



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 3575

BY REPRESENTATIVES ROMULO, TEODORO, GONZALES (N.), ANGARA-CASTILLO, RODRIGUEZ (R.), RODRIGUEZ (M.), PIAMONTE, CORTUNA, VILLAR, UMALI (C.), ESCUDERO, ALIPING, GULLAS, MANALO, LOBREGAT, AMATONG (I.), ROQUE, BELMONTE (J.), CAYETANO, ENERIO-CERILLES, ACEDILLO, PAQUIZ, DELA CRUZ, LAGDAMEO (M.), OAMINAL, YU, CRUZ-GONZALES, PANCHO, RIDON, UNGAB, ANGPING, QUISUMBING, BATAOIL, EVARDONE, SINGSON (E.), CUA, ONG, ALMARIO, ZAMORA (M.), BAG-AO, CALIXTO-RUBIANO, CASTELO, DEL ROSARIO (A.G.), FORTUNO, ERICE, LOONG, PANOTES, MASONGSONG, CHIPECO, ACOP, SUANSING, AUMENTADO, BONOAN, ARBISON, COLMENARES, BELLO (S.) AND ROMUALDEZ, PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 18

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE LADDERIZED INTERFACE BETWEEN TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

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 “Ladderized
2 Education Act”.

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – In line with the constitutional
4 guarantee for the State to promote the right of all citizens to quality and
5 accessible education at all levels and to establish, maintain and support a
6 complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of
7 the people and contributory to national development, it is hereby declared the
8 policy of the State to institutionalize the ladderized interface between

1 technical-vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education to
2 open the pathways of opportunities for career and educational progression of
3 students and workers, create a seamless and borderless system of education,
4 empower students and workers to exercise options or to choose when to enter
5 *and exit in the educational ladder, and provide job platforms at every exit as*
6 *well as the opportunity to earn income.*

7 The State likewise recognizes and supports the promotion and
8 protection of the inherent academic freedom enjoyed by all institutions of
9 higher learning. For this purpose, the government shall uphold the academic
10 standards, equity principles, promptness and consistency of the applications or
11 admissions and equivalency policies of higher education institutions (HEIs).

12 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following
13 terms are hereby defined:

14 (a) *Articulation* refers to a process which allows students to make the
15 smooth transition from one (1) course, program or educational level to the next
16 without experiencing duplication of learning. The guiding principle of
17 articulation is that no student should repeat the same course content for which
18 credit has already been received, even if elsewhere or from another institution.
19 In general, an articulated program allows a student to move from a technical-
20 vocational course to a college degree program, using the principle of credit
21 transfer.

22 (b) *Credit* refers to the value given to a course or subject.

23 (c) *Credit transfer* refers to the recognition and carrying forward of
24 credits that constitute overlapping learning, from TVET to a degree program.

25 (d) *Embedded TVET qualification in a ladderized degree program*
26 *refers to the process of determining the TVET competencies or qualifications*
27 *that lead to job platforms in the relevant higher education or bachelor's degree*

1 program. Full TVET qualification can still be earned even if a student of a
2 ladderized degree program chooses to exit from the program and get a job.

3 (e) *Equivalency* refers to a process that involves assigning equivalent
4 academic credits to the competencies demonstrated by a student through
5 assessment tests, thereby providing entry points to the next higher level
6 qualification, the purpose of which is to provide opportunities to the student to
7 continue to learn and to reenter the educational program at a higher level
8 without having to unnecessarily retake courses on which a student already has
9 demonstrated competence and knowledge.

10 (f) *Job platform* refers to the gateway in the ladderized curriculum
11 which one reaches upon acquiring enough skills and knowledge to seek and
12 find employment.

13 (g) *Ladderized education* refers to the harmonization of all education
14 and training mechanisms that allow students and workers to progress between
15 technical-vocational and college courses and programs, or vice versa. It opens
16 opportunities for career and educational advancement to students and workers,
17 creates a seamless and borderless education and training system that will allow
18 transfers in terms of flexibility entry and exit between technical-vocational and
19 college degree programs in the post-secondary school educational system.

20 (h) *Qualification* refers to a formal certification that a person has
21 successfully achieved specific learning outcomes relevant to the identified
22 academic, industry or community requirements.

23 (i) *Recognition of prior learning* refers to the acknowledgment of a
24 person's skills and knowledge through previous training, work or life
25 experience, which may be used to grant status or credit for acquired
26 competencies.

1 SEC. 4. *Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF)*. – The
2 Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Education and Skills
3 Development Authority (TESDA) and the Department of Education (DepED)
4 are hereby mandated to closely coordinate and effectively implement a unified
5 Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) that establishes equivalency
6 pathways and access ramps in ladderized education, allowing for easier
7 transitions and progressions between TVET and higher education. The
8 framework shall include qualifications and articulation mechanisms such as,
9 but not necessarily limited to, the following: credit transfer, embedded TVET
10 qualification in ladderized degree programs, post-TVET bridging programs,
11 enhanced equivalency, adoption of ladderized curricula/programs, and
12 accreditation and/or recognition of prior learning.

