

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4901



Introduced by Hon. John Marvin "Yul Servo" C. Nieto

EXPLANATORY NOTE

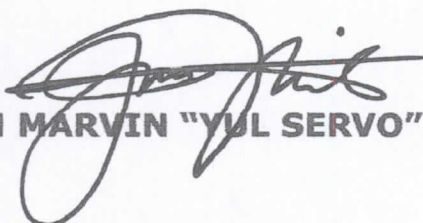
Article XIV, Section 1, of the 1987 Constitution provides that,

"The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."

Hence, it is the constitutional duty of the State to provide education to all persons regardless of their age. It is imperative to give to our senior citizens free education in order to help them achieve the goals and educational gain that they failed to attain during their younger years.

As a signatory to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) and Article 13 and Article 14 on Economic, Social and Cultural right, it is our international obligation to provide full and equal opportunities to education to all persons. The mandate of this convention is comprehensive enough to cover not just those who are in their formative years but also those who were not able to have access to it during their time; accessibility must be in law and in fact, without prejudice on any prohibited grounds; it must have economic accessibility, as it is provided in the convention that the State parties must progressively introduce free education in all levels and for all ages. Right to education occupies a great part in the exercise of other human rights and for one's development.

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


JOHN MARVIN "YUL SERVO" C. NIETO

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AN ACT PROVIDING FREE EDUCATION TO SENIOR CITIZENS

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 "Free Education for Seniors Act".

SECTION 2: Declaration of Policy - It is the State's duty to provide its citizens access to quality education regardless of their age. The state shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society. This bill seeks to ensure that quality education is made available to Senior Citizens by exempting them from the payment of tuition fees in any public school.

SECTION 3: Exemption from the payment of tuition fees - Senior Citizens as defined in this Act shall be exempt from paying tuition fees in any public school in the Philippines.

Senior Citizens availing of this exemption shall still be required to comply with the minimum admission requirements of the school he/she wishes to enroll in.

No additional academic requirements shall be imposed on Senior Citizens to avail of the exemption from payment of tuition fees under this Act.

SECTION 4: Who are considered Senior Citizens - For the purpose of availing the exemption from payment of tuition fees under this Act, any Filipino who is already sixty (60) years old or older shall be considered a Senior Citizen.

SECTION 5: Which schools are considered public - For the purposes of this Act, any school which receives regular funding from the government shall be considered a public school.

SECTION 6: Implementing rules and regulations - Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Education together with the Commission on Higher Education, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to further carry out this Act.

SECTION 7: Separability clause - If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts thereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SECTION 8: Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulation or part thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly,

SECTION 9: Effectivity Clause - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon completion of its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,