

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila  
  
NINETEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session



**HOUSE BILL NO. 7724**

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Introduced by Representative Alfred Delos Santos

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The 1987 Constitution states that The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

Such is the driving force and rationale behind a myriad of the government's programs and policies towards development. However, despite our best efforts, there still exists gaps in our efficient and effective delivery of services to our youth. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, there are more or less 4 million young people who are out of school, not gainfully employed, and have not finished college or post-secondary course.

The Department of Education and the National Youth Commission, way back in 2014, had thought of a solution to such problem. It launched the Abot-Alam program, which is a convergence of multiple government agencies and instrumentalities, seeking a reduction in the number of out-of-school youth in the country and to empower them through a tailor-made program intervention suited to the needs of each and every one of the out-of-school youth. It is a noble initiative and such, it is with best intentions in mind that such program have the full support of the government through the program's institutionalization into law.

The cliché goes that the youth are the hope of our nation. In order to uplift the lives of Filipinos in the peripheries and the provinces, we must take every possible measure to ensure that the youth have access to quality and relevant education.

It is for these foregoing premises that the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**ALFRED C. DELOS SANTOS**  
*Representative, Ang Probinsyano Party List*

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**HOUSE BILL NO. 7724**

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Introduced by Representatives Alfred Delos Santos and Ronnie L. Ong

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**AN ACT  
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ABOT-ALAM PROJECT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF**

*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 the “Abot-Alam Act”

**SECTION 2.** *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to be more proactive in addressing the issues that face out-of-school youth (OSY), recognizing their role in nation-building and in both public and civic affairs. As such, the State shall undertake the necessary steps to ensure that these OSYs are fully equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills that they need to become productive members of society.

**SECTION 3.** *Definition of Terms.* As used in this Act:

- a) “Out of School Youth (OSY) – refers to individuals aged 15 to 30 years old who:
  - a. Have not yet finished basic education and are currently not in school, whether employed or unemployed;
  - b. Have not yet finished higher education or any technical/vocational skills training and are currently not in school, whether employed or unemployed.
- b) OSYs Mapped – refers to OSYs who have been mapped and registered in the Abot-Alam database either through the household targeting done by the local DepEd or barangay, or online through the Abot-Alam website.
- c) Alternative Learning System (ALS) – is a parallel learning system to provide a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction. It encompasses both the nonformal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.
- d) ALS Partner – refers to an individual or group, organization and agency (e.g., LGUs, NGOs, private institutions/companies, religious groups, etc.) that implements ALS programs in different areas using their own resources and/or that provides technical assistance or other resources in support of ALS programs at any level.

**SECTION 4. Coverage.** – This Act shall apply to all OSYs as the primary beneficiaries.

**SECTION 5. Objective.** – This Act seeks to enroll OSYs in programs where they will acquire their desired knowledge and skills to enable them to become more productive members of society and to help improve their current economic conditions. This shall be done through two phases: the data-gathering phase and the program intervention phase.

The Data Gathering phase of the program consists of the organization or convening of the local alliances headed by the LGUs and the Schools Division Office, the data gathering and community mapping of the barangays and the OSYs therein, the mapping of programs for OSYs by the National Abot-Alam Council, and the program matching of the OSYs to their desired programs by the local alliances. The data gathered in community mapping shall be inputted into a National Abot-Alam database. Data on children 14 years old and below and adults above 30 years old who are out-of-school and have not yet finished basic education may be included in the mapping but will be enlisted in the existing ALS data collection processes

The Program Intervention phase shall consist of the enrollment or referral of OSYs Mapped to their desired programs, capacity-building for newly hired/assigned teachers for the implementation of the program, and learner assessment and certification.

