Philippines, through its College of Medicine, shall serve as the institutional core or principal medical educational institution where grantees or scholars of the program shall pursue their medical training and studies. Other colleges and universities nationwide shall be accredited to serve as adjunct medical educational institutions to provide medical training to scholars.

The government shall provide the physical, technical and financial resources to equip, man, and develop the U.P. College of Medicine as the institutional core of the Philippine Medical Academy. It shall also provide funds to pay for all the

necessary expenses such as tuition, matriculation and all other school fees, prescribed textbooks and other educational supplies and equipments, board and lodging expenses, clothing and uniform allowances, traveling expenses and other related miscellaneous living allowances of qualified entrants to the Philippine Medical Academy and recipients of the scholarship program.

It is envisioned that a scholar shall undergo higher post-graduate internship in a public health and medical institution which shall be considered as part of the mandatory public service. Upon passing the medical board examination, the scholar shall commence integration into the public health service system and shall accordingly be given the appropriate rank and salary. Such integration into the public service system shall be required for a period equivalent to at least one (1) year for each year of scholarship benefits received.

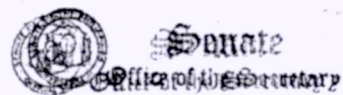
The Academy, the Scholarship and Service programs shall be administered by a Board empowered to formulate and implement policies, rules and regulations, and all such other activities for the effective management and development of the programs.

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



RALPH G. RECTO

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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 "*Philippine Medical*
2 *Academy and Scholarship Act*".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to undertake health
4 manpower development responsive to the country's health service needs. Towards
5 this end, the State shall establish mechanisms inclusive of creating educational
6 institutions and scholarship programs to enable deserving and qualified individuals to
7 pursue education and training in the field of medicine, and shall formulate and
8 implement such policies and programs to systematically integrate these individuals,
9 upon qualifying as doctors of medicine, into the public health care system.

10 Sec. 3. *The Philippine Medical Academy.* – There shall be established a
11 Philippine Medical Academy (PMA) which shall be the primary educational
12 institutional mechanism for the sustained human resource development for the
13 Philippine Public Health Care System. The government, on its own and, when
14 feasible, in partnership with other lawful entities in the public and private sectors,
15 shall provide and undertake measures to generate the necessary financial, technical,
16 physical and other resources needed to efficiently and effectively man, equip,
17 manage and develop the University of the Philippines - College of Medicine as the
18 institutional Core of the Philippine Medical Academy. Other colleges and universities
19 upon fulfillment of prescribed conditions may be accredited and integrated into the

1 Philippine Medical Academy as adjunct educational institutions that will provide
2 training and education in the field of medicine to qualified entrants to the Philippine
3 Medical Academy.

4 *Sec. 4. Philippine Medical Academy Scholarship Board (PMASB).* – There is
5 hereby created a Philippine Medical Academy and Scholarship Board (PMASB) which
6 shall administer the Philippine Medical Academy, the Scholarship and Service
7 Program and shall be empowered to formulate, consolidate, integrate, systematize
8 and implement all policies, rules and regulations and programs related thereto and
9 intended to enhance the effectiveness thereof.

10 The PMASB shall be composed of the Chairperson of the Commission on
11 Higher Education as chairperson of the Board; and as members: the Secretary of
12 Education, the Secretary of Health, the Secretary of Budget and Management, the
13 President of the University of the Philippines System, The Dean of the College of
14 Medicine of the University of the Philippines, the Executive Director of the PMASB
15 Secretariat, and the Chairpersons of the Committees on Health and Higher Education
16 of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The members of the PMASB shall
17 be entitled to reasonable amounts of per diems, representation, travel and
18 transportation allowances.

19 *Sec. 5. Functions of the Board.* – The PMASB shall have the following
20 functions:

- 21 a. Determine, formulate and promulgate the appropriate policies, measures,
22 rules and regulations necessary to operate, manage, maintain, and
23 enhance the effectiveness of the PMA and the scholarship and services
24 programs integral to its operations;
- 25 b. Establish cooperative and coordinative linkages with other educational and
26 related institutions in the public and private sectors to ensure the effective
27 operation, management and development of the PMA and the scholarship
28 and services programs;
- 29 c. Approve the accreditation of medical colleges and universities who will be
30 adjunct educational institutions and who in addition to the University of

1 the Philippines - Philippine General Hospital will accept medical scholars to
2 their respective institutions;

- 3 d. Prescribe such tests, standards and criteria for the selection of medical
4 scholars; and the relevant and appropriate terms and conditions governing
5 the scholarship grants and the integration of qualified medical scholars
6 into the public health service system;
- 7 e. Determine the various expenses to be covered by the scholarship, and
8 approve the schedule of payments thereof to medical scholars from such
9 sums appropriated by law and other funds available for the purpose;
- 10 f. Design the staffing pattern, salaries and other compensation of officials
11 and personnel of the Secretariat subject to the approval of the
12 Department of Budget and Management and in accordance with the Salary
13 Standardization Law;
- 14 g. Conduct regular meetings as often as may be decided by the Board and
15 special meetings when necessary as may be called by the Chairman of the
16 Board; and
- 17 h. Perform such other duties and functions as may be assigned by the
18 President of the Philippines.

19 Sec. 6. *Secretariat.* – There shall be a Secretariat to provide administrative
20 and technical assistance to the PMASB. It shall be headed by an Executive Director
21 who shall perform duties and responsibilities as may be determined and delegated
22 by the PMASB. The support staff of the Secretariat shall be recruited preferably from
23 qualified professionals from the academe and medical profession.