13 For this purpose, the CHED, TESDA and DepED shall design
14 harmonized guidelines and equivalency competency courses to enhance the
15 delivery of high-quality technical-vocational and higher education courses,
16 synchronize standards and upgrade curriculum design per discipline and adopt
17 a strategic implementation scheme, including a massive consultation and
18 information dissemination scheme. In so doing, the CHED, TESDA and
19 DepED shall continue exploring and developing other mechanisms and
20 systems that will allow the interface between TVET and higher education with
21 the end in view of creating a seamless and borderless education system.

22 SEC. 5. *Priority Disciplines*. – As a preliminary approach to the
23 implementation of the ladderized program and to ensure its more focused
24 implementation, the CHED, TESDA and DepED, in consultation with the
25 industry, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Department
26 of Trade and Industry (DTI), the National Economic and Development
27 Authority (NEDA), the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the
28 Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and other related agencies, are

1 directed to identify priority disciplines and programs for ladderization, taking
2 into account labor market realities. The CHED, TESDA and DepED shall
3 implement the ladderization of other disciplines other than those presently
4 being implemented, should these be found necessary and beneficial based on a
5 comprehensive study of their viability.

6 *SEC. 6. Enhancement of the Ladderized Education Program (LEP). --*

7 The CHED, TESDA and DepED, in consultation with the PRC, are directed to
8 jointly devise systems, procedures and mechanisms, as well as to issue, amend
9 and update existing implementing guidelines, as necessary, for the efficient and
10 effective implementation of the LEP and to ensure that the objectives of the
11 program are met. Incentives may be given to HEIs and technical-vocational
12 institutions to further encourage wider participation in the LEP.

13 For this purpose, the PQF National Coordinating Committee composed
14 of the CHED, TESDA, DepED, DOLE and PRC is hereby established. It shall
15 be chaired by the DepED.

16 The CHED, TESDA and DepED shall ensure that there are designated
17 personnel at the regional and provincial levels responsible for the
18 implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the LEP nationwide.

19 *SEC. 7. Support from Other Government Agencies. --* The PRC,
20 DOLE, DOST, DTI, Department of Budget and Management (DBM), NEDA
21 and other related agencies are hereby mandated to extend the necessary
22 support and provide relevant inputs towards the effective implementation of
23 the ladderized system of education.

24 *SEC. 8. Scholarships, Grants and Loans. --* To ensure the effective
25 implementation and greater nationwide impact of the program and its
26 accessibility to the students and workers, the CHED, TESDA and DepED shall
27 include in their respective budgets the provision of scholarships, grants and
28 loans to deserving students and workers availing themselves of the ladderized

1 system of education, in addition to the present scholarship programs being
2 implemented by the CHED and TESDA.

3 SEC. 9. *Enabling Clause for HEIs.* – To encourage the widest
4 enjoyment of the benefit of ladderized education, HEIs whose curricula have
5 been recognized by the CHED may avail of the ladderization program:
6 *Provided*, That the minimum curricular requirements under the relevant
7 guidelines of the CHED, TESDA and DepED are complied with and duly
8 certified by these agencies prior to the formal offering of the program.

9 For this purpose, the HEI shall be required to submit to the PQF
10 National Coordinating Committee a copy of the curriculum for the proposed
11 ladderized program for monitoring, compliance and for potential objective
12 inputs from the technical experts in the said committee. Failure to submit this
13 requirement shall be subject to administrative sanctions to be imposed by the
14 CHED and TESDA, respectively.

15 SEC. 10. *Academic Freedom.* – Nothing in this Act shall be construed
16 as restricting the HEI in the exercise of its academic freedom. The HEI shall
17 retain the right to assess the level and standard of previously completed TVET
18 programs by an applicant-student in a manner that is transparent and objective,
19 incorporating therein its own admission requirements. The applicant-student
20 must gain admission to the HEI's undergraduate program by meeting the
21 prescribed criteria and program requisites and such other requirements by the
22 HEI.

23 SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial
24 implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and
25 development funds of the CHED, TESDA and DepED. Thereafter, the funds
26 necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act in the ensuing years
27 shall be included in the respective annual appropriations of the CHED,
28 TESDA and DepED in the General Appropriations Act.

1 SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CHED, TESDA
2 and DepED, in consultation with relevant stakeholders in higher and technical-
3 vocational education, shall issue within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of
4 this Act, the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

5 SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act or any
6 part hereof shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions,
7 as far as they are separable, shall remain in force and effect.

8 SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and
9 regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this
10 Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

11 SEC. 15. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
12 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of
13 general circulation.

Approved,

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