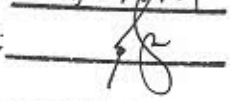


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH (17TH) CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 181

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
RECEIVED	
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REGISTRATION UNIT BILLS AND INQUIRY SERVICE	

Introduced by Hon. Vincent "Bingbong" P. Crisologo

AN ACT
INSTITUTING FREE COLLEGE EDUCATION FOR
INDIGENT STUDENTS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

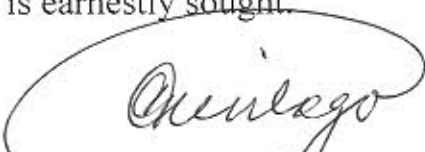
Free public basic education has already been instituted in the country. It is imperative to go further by instituting free tertiary or college education. Up to now, those who have less in life have always been hoping for the day that they could send their children to college free of tuition fees. Now is the opportune time to give them what they have been wishing for.

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*¹ Indeed, education plays an important role in diminishing, if not eradicating, poverty; it fosters employment; it can also be a catalyst in propelling the economy.

It cannot be denied that a significant number of our constituency failed to obtain college education because their parents could hardly make both ends meet, so to speak, not to mention the high cost of tuition fees.

State colleges and universities receive subsidies from the national government. Private education institutions, on the other hand, enjoy tax exemptions from the government. For this reasons, it is not too much to require them to accommodate or admit indigent students, free of tuition fees, not exceeding ten percent (10%) of the paying freshman students. It is but proper that they give back to the society and contribute to the instruction of our young generation who cannot afford to pay high cost of tuition fees.

Support on this bill is earnestly sought.


BRO. VINCENT "Bingbong" P. CRISOLOGO
Representative
First District, Quezon City

¹ Nelson Mandela

Republic of the Philippines
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SEVENTEENTH (17TH) CONGRESS
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Introduced by Hon. Vincent “Bingbong” P. Crisologo

AN ACT
INSTITUTING FREE COLLEGE EDUCATION FOR
INDIGENT STUDENTS

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.*— This Act shall be known as the “*Free College Education for Indigents Act.*”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State that indigent students should be given ample opportunity to pursue tertiary or college education. State colleges and universities, and private educational institutions should contribute to the instruction of indigent students. Towards this end, schools covered by this Act are obliged to admit, free of tuition fees, indigent students/beneficiaries the number of which shall be at least ten percent (10%) of the total paying freshman enrollees for each semester for each tertiary school and for each course. The 10% shall be based on the actual number of paying freshman students in the immediately preceding semester.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the terms:

(a) College or Tertiary Education – refers to the stage of education following the secondary education.

(b) Course – refers to any of the bachelor’s degree or baccalaureate program offered by a school.

(c) Paying Enrollee – a student enrolled in a school who pays tuition and miscellaneous fees as a requirement for admission and or enrollment.

(d) Indigent Family –a family whose income does not exceed fifteen thousand pesos (Php 15,000.00) per month.

Family income refers to the combined gross income of the student's parents. It does not include the income of the other members of the family. A family is not considered indigent if it owns a real property or a vehicle. For purposes of this Act, the real property does not include the parcels of land given by the state or any of its instrumentality to informal settlers. The real property referred to under this act refers to a property acquired through sale.

(e) Indigent Student – a student who comes from an indigent family.

(f) Tuition Fees – refer to the fee required by schools to be paid by students as requirement for admission, taking the examination, and/or continued stay or study in the school.

(g) Beneficiary– refers to an indigent student who was indorsed by the Regional Scholarship Board and admitted by a school to avail the free education under this Act.

(h) School – refers to either a state university or college (SUC), or a private learning institution, that offers college or tertiary education.

SECTION 4. *Institution of Free College Education in Schools covered by this Act.* – Free college education in Schools covered by this Act is hereby instituted in favor of indigent students the number of which shall be at least 10% of the number of paying freshman enrollees for each tertiary school and for each course.

SECTION 5. *Obligation of Schools.* It shall be the obligation of the Schools covered by this Act to admit or enroll qualified beneficiaries indorsed by the Regional Scholarship Boards and extend these beneficiaries free tuition fees. Prior to the start of every school semester, the Schools shall submit to the Regional Scholarship Boards their respective reports indicating the actual number of freshman enrollees for each course they offer. The number of actual enrollees in each course shall be the basis in determining the number of beneficiaries (which is 10% of the paying enrollees) who will be admitted by the Schools in a particular course. The obligations of the school under this Act shall continue or subsist until the indigent student/beneficiary completes his course or degree. For purposes of determining the number of beneficiaries for a particular semester, the 10% shall be based on the actual number of paying freshman students in the immediately preceding semester.

SECTION 6. *Qualifications of a Beneficiary.* – To become a beneficiary and eligible for the free college education under this Act, the student must:

(a) Be a graduate of senior high school immediately preceding the next school semester of the School he/she wishes to enroll;

(b) Come from an indigent family;

(c) Pass the usual qualifying examination for admission of the School;

(d) Must not have any derogatory record, or must not be accused in, or adjudged by, a competent court as having committed an offense or crime under Philippine laws.

