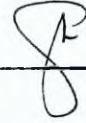


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

'22 JUL -7 P4 :15

SENATE
S. No. 171

RECEIVED BY: _____



Introduced by SENATOR FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM
AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

Explanatory Note

It is the policy of the State to promote and protect the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take the appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. It is also the policy of the State to promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform, through industries that make full and efficient use of human and natural resources, and which are competitive in both domestic and foreign markets.

The Philippines is regarded as one of the world's mega-biodiversity countries which are rich in both flora and fauna. Agriculture is the backbone of our economy. According to the latest data from the World Bank, the Philippine agriculture sector employs 23% of the workforce.¹ In 2010, the Philippines was regarded as the top rice producer in the world.² At present, however, the country is only the 8th top rice producer in the world,³ and is

¹ "Employment in Agriculture," retrieved at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS> .

² "Adaptation and Mitigation Initiatives in Philippine Rice Cultivation," retrieved at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/amia_philippines.pdf.

³ "The World's Biggest Rice Producers," retrieved at <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/worlds-biggest-rice-producers/> .

even one of the world's top rice importers. This shows that despite the country being one of the most mega-diverse in the world, it still lacks the capacity to produce its own rice. The situation threatens the food security of the country.

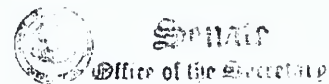
One way to increase the capacity of the country for agriculture and related industries is to promote agricultural education as early as in secondary school. Republic Act No. 10618, or the "Rural Farm Schools Act," mandated the Department of Education to encourage the establishment of at least one public rural farm school in every province in the country. On the other hand, this bill seeks to establish a national agricultural high school and agricultural secondary schools in every region of the country which shall all be integrated into one system. This includes the determination of how the current rural farm schools established under RA 10618 can be integrated into the system that will be formed under this bill. This proposed legislation will promote the establishment of a complete, adequate, and integrated national system of education for the agriculture sector.

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



FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

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Introduced by SENATOR FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

1 AN ACT
2 ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM
3 AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

4 **Section 1. *Short Title.*** - This Act shall be known as the "Philippine
5 Agricultural High School (PAHS) System Act of 2022."

6 **Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared policy of the
7 State:

8 (a) To protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at
9 all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.
10 Further, the State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and
11 integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society; and
12 encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-
13 learning, independent, and out-of-school study programs particularly those that
14 respond to community needs;

15 (b) Promote industrialization and full employment based on sound
16 agricultural development, through industries that make full and efficient use of
17 human and natural resources;

1 (c) Recognize the right of farmers, farmworkers, and landowners, as well
2 as cooperatives, and other independent farmers' organizations to participate in the
3 planning, organization, and management of the program, and shall provide support
4 to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial,
5 production, marketing, and other support services; and

6 (d) Give priority to research and development, invention, innovation, and
7 their utilization; and to science and technology education, training, and services. The
8 State shall support indigenous, appropriate, and self-reliant scientific and
9 technological capabilities, and their application to the country's productive systems
10 and national life.

11 To this end, the State hereby establishes the Philippine Agricultural High
12 School ("PAHS") System that will assume a leadership role in secondary level
13 agricultural education.

14 **Section 3. Objectives.** – In implementing the foregoing policy, the State
15 shall pursue the following objectives:

16 (a) Establish a main national agricultural high school and other agricultural
17 secondary schools in different parts of the country and integrate them into one
18 system of governance and management;

19 (b) Integrate rural farm schools established under Republic Act No. 10618,
20 or the "Rural Farm Schools Act," under the PAHS System;

21 (c) Ensure uniformity in quality standards and systematize operations of
22 schools under the PAHS System; and

23 (d) Rationalize the establishment of agricultural high schools as defined in
24 this Act.

25 **Section 4. Scope.** – The PAHS System shall be composed of the agricultural
26 high schools which shall be established under this Act, and the rural farm schools
27 established under Republic Act No. 10618 which shall be integrated under this Act.

28 **Section 6. Philippine Agricultural High School System.** – There shall be
29 established a national agricultural high school to be known as the "Philippine

1 Agricultural High School (Main Campus).” Agricultural high schools shall likewise be
2 established in municipalities, cities, and provinces in the country.

3 These agricultural high schools shall provide on a free scholarship basis high
4 school education with special emphasis on subjects pertaining to the agricultural
5 sciences.

6 **Section 7. Over-all Coordinating Authority.** – The PAHS System shall be
7 under the administrative supervision of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the
8 Department of Education (DepEd).

