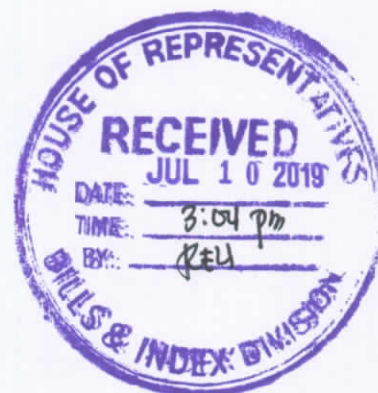


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 52

Introduced by

ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO,
BAYAN MUNA Party-List Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
Rep. FERDINAND GAITE and Rep. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
GABRIELA Women's Party Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS,
and **KABATAAN Party-List Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES BOARD OF REGENTS TO RECONSIDER ITS POLICY LIMITING THE COMMUTATION OF FACULTY SICK LEAVE BENEFITS ONLY TO "SERIOUS OR SEVERE ILLNESSES" IN CASES OF OPTIONAL RETIREMENT

WHEREAS, the University of the Philippines Board of Regents (UP BOR), on its 1226th meeting on 25 October 2007, approved the grant of cumulative sick leave benefits to regular and full-time faculty for a period of equivalent to 10 days for every year of full-time service. This benefit is commutable to cash only upon compulsory retirement at age 65 or "optional retirement [at age 60] due to serious/severe illness as defined by Philhealth";

WHEREAS, the BOR also provided that "Faculty members who get seriously ill may avail of sick leave with pay charged to this benefit. The earned credits, however, cannot be monetized before retirement";

WHEREAS, on its 1255th meeting on 27 May 2010, the UP BOR amended its policy, providing that "Faculty members (regular, full-time) [shall] be granted sick leave benefits for a period equivalent to 15 days per year of full[-]time service, cumulative and commutable upon compulsory retirement or upon optional retirement due to serious/severe illness (as defined by Philhealth)";

WHEREAS, this faculty sick leave benefit (FSLB) was granted after the campaign of the All-UP Academic Employees Union (AUPAE). Before 2007, UP faculty cannot accumulate leave credits, so, when they get seriously ill, they can only avail of 15 days paid sick

leave, after which, they go on leave without pay. On the other hand, cumulative and commutable leave credits are available to administrative staff and Research, Extension and Professional Staff;

WHEREAS, PhilHealth guidelines classify severe or serious illness or injury as either (1) catastrophic cases or (2) confinements in the intensive care unit other than those classified as catastrophic;

WHEREAS, the policy of limiting the commutation to cash of the FSLB only in cases of "serious/severe illness" is unjust and discriminatory, and has led to cases of denial of optional retirement of faculty members who, while not suffering from "catastrophic cases" or not confined in the ICU, are nevertheless in dire need of the commuted benefit;

WHEREAS, one such example is a professor who, after having rendered over 35 years of service, applied for commutation of her FSLB upon optional retirement at age 60 due to diabetes and heart ailment. Her health condition, though "not catastrophic," necessitates long-term maintenance. Her application was recommended to the BOR for its approval by the chancellor of the constituent unit to which she belonged, but the BOR denied it;

WHEREAS, there are other reported complaints over this policy, which the UP BOR has been implementing for over a decade. Several report that they were discouraged from even applying for optional retirement and forced to endure and suffer from their illnesses while continuing to work, or have just retired early without getting any benefit. Some have unfortunately died from their illnesses before reaching the mandatory retirement age, without receiving aid from the University which they have served for long years. The limitation has affected around 20 professors in a single constituent unit alone, not counting other items below Professor I;

WHEREAS, efforts have been made to have this policy reviewed. However, according to a letter dated 25 June 2018 from the Office of the UP President, the UP BOR "opined that[,] since the proposal is not feasible upon review by the different members of the administration due to several challenges, then it should be not endorsed for the consideration of the BOR";

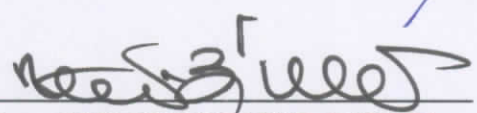
WHEREAS, a congressional inquiry is necessary to weigh the UP BOR's policy on FSLB, as well as other similar policies being implemented in other state universities and colleges, in light of state policies related to health as declared in the Constitution, Republic Act 9994 or the *Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010*, and in other laws.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives direct the University of the Philippines Board of Regents to reconsider its policy limiting the commutation of faculty sick leave benefits only to "serious or severe illnesses" in cases of optional retirement.

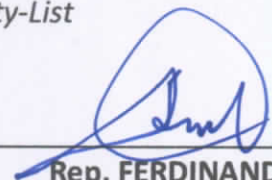
Adopted,



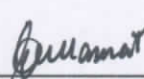
Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Party-List



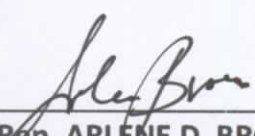
Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
BAYAN MUNA Party-List



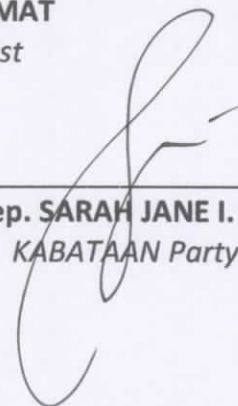
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