**SECTION 6. The National Abot-Alam Council.** – There shall be created a National Abot-Alam Council, hereon referred to in this Act as the National Council, to oversee the implementation and realization of the directives as set forth in this Act. The council shall be composed of the following:

- a) Secretary of Education
- b) Chairperson of the National Youth Commission
- c) Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education
- d) Director-General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
- e) Secretary of the Labor and Employment
- f) Secretary of Social Welfare and Development
- g) Convenor of the National Anti-Poverty Commission
- h) Chairperson of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor.

The National Council shall be co-chaired by the Secretary of Education and the Chairperson of the National Youth Commission. The Department Secretaries and other members may not designate alternate representatives other than their respective undersecretaries or the equivalent of such to the meetings of the National Council.

**SECTION 7.** *Functions of the National Abot-Alam Council.* – The National Council shall have the following functions:

- a) Develop goals and key performance indicators in the implementation of this Act;
- b) Develop strategies to ensure smooth and effective implementation of this Act's objectives;
- c) Map existing programs and services that are offered by various organizations or agencies at each locality and provide such to the appropriate Multi-Sectoral Local Alliance. Such menu of programs must be furnished to the Multi-Sectoral Local Alliances within sixty (60) days from the constitution of the National Council;
- d) Monitor and assess the effectiveness of the program as laid out by this Act;
- e) Administer the appropriations as established in this Act;
- f) Ensure equitable prioritization and selection of recipients of the program;
- g) Submit reports and recommendations to Congress for needed adjustments in the existing legal framework to better carry out the policy of the State as declared in this Act.

**SECTION 8.** *Secretariat to the National Abot-Alam Council.* - A Secretariat to the National Council shall be established within the National Youth Commission, to be headed by an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the President and shall have the rank of Undersecretary. The Executive Director shall have at least seven (7) years of experience and practice in the fields of education, social work, or community development to qualify for appointment. The Executive Director shall be nominated by the National Council.

The Secretariat of the National Council is hereby established whose staffing structure and complement shall be submitted to the Department of Budget and Management for funding. Pending the creation of the appropriate plantilla positions, the National Council shall constitute an interim Secretariat within one (1) month from the approval of this Act, through the temporary detail of personnel from its member agencies.

The Secretariat shall have the following functions:

- a) Provide secretariat support to the National Council, including the preparation of draft strategies, priorities, and other outputs to be adopted;
- b) Consult with experts who can offer vital insights on policymaking and priority setting;
- c) Coordinate with various agencies of the government, the private sector, and other sector stakeholders to produce a comprehensive menu of programs and interventions available for OSYs;

d) Perform other functions as may be directed by the National Council.

**SECTION 9.** *Multi-Sectoral Local Alliances.* – There shall be Local Multi-Sectoral Alliances created at the provincial and city/municipal levels headed by the Schools Division Office (SDO) and the LGU. It shall be further composed of both government and non-governmental agencies/organizations and other stakeholders as would be determined by the SDO and the LGU. The commitment of relevant private organizations and stakeholders shall be formalized through a Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding among them.

The LGUs shall, in coordination with the SDOs and other relevant stakeholders, conduct the data gathering activities to map the households in all barangays and record information on OSYs. Such information shall be encoded appropriately for integration in the National Abot-Alam database. The information gathered shall, at the minimum, produce a list of OSYs per barangay, with all the data necessary to assess their needs. Such mapping of OSYs shall be done continuously until all barangays have been covered and all OSYs have been registered to the program.

The Multi-Sectoral Local Alliances shall oversee the matching of OSYs to the appropriate or desired programs from the menu of available services provided by the National Council to their locality and ensure the delivery of the matched programs and services to OSYs.

**SECTION 10.** *Appropriations.* – Such amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation for the concerned agencies. Thereafter, the funds necessary for this Act's continuous and effective implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SECTION 11.** *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The National Council shall formulate and promulgate the implementing rules and regulations and other issuances as may be necessary to ensure the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act within sixty (60) days from the approval thereof. The implementing rules and regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take effect (30) days after its publication in any newspaper of general circulation.

**SECTION 12.** *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, and proclamations, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act, are hereby amended or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 13.** *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

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

Approved,