

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



23 JUN 19 P2:09

SENATE

S. No. 2281

RECEIVED BY: 

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**Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada**

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**AN ACT**  
**GRANTING FREE COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (SHS) STUDENTS TAKING TRAINING-VOCATIONAL-LIVELIHOOD TRACK AND OTHER SHS TRACKS REQUIRING CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY (COC) AND NATIONAL CERTIFICATES (NC), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Senior High School (SHS) curriculum was implemented in the country by virtue of Republic Act No. 10533, otherwise known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013". SHS is two (2) years of specialized upper secondary education that offers four tracks: (1) Academic; (2) Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL); (3) Sports; and (4) Arts and Design.

The TVL track has five (5) strands: Agri-Fishery Arts; Home Economics; Industrial Arts; Information and Communications Technology (ICT); and TVL Maritime. After finishing a TVL track in Grade 12, a student may obtain a National Certificate Level II (NC II), provided that he or she passes the competency-based assessment of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). NC II improves employability of graduates in fields like agriculture, electronics, and trade.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [The K to 12 Basic Education Program | Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines](#)

Based on the records of the Department of Education (DepEd), the number of enrollees in the TVL track declined in the past years:

- School Year 2017-2018 – 1,025,097 enrollees
- School Year 2018-2019 – 1,085,926 enrollees
- School Year 2019-2020 – 1,082,531 enrollees
- School Year 2020-2021 – 993,856 enrollees

To assist the SHS students taking the TVL track, the DepEd issued regulations in the past school years to implement the Joint Delivery Voucher Program for Senior High School Technical Vocational and Livelihood Specializations (JDVP-TVL). JDVP-TVL is “a tuition fee assistance to Grade 12 students in DepEd public SHSs, which have been identified as having inadequate facilities, equipment, tools and teachers relevant to the implementation of TVL specializations.”<sup>2</sup>

DepEd Order No. 006, s. 2023 promulgated on March 21, 2023 provides for the “Guidelines on the Implementation of the Joint Delivery Voucher Program for Senior High School Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Specializations for School Year 2022-2023”. Item No. 23 of the said Order states that, “The voucher subsidy for the assessment fee in the amount of P550.00 shall be limited to one National Certification (NC). The learner-beneficiary shall take the NC of his or her choice in any Assessment Center (AC) which must be conducted before the end of the school year. However, if the learner-beneficiary takes more than one NC or if the NC assessment fee exceeds the total cost of the assessment subsidy, the partner institution may cover the said fee, or the school-recipient may request the assistance of the LGU.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [DO s2023 006.pdf \(deped.gov.ph\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [DO s2023 006.pdf \(deped.gov.ph\)](#)

However, such coverage of assessment fee in the JDVP-TVL is not always provided. To illustrate:

- assessment fee is covered for school year 2018-2019, as provided under DepEd Order No. 033, s. 2018;<sup>4</sup>
- assessment fee is covered for school year 2019-2020, as provided under DepEd Order No. 019, s. 2019;<sup>5</sup>
- assessment fee is not covered for school year 2020-2021, as provided under DepEd Order No. 035, s. 2020;<sup>6</sup>
- assessment fee is not covered for school year 2021-2022, as provided under DepEd Order No. 040, s. 2021;<sup>7</sup>
- assessment fee is covered for school year 2022-2023, as provided under DepEd Order No. 006, s. 2023.<sup>8</sup>

The Philippine Institute of Development Studies emphasized in its study that, “there is a clamor to subsidizing the fees for taking the NC exams for TVL graduates, particularly for students from poorer households. The NCs are expected to boost SHS graduates’ probability of being hired. If they are not able to take certification assessments for one reason or the other, then it deprives them of the chance of getting certified.” Moreover, the study added that the government should “explore the possibility of supporting students who are required to take the exam by their employers but cannot afford the exam fees in taking NC exams. Maybe an amount can be set aside from existing fund and a mechanism be put in place.”<sup>9</sup>

To help achieve the objective of employability of SHS students after graduation, the “*Free Competency-Based Assessment for Senior High School Act*” seeks to make the assessment being conducted by TESDA free for all SHS students by including it in the voucher program for the SHS curriculum, to include all tracks

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<sup>4</sup> [C:\Users\jlcabiles\Documents\tije\\_bitippine\\_flepartment.tif \(deped.gov.ph\)](C:\Users\jlcabiles\Documents\tije_bitippine_flepartment.tif)

<sup>5</sup> [C:\Users\jlcabiles\Documents\aeptibtic of t.tif \(deped.gov.ph\)](C:\Users\jlcabiles\Documents\aeptibtic of t.tif)

<sup>6</sup> [A9R19m8dfy\\_1o6qo71\\_3jg.tmp \(deped.gov.ph\)](A9R19m8dfy_1o6qo71_3jg.tmp)

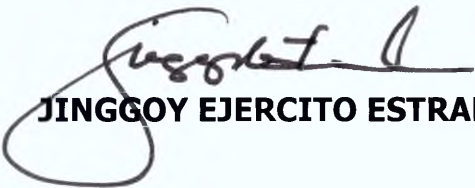
<sup>7</sup> [DO\\_s2021\\_040.pdf \(deped.gov.ph\)](DO_s2021_040.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [DO\\_s2023\\_006.pdf \(deped.gov.ph\)](DO_s2023_006.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Brillantes, K., Orbeta Jr., A., Francisco-Abrigo, K., Capones, E. and Jovellanos, J. (2019). Status of Senior High School Implementation: A Process Evaluation. Discussion Paper Series No. 2019-13

that require Certificates of Competency (COCs) and NCs. This will institutionalize the said benefits and therefore help the students maximize their available financial resources by allocating them to other expenses that they need to finish their studies.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this measure is highly recommended.




**JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA**

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*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 “*Free Competency-*  
2 *Based Assessment for Senior High School Act*”.

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to  
4 promote full employment, equality of employment opportunities, a rising standard of  
5 living, and an improved quality of life for all, complementary to the policy of the  
6 State to promote and make quality education accessible to all Filipino citizens,  
7 especially the youth. Towards this end, the State shall assist the Senior High School  
8 (SHS) students to achieve immediate employability by encouraging the certification  
9 of SHS students under the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track and other  
10 tracks requiring national certifications, through the granting of free competency-  
11 based assessment of Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

12 Sec. 3. *Free Competency-Based Assessment for SHS Students under the TVL*  
13 *and Other Tracks.* – All SHS students under the TVL and other tracks that require  
14 Certificates of Competency (COC) or National Certificate (NC) are granted free  
15 competency-based assessment conducted by Technical Education and Skills

1 Development Authority (TESDA) through the voucher program for the SHS  
2 curriculum being implemented by the Department of Education (DepEd).

3       Sec. 4. *Appropriations.* – The amount required to implement this Act shall be  
4 determined by the DepEd based on its projected number of enrollees in the TVL and  
5 other tracks that require COC or NC for each academic year. The initial funding for  
6 this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of DepEd. Thereafter,  
7 the amount necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the  
8 annual General Appropriations Act.

9       Sec. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within ninety (90) days  
10 from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, in coordination with TESDA, shall  
11 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this  
12 Act: *Provided,* That the non-promulgation of the said rules and regulations shall not  
13 prevent the immediate implementation of this Act upon effectivity.

14       Sec. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or  
15 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision or part not otherwise  
16 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

17       Sec. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
18 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation  
19 contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed,  
20 modified, or amended accordingly.

21       Sec. 8. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
22 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*