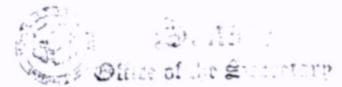


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE }
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
First Regular Session }



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SENATE
S.B. No. 1

RECEIVED BY 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VICENTE C. SOTTO III

AN ACT
PROVIDING MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIPS IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND
COLLEGES TO QUALIFIED STUDENTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Mahatma Gandhi once said “*It is health which is real wealth, and not pieces of gold and silver.*” It means that there is nothing in life that is more valuable than our health as it is a state of a person’s complete physical, mental and social well-being. It is that important that it has been a declared policy of the State, and enshrined in the highest law of the land, to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

However, even though the government is allotting so much of our limited resources for the country’s healthcare – with an increasing budget and spending trend every year – it seems that there are still a lot of areas for improvement. One of the areas that have to be addressed is the worsening shortage of doctors. In a statement given by the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) in 2014, it declared that the shortage is expected to reach 930,000 when the country’s population reaches 100 million – considering that the

“internationally-suggested” ratio is one doctor per 100 population¹. As of January 01, 2016, the population of Philippines was estimated to be 101,498,763 people; thus, the predicted shortage by the PMA in 2014 is not anymore a forecast but a reality – reality that has to be faced and solved head-on.

In addition to the scarcity in the number of doctors, another issue that has to be addressed in relation thereto is the severe “maldistribution” of physicians in the country caused by most doctors preferring to practice in the urban areas than in the rural.²

This proposed measure seeks to address both issues of scarcity and maldistribution of physicians because the granting of scholarships to deserving medical students would aid in the increase of the number of physicians in the country. At the same time, the condition stipulated in this bill that immediately after graduating from the program, the scholar must work in the country for five (5) years, two (2) years of which must be rendered in a government hospital or office where he/she resides would hopefully put a sense of balance in the distribution of doctors particularly in the government sector, which take care of nearly 70%³ of the health care needs of the population.

If the afore-cited issues would be solved, it will translate into better services and eventually a better nation, thus the passage of this bill is earnestly recommended.

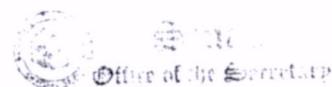

VICENTE C. SOTTO III

¹ <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/01/31/1285056/pma-warns-worsening-shortage-doctors>

² The Philippine Health Agenda for 2016 to 2022. Philippine Journal of Internal Medicine, Esperanza I. Cabral, M.D

³ *Ibid.*,

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AN ACT
PROVIDING MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIPS IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND
COLLEGES TO QUALIFIED STUDENTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

*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 “*Medical*
2 *Scholarship Act.*”

3 SECTION 2. **Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to
4 protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health
5 consciousness among them. In order to carry out such policy, the number of
6 health professionals who will provide for the needed health services must meet
7 the World Health Organization standards. Towards this end, the State shall
8 establish a scholarship program that will encourage aspiring medical
9 students to pursue education and training in the field of medicine and who,
10 thereafter, shall render their services in government hospitals or offices.

11 SECTION 3. **Qualifications of Candidates.** – A scholarship in a state-
12 run university or college shall be granted to any aspiring medical student,
13 subject to the following qualifications:

14 a) Must belong to the top twenty per centum (20%) of the graduating
15 batch;

- 1 b) The personal and/or family's income must not be sufficient to
2 support the aspiring medical student's education;
3 c) Must passed the National Medical Admission Test (NMAT);
4 d) Must passed the medical school's entrance examination
5 e) Such other qualifications as the state-run university or college may
6 deem necessary, provided that it shall not defeat the purpose of this
7 Act

8 SECTION 4. **Extent of Scholarship Grant.** – The scholarship grant
9 shall cover expenses for, among others, tuition, laboratory and miscellaneous
10 fees; required textbooks, school supplies and equipment; clothing and
11 uniform allowances; traveling expenses; board and lodging expenses; and
12 subsistence and living allowances.

13 SECTION 5. **Conditions of the Scholarship Grant.** – The admitted
14 scholars shall continue to enjoy the benefits of the scholarship grant until the
15 completion of the program, subject to the following conditions:

- 16 a) The scholar should finish the entire program without any delay;
17 b) The scholar may be allowed to file a leave of absence for one (1)
18 school year in the institution where he/she is enrolled only for
19 justifiable reasons;
20 c) No other scholarship grant shall be accepted by the scholar while
21 enjoying the benefits of this Act;
22 d) Immediately after graduating from the program, the scholar must
23 work in the country for five (5) years, two (2) years of which must be
24 rendered in a government hospital or office where he/she resides.

25 SECTION 6. **Failure to Comply with the Conditions.** – Failure of the
26 scholar to comply with Section 5 pars. (a), (b) and (c) shall automatically
27 disqualify him/her to enjoy the benefits of the scholarship program. In
28 addition thereto, the non-compliant scholar shall pay for all the expenses
29 incurred during his/her participation in the scholarship program if any
30 condition is breached.

31 SECTION 7. **Number of Scholars to be Admitted.** – Every five (5) years
32 upon the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Health
33 (DOH), the Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and

1 the President and a representative from the respective Boards of Regents of
2 the state universities or colleges concerned shall determine the number of
3 scholars that should be admitted every school year. The needed number of
4 physicians of the town or province where the state university or college is
5 situated shall be taken into consideration in determining the number of
6 scholars, provided that the admitted scholars in any state university or college
7 for any given school year shall not be less than five (5).

8 SECTION 8. **Appropriations.** – Fifty per centum (50%) of the amount
9 necessary to effectively carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall
10 be sourced from the DOH, while the remaining fifty per centum (50%) shall
11 be coming from the funds of the covered state-run university or college.
12 Thereafter, such amount necessary for the continued implementation of this
13 Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

14 SECTION 9. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within 60 days
15 after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of DOH, the Chairman of CHED,
16 and the President and a representative from the respective Boards of Regents
17 of the state universities or colleges concerned shall promulgate rules and
18 regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

19 SECTION 10. **Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is held
20 invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and
21 effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

22 SECTION 11. **Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, orders, and
23 issuances, or portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of
24 this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

25 SECTION 12. **Effectivity Clause.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
26 days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of
27 general circulation.

Approved,