9 The DA together with the DepEd shall institutionalize high standards of quality
10 assurance in the PAHS System. These standards shall involve prescribing guidelines
11 and policies on the operation and management of agricultural schools as well as
12 basic curricula content to ensure the credibility and academic integrity of such
13 agricultural schools.

14 **Section 8. Board of Regents.** – The PAHS (Main Campus) and the
15 agricultural high schools established under this Act shall have the general powers set
16 out under Republic Act No. 11232, or the “Revised Corporation Code,” and the
17 exercise of its powers is hereby vested exclusively in the Board of Regents of the
18 PAHS System. The Board of Regents shall be composed of the Secretary of
19 Agriculture as *ex-officio* Chairperson, the Secretary of Education as *ex-officio* Vice
20 Chairperson, and the following members: the President of the University of the
21 Philippines, the Executive Director of PAHS (Main Campus), and the Director of the
22 Science Education Institute (SEI) as *ex-officio* Members; and one (1) representative
23 each from the private sector representing higher education, agriculture, and new
24 and emerging technologies as regular Members. The private sector representatives
25 shall be appointed by the Chairperson subject to the confirmation of the Board of
26 Regents, and shall serve for a term of four (4) years, unless sooner removed from
27 office for cause.

28 The Board shall exercise the following powers:

29 (a) To determine the site of the PAHS (Main Campus) and the agricultural
30 high schools to be established municipalities, cities, and provinces in the country;

1 (b) To receive and appropriate in trust to the ends specified by law such
2 legacies, gifts, sums, and donations of real and personal property of all kinds and to
3 administer the same in accordance with the directions and instructions of the donor,
4 and in default thereof, in such manner as the Board of Regents may in its discretion
5 determine, for the benefit of the High School or for aid to any of its students;

6 (c) To approve appointments made and contracts entered into by the
7 Executive Director and Campus Directors in connection with the employment of
8 professors, instructors, lecturers, and other employees of the school, subject to
9 Section 14 of this Act; to fix their compensation, promotion, renewal, retention,
10 rewards, incentives, and other conditions of employment; and to remove them for
11 cause after due investigation and hearing;

12 (d) To formulate its own rules of procedure, policies, and guidelines, and
13 to prescribe for the administration of the PAHS System such general rules and
14 regulations, not contrary to law, as are consistent with the purposes of this Act;

15 (e) Approve the curricula and course of study submitted by the Executive
16 Director;

17 (f) Approve the criteria for the selection and admission of students;

18 (g) Approve the grant of scholarship, stipend, and such allowances to
19 students;

20 (h) Approve the graduation of successful candidates from the various
21 PAHS campuses;

22 (i) Formulate policies and rules of discipline for students, faculty, and
23 staff;

24 (j) Approve the PAHS System budget and appropriate to the ends
25 specified by law such sums as may be provided by law for the support of the
26 System;

27 (k) Receive grants whether cash, land, buildings and improvements
28 thereof; donations, contributions, bequest, gifts, and to formulate policies for the
29 administration thereof;

30 (l) Develop policies for the expansion of enrollment in the campuses
31 under the PAHS System;

1 (m) Set policies and criteria to rationalize the establishment of agricultural
2 high schools under the System, for its evaluation and approval thereof; and

3 (n) Prepare strategic plans to enhance the capability of the System in
4 developing human resources with focus on youth with special talents in agriculture
5 science.

6 A quorum of the Board shall consist of a majority of all members holding
7 office at the time of meeting of the Board is called. All processes against the Board
8 of Regents shall be served on the Executive Director or the Secretary thereof.

9 **Section 9. Executive Director.** – There shall be an Executive Director of
10 the PAHS (Main Campus) who shall be appointed by the Chairperson, subject to the
11 approval of the Board and shall be conferred the rank equivalent to a bureau
12 director with a fixed term of six (6) years, renewable for another term. The
13 Executive Director shall coordinate the implementation of policies and guidelines set
14 by the Board of Regents. As a member of the Board of Regents, the Executive
15 Director shall articulate to the Board the mutual concerns of all the campuses.

16 The Executive Director shall perform the following roles and functions:

17 (a) Coordinate curriculum planning activities for the PAHS System;

18 (b) Oversee research projects related to agricultural science;

19 (c) Coordinate publication of research outputs of teachers, administrators,
20 and students from the PAHS System;

21 (d) Coordinate exchange programs with other educational institutions both
22 local and foreign;

23 (e) Develop and coordinate linkages and networking among the campuses
24 of the PAHS System with other institutions;

25 (f) Coordinate the implementation of the program for the identification
26 and selection of scholars for the PAHS System;

27 (g) Provide secretariat services to the Board of Regents; and

28 (h) Perform such other functions as may be deemed necessary.

