

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

House Bill No. 7572



**Introduced by Representatives PAOLO Z. DUTERTE, ERIC G. YAP,
and EDVIC G. YAP**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Statistical Authority (PSA) accounts for the continuous employment drop in the agricultural sector, stating that the sector—agriculture, forestry, fishing, and aquaculture industries—had its share of total employment fall from 24.5 percent (9.7 million) in October 2020 and 24.6 percent (10.77 million) in October 2021 to 22.5 percent (10.60 million) in October 2022.¹

The Philippine Development Studies contends that diminishing farm size and declining incomes in agriculture, have incentivized the shift out of agriculture.¹ Hence, apart from measures that ought to increase agricultural production and farmer assistance, there is a need to encourage the young generation to choose the country's agricultural sector.

Following this pursuit, this proposed measure seeks to grant free tertiary Agriculture education to the dependents of qualified indigent farmers. Following the implementation of the Republic Act No. 10931 or *Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act* which provides free tuition and other school fees in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and other Local Universities and Colleges, the said grant will also include payment of other school fees and entitlement to other incentives or subsidies such as living and transportation allowance.

Apart from encouraging more youth to consider entering the said sector, the said measure will also uplift and motivate agricultural research that is vital in the sector's quest for development.

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


PAOLO Z. DUTERTE


ERIC G. YAP


EDVIC G. YAP

¹The Philippine Star. (December 8, 2022). "PH farms getting empty: Agriculture job loss a worrying trend."

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AN ACT
GRANTING FREE TERTIARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, AND OTHER
RELATED COURSES TO ALL DEPENDENT CHILDREN OF QUALIFIED
INDIGENT FARMERS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 Tertiary Agricultural Education Act."

SEC. 2. *Statement of Policy.* - It is the declared policy of the State to promote sound agricultural development in the country and to achieve global competitiveness in the agricultural sector. Towards this end, education and trainings on Agriculture shall be encouraged among the youth to inculcate the latest agricultural principles and techniques. The State, therefore, shall extend the avenue for this learning process by providing accessible education on agriculture and other related courses.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the following terms shall be defined as:

- a. Qualified Dependent Children - refers to the children of indigent farmers who are enrolled or about to enroll in State Colleges and Universities where Agriculture and its related courses are offered.
- b. Registered Indigent Farmers - are those indigent individuals whose sole source of income is agriculture, who actually cultivate or till the land, whether as owner or lessee of the land, or who actually engage in crop production, livestock and poultry farming, and who are included in the registry of farmers of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

SEC. 4. *Implementation of Free Tertiary Agricultural Education.* - The DA, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall establish a scholarship program for Tertiary Agricultural Education. Qualified dependent

children of registered indigent farmers intending to enroll or already enrolled in agricultural courses or any related field offerings in state colleges and universities shall be exempt from payment of tuition and other school fees and shall be entitled to such other incentives or subsidies, including living and transportation allowance, as may be granted in accordance with such rules and regulations to be promulgated to carry out the provisions of this Act. Provided, that they meet the admission requirements of the SUCs where they intend to enroll in.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Act, the DA and the CHED shall issue the necessary guidelines, rules, and regulations for the proper implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act, or parts thereof, is declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other portions.

SEC. 7. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, implementing rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 8. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,