24 Sec. 7. *Medical Scholarship.* – There shall be an annual selection through
25 appropriate examinations and screening processes of those who shall be admitted to
26 the Philippine Medical Academy to be known as Medical Academy Scholars. The
27 candidates shall come from among qualified graduating students or graduates of
28 appropriate courses in colleges and universities nationwide. The qualified and
29 selected scholars shall be granted scholarship in a medical course and shall cover
30 expenses for, among others, tuition, matriculation and other school fees; prescribed
31 textbooks, supplies and equipment; board and lodging expenses; clothing and

1 uniform allowances; traveling expenses and other related miscellaneous living
2 allowances: *Provided*, That at least five (5) candidates per region, or when
3 practicable, one (1) candidate from every province and city shall be chosen to
4 participate in the annual selection: *Provided, further*, That at least fifty (50) Medical
5 Academy Scholars shall be selected annually.

6 *Sec. 8. Qualifications of Candidates.* – Candidates for admission into the
7 Philippine Medical Academy and for medical scholarship grants shall possess the
8 following minimum qualifications:

- 9 a. Must belong to the top thirty per centum (30%) of their respective
10 graduating classes and must be completing or already completed
11 undergraduate courses identified by the PMASB as a prerequisite course to
12 the pursuit of studies in the field of medicine;
- 13 b. Family and or personal incomes are not sufficient to finance their education
14 in the field of medicine: *Provided*, That those who are financially capable
15 and are willing to serve in public health and medical institutions after
16 graduation may be accepted: *Provided, further*, That they do not compose
17 more than 10 percent (10%) of the total scholars for a particular year;
- 18 c. Must be not more than twenty-five (25) years of age and a natural-born
19 citizen of the Philippines; and
- 20 d. Such other qualifications that the PMASB shall determine as necessary for
21 the purpose.

22 *Sec. 9. General Conditions for Admission to the Philippine Medical Academy*
23 *and for the Scholarship Grant.* – A medical academy scholar shall be accepted to the
24 Academy and the programs and shall receive and continue to enjoy the benefits of
25 the scholarship until the completion of the course, subject to the following
26 conditions:

- 27 a. The scholar shall pass the entrance/admission examinations and related
28 requirements of PMASB and the medical school the scholar intends to enroll
29 in;

- 1 b. The scholar shall carry the full load of subjects prescribed per semester by
2 the medical school, and shall, under no circumstance, drop a course which
3 will result in under-loading;
- 4 c. The scholar may be allowed, for valid reasons preventing his enrolment, to
5 defer availing of the scholarship and file a leave of absence for a period not
6 exceeding one school year;
- 7 d. The scholar shall sign an agreement stating the terms and conditions of the
8 scholarship on a form prescribed by the PMASB;
- 9 e. The scholar shall repay the full cost of scholarship and related benefits
10 received, and the scholarship shall be terminated in the event the grantee
11 accepts another scholarship from other government or private agencies or
12 entities; and
- 13 f. The full cost of scholarship and related benefits received shall be paid by
14 the scholar in case of failure to complete the medical course without valid
15 cause as may be determined by the PMASB: *Provided*, That, if the
16 terminated medical scholar completes another course and qualifies as an
17 allied medical service practitioner, the scholar may choose, instead of
18 repayment of scholarship costs, to render public service and be integrated
19 into the public health and medical service system.

20 Sec. 10. *Medical Service Program.* – The scholar shall, pursuant to the
21 agreement provided in Section 9 hereof, render services and be integrated into the
22 public health and medical service system as medical doctor, with the appropriate
23 rank and salary upon passing the medical board examination: *Provided*, That such
24 service and integration in the public service shall be mandatory for a period
25 equivalent to at least one (1) year for every year of scholarship availed: *Provided*,
26 *further*, That the scholar when he obtains a very satisfactory performance rating,
27 shall be entitled to salary step increases for at least every two (2) years in the
28 service: *Provided, finally*, That the scholar shall undertake post graduate internship
29 in a public health or medical institution that shall ensure his acceptance and such
30 internship shall be part of the mandatory service and integration into the public
31 health and medical service system.

1 Sec. 11. *Appropriation.* – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall
2 be included in the subsequent annual General Appropriations Act.

3 Sec. 12. *Donations, Grants, etc.* – The PMASB may accept donations,
4 legacies, grants, and other contributions to form part of the Medical Scholarship
5 Fund: *Provided,* That such donations, legacies, grants, and other contributions shall
6 be exempt from taxation and shall be allowable deductions for income tax purposes.
7 Proceeds from at least two (2) draws of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes per year
8 shall also be allocated to finance the PMA, the Scholarship and the Services
9 Programs.

10 Sec. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days after
11 the effectivity of this Act, the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of
12 Health, the Department of Budget and Management, the University of the Philippines
13 System, and other government agencies concerned shall promulgate the necessary
14 rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

15 Sec. 14. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any provision of this Act or
16 any part thereof shall be held unconstitutional and invalid, the other parts or
17 provisions of this Act, which are not affected thereby, shall remain in full force and
18 effect.

19 Sec. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, resolutions, orders or
20 ordinances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed, amended
21 or modified accordingly.

22 Sec. 16. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
23 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official*
24 *Gazette.*

Approved,