

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7280



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

About 1,500 inmates in the Maximum Security Compound of the New Bilibid Prison have been benefited by the Department of Education's informal education program, the Alternative Learning System (ALS)¹. The implementation of this program in Philippine penitentiaries came from the Bureau of Corrections' conviction that "the best reformatory program in the world is an educational program". This sentiment was seconded by Non-Government Organizations and education institutions dedicated to providing inmates a second chance to acquire a college degree while in detention² and have set up college education centers in prisons such as in Davao City.

However, as inmates are not obliged to attend school, graduate rate of programs like the ALS, is low. In 2015, only a third of the annual enrollees from the New Bilibid Prison graduated. Despite the low figure in graduates, the passing rate of those who did finish and eventually take the Accreditation and Equivalency Test have been exemplary. The 2014 exams reported that 210 out of 214 takers passed.

¹ <https://www.rappler.com/nation/86735-als-mandatory-jails>

² <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/922306/college-education-behind-bars>

This bill intends to incentivize inmates who have earned or has made satisfactory progress in their education by granting time credit towards the service of sentence. Programs for academic, vocational, technical and values development programs for prisoners shall be coordinated and implemented by the Department of Education and the Technical Education Skills Development Authority. This hopes to encourage inmates, especially those who are illiterate, to continue their education and develop further skills and moral values while under detention.

The approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luis Raymund F. Villafuerte, Jr.', written in a cursive style.

LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7280

Introduced by HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

AN ACT

GRANTING GOOD CONDUCT TIME ALLOWANCE TO PRISONERS WHO
PARTICIPATE IN LITERACY, SKILLS AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS IN PENAL INSTITUTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
ARTICLE 97 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3815, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
REVISED PENAL CODE

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to promote the correction and rehabilitation of prisoners by providing opportunities for increasing their literacy skills and strengthening their moral values thereby facilitating their reintegration into the mainstream of society as reformed and productive citizens. Towards this end, the State shall recognize efforts of prisoners for self-improvement by granting them good conduct time allowance as envisioned under Article 97, Chapter II of the Revised Penal Code.

SECTION 2. Coverage. – This Act shall cover detention prisoners in detention facilities of law enforcement agencies and those prisoners serving sentence by virtue of final judgement in the Bureau of Corrections and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).

SECTION 3. Good Conduct Time Allowance. – Any prisoner who has earned or is making satisfactory progress towards earning a post-graduate or college degree, high school or elementary grade diploma, vocational or technical skill or values development certificate or those who are being utilized to teach subjects or courses in the aforementioned programs shall be granted time credit towards the service of sentence: Provided, That the time credit shall not exceed fifteen (15) days for every month of study time.

SECTION 4. Program Implementation. – The academic, vocational skills and values development programs for prisoners shall be implemented in coordination with the Department of Education, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority and other recognized institutions and organization.

SECTION 5. Authority to Grant Good Conduct Time Allowance. – The Director of the Bureau of Corrections, the Chief of the BJMP, wardens of provincial and sub-provincial jails and the Director of the National Bureau of Investigation shall have the authority to assess, evaluate and grant good time allowances to prisoners, subject to the approval of the Secretary of Justice, Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) or the Provincial Governor, as the case may be.

SECTION 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Secretary of Justice and the Secretary of the DILG shall, within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for its effective implementation.

SECTION 7. Separability Clause. – In case any provision hereof is declared unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared and affected shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, rules and regulations or parts thereof, which are contrary to or are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 9. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,