

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



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**SENATE
P.S.R. No. 128**

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INTRODUCED BY **SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS**

RESOLUTION

**DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS OF THE UNIFIED STUDENT FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE SYSTEM FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION (UNIFAST) ALLEGEDLY
DUE TO QUESTIONABLE RELEASES OF FUNDS AND LACK OF CONTROL
MECHANISMS**

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 10687 or the Unified Assistance System for Tertiary Education Act (UniFAST) was signed into law on October 15, 2015;

WHEREAS, UniFAST is an attached agency of the Commission on Higher Education and is the primary implementer of the Free Higher Education (FHE) and Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES);

WHEREAS, the UniFAST law consolidates under one body all government-funded modalities of Student Financial Assistance Programs (StuFAPs) in order to make financial assistance programs more effective and efficient;

WHEREAS, the COA Annual Audit Report (AAR) for CHED flagged numerous issues with the "lack of control mechanisms" of CHED, specifically UniFAST, with regard to the questionable release of funds as well as the implementation of its key programs;

WHEREAS, COA has flagged overpayments for Tuition Fees and other School Fees (TOSFs) amounting to almost P131 million due to the deficient mechanisms of UniFAST to prevent over-charging and prevent erroneous payments;

WHEREAS, there are also cited reimbursements amounting to P251 million to Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) that were already being fully subsidized by their respective LGUs in violation of Section 55 of the IRR of RA 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education (UAQTE);

WHEREAS, COA listed around P3.443 billion worth of delayed and non-submission of the FHE billings and documents for the Free Higher Education Program (FHE) of UniFAST. Section 7.2.1 of COA Circular No. 2009-006 (dated September 15, 2009) prescribes the financial records to be immediately recorded and accessible to the auditors;

WHEREAS, COA also cited around P824 million in payments made to SUCs and LUCs with lacking supporting Official Receipts. This is contrary to Section 4(6) of PD No. 1445, and UniFAST's Memorandum Circular No. 2018-02 which requires an issuance of

ORs for every amount received from CHED, in relation to the implementation of RA 10931;

WHEREAS, the leakages flagged by COA amount to almost P7 billion which could have been used to build at least 7,000 classrooms or given classroom allowance to 1.4 million teachers¹;

WHEREAS, the recent COA report casts doubt as to the veracity and strength of the control mechanisms within UniFAST in implementing the Universal Access to Quality Education. These may just be the tip of the iceberg as to questionable practices and implementation of programs by the UniFAST;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, TO DIRECT THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS OF THE UNIFIED STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION (UNIFAST) ALLEGEDLY DUE TO QUESTIONABLE RELEASES OF FUNDS AND LACK OF CONTROL MECHANISMS.

Adopted.


RISA HONTIVEROS