29 For the efficient and effective implementation of the foregoing functions, the
30 Executive Director shall be provided with a staff.

1 **Section 10. *Campus Director.*** – The agricultural high schools established
2 under this Act different from the PAHS Main Campus shall each be headed by a
3 Campus Director who shall be appointed by the Board, upon recommendation of the
4 Executive Director on the basis of a search process. He/she shall have a fixed term
5 of six (6) years, renewable for another term at the option of the Board. The Campus
6 Director shall not be removed from office except for cause.

7 The Campus Director shall be the administrative and academic head of
8 his/her campus and shall be responsible for its smooth operations. The Campus
9 Director may constitute a consultative body which may act as a citizen's arm to
10 interpret the educational needs of the service area of the campus.

11 **Section 11. *Executive Committee.*** – There shall be an Executive
12 Committee composed of the Executive Director, the Campus Directors in all the
13 agricultural high schools included in the PAHS System, the heads of departments,
14 and such other ranking faculty members or officials of the PAHS System as may be
15 determined by the Executive Director, as members. The Committee shall be collegial
16 in character. It shall have the power to screen and select the students to be
17 admitted to the high schools; to select students who shall be recipients of
18 scholarship, stipends, and other allowances in accordance with duly promulgated
19 criteria and rules; and to develop the curricula, course of study, and rules of
20 discipline, all subject to the approval of the Board. The Committee shall have the
21 exclusive power to recommend students eligible for graduation.

22 The Committee shall implement and execute the policies laid down by the
23 Board of Regents and exercise such other functions, powers, and duties as the
24 Board may prescribe.

25 **Section 12. *Registrar.*** – The PAHS (Main Campus) shall have a Registrar
26 who shall also act as Secretary of the Board of Regents. The Registrar shall be
27 appointed by the Executive Director with the approval of the Board of Regents.
28 He/She shall keep such records as may be prescribed by the Board.

29 All other Registrars of the agricultural high schools in the PAHS System shall
30 be appointed by their respective Campus Directors with the approval of the Board of
31 Regents.

1 **Section 13. *Treasurer.*** – The PAHS (Main Campus) shall have a treasurer
2 who shall be appointed by the Executive Director with the approval of the Board of
3 Regents. All accounts and expenses shall be audited by the Commission on Audit
4 (COA).

5 **Section 14. *Professors, Instructors, and other Faculty Members.*** –
6 Professors, instructors, and other faculty members of the PAHS System shall be
7 exempt as such from any civil service examination or regulations as a requisite to
8 appointment. They shall be selected in accordance with such criteria as may be
9 established by the Board of Regents which shall include, if necessary and
10 practicable, competitive screening examination.

11 **Section 15. *Donations, Legacies, Gifts, and Other Contributions.*** – All
12 donations, legacies, gifts, and other contributions for the benefit of the PAHS System
13 or its support and maintenance or for aid to any of its students shall be tax-exempt
14 and shall be an allowable deduction from the gross income of the donors. For the
15 purpose of the income tax, the PAHS System shall be exempt from the payment of
16 all taxes, fees, assessments, and other charges of the Government, its branches,
17 and subdivisions.

18 **Section 16. *Philippine Agricultural High School (PAHS) System Fund.***
19 – All income and donations to the PAHS (Main Campus) or the agricultural high
20 schools created under this Act shall constitute a special fund to be known as the
21 Philippine Agricultural High School (PAHS) System Fund. This fund shall be expended
22 by the Board of Regents exclusively for the purposes of this Act.

23 **Section 17. *Funding.*** – To carry out the purposes of this Act, including the
24 operation of the PAHS (Main Campus) and agricultural high schools established
25 under this Act, including the operations of the schools, the acquisition, improvement,
26 and development of the land on which the schools shall be built, the construction,
27 maintenance, and repair of buildings and improvements, and the acquisition of
28 furniture, fixtures, and equipment, an initial appropriation of Five Hundred Million
29 Pesos (Php500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated. Thereafter, such amounts as
30 may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in

1 the Annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) of the Department of Agriculture as a
2 separate and distinct item.

3 **Section 18. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within sixty (60)
4 days from the effectivity of this Act, the Board of Regents shall promulgate the
5 implementing rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

6 **Section 19. *Separability Clause.*** – If any part or provision of this Act is
7 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions hereof which are
8 not affected shall continue to be in full force and effect.

9 **Section 20. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and
10 regulations, or portions thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed,
11 amended, or modified accordingly.

12 **Section 21. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
13 following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general
14 circulation.

Approved,