

HONORABLE ROSANNA “RIA” V. VERGARA
Chairperson
Committee on Social Services
House of Representatives
Quezon City

Dear Representative VERGARA,

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) supports **House Joint Resolution 10** entitled “*Joint Resolution to Allocate Additional Funding for Educational Assistance Under the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) Program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)*,” by Reps. Raoul Dannel A. Manuel, France L. Castro, and Arlene D. Brosas.

To contribute to the all the Resolution’s enhancement, we are recommending the following:

1. General Comments

- 1.1 The resolution aimed at allocating additional 5.3 billion funding for Educational Assistance under the AICS Program of the DSWD taking into consideration the return to full face-to-face classes. However, the face-to-face classes already started as early as August of this year. Hence, the additional funding may no longer be applied this school year but for the following school year, i.e., SY 2023-2024. With this in mind, please consider amending the Joint Resolution to specify that the additional funding be allocated for school year 2023-2024 and/or to succeeding school years, if any.
- 1.2 To allocate the funds in favor of DSWD specifically directing the Department to allocate the said additional budget for Educational Assistance under the AICS Program.
- 1.3 To consider supporting the passage of the AICS program as a law since the institutionalizing of the AICS program is already being planned.
- 1.4 To determine whether the two million target beneficiaries were already assessed and validated to be eligible.
- 1.5 To identify a certain percentage of the total number of students from each academic level based on the current statistics of the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and be considered in the targeting which in turn will be the basis for the allocation.

- 1.6 To give equal amounts of financial aid, regardless of the student's level of education if there will be no basis for the varying amounts given to students belonging to different levels, specifically, an assessment as to which level of education is costlier compared to the others.
- 1.7 To The resolution shall include provision that will direct relevant government agencies such as the DEPED, CHED, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) including the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) to jointly implement and assist the DSWD undertake the nationwide distribution of educational assistance given the limited manpower and resources of the DSWD and to guarantee for a timely and smooth implementation to be able to serve the entire beneficiaries nationwide, optimize the additional funds provided and recommend the creation of a database of beneficiaries for succeeding payouts and issuance of a special guideline or joint memorandum circular to delineate roles and tasks among partner agencies mentioned.
- 1.8 To increase the assistance given to the Elementary School Students from Php 1,000 to P1,500 to be adequate for the needs of the students such as school supplies, uniform, etc.
- 1.9 To prioritize applicants who were not accommodated in the provision of educational assistance.
- 1.10 To consider addressing economic challenges, and strengthen the purchasing power of the allotted cash aid, otherwise, it may defeat some of the purpose from the provision of the program if the increasing rate of typical educational expenses will not be simultaneously addressed.
- 1.11 In furtherance of this resolution, objectives may be considered in the enhancement and/or IRR of the draft House Bill on Institutionalizing the Crisis Intervention Program of the DSWD once approved/enacted into a law.

For the Chairperson's information and reference.

Very Truly Yours,



EDUARDO M. PUNAY

OIC, Secretary

Date: 12 JAN 2023