SECTION 7. *Limitations.* – The number of free indigent students/beneficiaries that Schools are obliged to admit per school semester under this Act shall be at least 10% of the total paying freshman enrollees for the same semester in all courses. The 10% shall be on a per course basis such that the total number of free indigent students/beneficiaries for each course shall be at least 10% of the paying enrollees for the particular course. The 10% shall be based on the actual number of paying freshman students in the immediately preceding semester.

The number of free indigent students/beneficiaries per school/per course shall be determined by the number of paying freshman students which shall be at least 10% of said number of paying students. A fraction of more than fifty percent (50%) shall be equivalent to one free indigent student/beneficiary.

The indigent student/beneficiary shall take the load or number of units of a regular student. The privilege of an indigent student/beneficiary under this Act shall be terminated if he/she fails for three (3) subjects where he/she is enrolled during the entire course of study, or when he/she shall skip a semester.

The beneficiary shall enroll in a school of his/her choice.

The admission to a School shall be on a first-come first-serve basis. If there is no more slot in the School preferred by the beneficiary, he/she may still enroll in another school that still has remaining slots for beneficiaries.

SECTION 8. *Prohibition on Discrimination.* – It shall be unlawful for a school to discriminate against a beneficiary. Discrimination may be in any of the following forms:

(a) Imposing a rule or regulation for beneficiaries different from the paying students;

(b) Failing a beneficiary in a subject while passing a paying student who obtained a lower grade than the beneficiary;

(c) Segregating beneficiaries from the paying students;

(d) Restricting beneficiaries from the use of a school facility that is not so restricted for paying students.

SECTION 9. *Creation and Composition of Regional Scholarship Boards.* – Regional Scholarship Boards for the following regions are hereby created:

- (a) Negros Island Region (NIR);
- (b) National Capital Region (NCR);
- (c) Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR);
- (d) Region I (Ilocos Region);
- (e) Region II (Cagayan Valley);
- (f) Region III (Central Luzon);
- (g) Region IV-A (CALABARZON);
- (h) Region IV-B (MIMAROPA);
- (i) Region V (Bicol Region);
- (j) Region VI (Western Visayas);
- (k) Region VII (Central Visayas);
- (l) Region VIII (Eastern Visayas);
- (m) Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula);
- (n) Region X (Northern Mindanao);
- (o) Region XI (Davao Region);
- (p) Region XII (Soccsksargen);
- (q) Region XIII (Caraga);
- (r) ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao)

Each Regional Scholarship Board shall be composed of three (3) members constituted by the following: Regional Director of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) who shall act as Chairman, the Regional Director of the Department of Education (DepEd), and the Regional Director of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The Boards shall hold office at the Regional Offices of DepEd.

SECTION 10. *Powers and Functions of the Regional Scholarship Boards.* – The Regional Scholarship Boards shall have the following functions:

(a) To implement or enforce the Implementing Rules and Regulations promulgated under this Act;

(b) To accept applications for free education under this Act;

(c) To determine whether an applicant is qualified to avail of the free education under this Act;

(d) To indorse and recommend to a School a qualified indigent student to avail of the free education under this Act;

(e) To require all the Schools in their respective regions to provide the number of paying freshman enrollees in each course for each ensuing semesters to determine the 10% limitation;

(f) To gather from schools data relating to the number of paying freshman enrollees per semester in each course they offer;

(g) To determine the number of free indigent students/beneficiaries to be admitted by the schools covered by this Act.

SECTION 11. *Penal Clause.* – (a) The Presidents, Administrators and Heads of schools who refuse to accept qualified indigent students approved and endorsed by the Scholarship Board when there are slots still available, or discriminate against the beneficiaries shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment of not less than six (6) months and one (1) day but not more than two (2) years, or a fine of two hundred thousand pesos (Php 200,000), or both;

(b) Any member of the Scholarship Board who indorses or who agrees to indorse to a School a student who does not possess the qualifications to avail of the free college or tertiary education under this Act shall suffer the penalty of imprisonment of not less than 6 months and 1 day but not more than 2 years, or a fine of Php 200,000, or both.

(c) Any member of the Scholarship Board who refuses to indorse to a School a student who possesses the qualifications to avail the free college education under this Act shall also suffer the penalty of imprisonment of not less than 6 months and 1 day but not more than 2 years, or a fine of Php 200,000, or both.

(d) Any other violation of the provisions contained in this Act by any person shall be punished by imprisonment of not less than 6 months and 1 day but not more than 2 years, or a fine of Php 200,000, or both.

SECTION 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Chairman of CHED, the Secretary of DepEd and the Secretary of DSWD shall promulgate Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the effective implementation of this Act. The IRR shall be approved by the House of Representatives.

SECTION 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall continue to be in force and in effect.

SECTION 14. *Repealing Clause.* – Laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved, _____

A handwritten signature in cursive script, enclosed within an oval-shaped line. The signature appears to be 'D. Duterte'.