



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FIFTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION, 2006

PUBLIC LAW NO. 15-109

H. B. No. 15-195, HS1, HD2

AN ACT

To repeal and re-enact Chapter 6 of Division 1 of Title 3 of the Commonwealth Code to reestablish the Post-secondary Teacher Education Program Scholarship for another five years and to establish the Medical School Professional Scholarship; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE FIFTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1           **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the Post Secondary  
2 Teacher Education Program Scholarship (PSTEPS) was enacted with the passage of Public  
3 Law 10-58, as amended by Public Law 11-34, on May 15, 1997. The scholarship program  
4 was established to encourage more CNMI students to become teachers and serve the CNMI's  
5 rapidly growing student population, thereby decreasing the costly practice of recruiting  
6 teachers from outside of the CNMI. The PSTEPS was instrumental in helping over 50  
7 students to become teachers; however, the program expired on September 30, 2004.

8           The Legislature further finds that the Public School System (PSS) continues to lack  
9 certified teachers to fill its classrooms and that there continues to be a need to encourage  
10 CNMI students to become teachers. Approximately 80 teachers resigned from their posts in  
11 the last school year leaving PSS with the daunting task of replacing these teachers. Recently,  
12 teachers have been recruited from off-island, which means that PSS will incur additional  
13 costs of recruitment and repatriation. The Legislature finds that the Commonwealth must  
14 continue to build upon the capacity of local resident teachers in order to meet the demands of  
15 a growing student population. It would be more prudent to invest funds used for teacher  
16 recruitment and repatriation expenses in the education of CNMI students who wish to  
17 become teachers by providing scholarships.

1           The Legislature finds that the Commonwealth also lacks medical doctors to fill  
2 essential positions at the Department of Public Health (DPH). The DPH expends an  
3 exorbitant amount of money each year on recruitment, housing, and repatriation fees of  
4 medical doctors and their families, in addition to the hundred thousand plus salaries of all  
5 such doctors. Again, it would be more sensible to invest these funds in educating CNMI  
6 students in the field of medicine by providing scholarships. The CNMI needs more local  
7 resident doctors to fill the medical doctor positions at the DPH.

8           Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to (1) re-establish the Post Secondary Teacher  
9 Education Program Scholarship to help meet the continued demand for teachers in the  
10 Commonwealth, (2) establish the Medical School Professional Scholarship, (3) require the  
11 submission of an annual report of the administration of the scholarship programs to the  
12 Governor, the presiding officers of the Legislature, the Commissioner of Education, and the  
13 Secretary of the Department of Public Health, and (4) provide a sunset provision for the  
14 PSTEPS, the Medical School Professional Scholarship, and the CNMI Honor Scholarship  
15 Program.

16           **Section 2. Repealer and Re-enactment.** Chapter 6 of Division 1 of Title 3 of the  
17 Commonwealth Code is repealed and reenacted to read as follows:

18           **“Chapter 6. Post Secondary Teacher Education Program and**  
19           **Medical School Professional Scholarships.**

20           **“§ 1601. Post Secondary Teacher Education Program Scholarship.**

21           (a) There is hereby established a Post Secondary Teacher Education Program  
22 for the purpose of awarding undergraduate college scholarships to not more than ten  
23 (10) students a year who are pursuing a degree in education at an accredited college  
24 or university in the Commonwealth or the United States or its territories to pay for  
25 costs directly related to the student's educational needs, including but not limited to  
26 tuition, textbooks and school supplies, transportation, and housing.

27           (b) The amount allocated for each scholarship shall be up to \$8,000 per annum  
28 for students attending the Northern Marianas College and up to \$15,000 per annum

1 for students attending a four-year college or university in the United States or its  
2 territories for a period of up to four (4) years.

3 (c) Criteria and Requirements. To be eligible for this scholarship program an  
4 individual shall:

5 (1) Be a United States citizen.

6 (2) Be a CNMI resident for at least three (3) consecutive years prior to  
7 enrollment in a college or university.

8 (3) Furnish a letter of acceptance from a U.S. accredited college or  
9 university.

10 (4) Agree to return to the CNMI after graduation from college and  
11 work as a teacher in the Public School System for a period of two years for  
12 each year of scholarship assistance, or if fails or refuses to complete this  
13 obligation, agree to remit all the scholarship funds received through this  
14 scholarship program back to the CNMI government.

15 (5) Agree to reimburse the CNMI of all moneys received if the student  
16 chooses to switch course of studies to a major other than teaching.

17 (6) Sign a fully executed Post Secondary Teacher Education Program  
18 Scholarship Agreement, or successor agreement.

19 (d) As a condition of continuing scholarship assistance, a scholarship recipient  
20 shall do the following:

21 (1) Maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale a  
22 semester.

23 (2) Enroll in no less than fifteen (15) credit hours a semester and be a  
24 full time student in an accredited teacher education program at a college or  
25 university.

26 (3) Submit a certified copy of their grades for each semester to the  
27 CNMI Scholarship Office and a class schedule for the next semester.

1           **§ 1602. Medical School Professional Scholarship.**

2           (a) There is hereby established a Medical School Professional Scholarship for  
3 the purpose of awarding scholarships to not more than five (5) students a year who  
4 are pursuing a degree in medicine at a U.S. accredited medical school to pay for costs  
5 directly related to the student's educational needs, including but not limited to tuition,  
6 textbooks and school supplies, transportation, and housing.

7           (b) The amount allocated for each scholarship shall be up to \$15,000 per year  
8 for students attending a U.S. accredited medical school for a period of up to five (5)  
9 years.

10          (c) **Criteria and Requirements.** To be eligible for this scholarship program an  
11 individual shall:

12                   (1) Be a United States citizen.

13                   (2) Be a CNMI resident for at least three (3) consecutive years prior to  
14 enrollment at a medical school.

15                   (3) Possess a bachelor's degree.

16                   (4) Furnish a letter of acceptance from a U.S. accredited medical  
17 school.

18                   (5) Agree to return to the CNMI after graduation from medical school  
19 and work as a medical doctor at the Department of Public Health for a period  
20 of two years for each year of scholarship assistance, or if fails or refuses to  
21 complete this obligation, agree to remit the all the scholarship funds received  
22 through this scholarship program back to the CNMI government.

23                   (6) Agree to reimburse the CNMI of all moneys received if the student  
24 chooses to switch course of studies to a major other than medicine.

25                   (7) Sign a fully executed Medical School Professional Scholarship  
26 Agreement, or successor agreement.

27          (d) As a condition of continuing assistance, a scholarship recipient shall do the  
28 following:

1 (1) Maintain every semester a cumulative grade point average of 3.0  
2 on a 4.0 scale or the cumulative grade point average required of the institution  
3 attending whichever is higher.

4 (2) Enroll in no less than fifteen (15) credit hours a semester and be a  
5 full time student at an accredited medical school.

6 (3) Submit a certified copy of their grades for each semester and a  
7 class schedule for the next semester to the CNMI Scholarship Office.

8 **§ 1603. Conditions of Scholarship Award.**

9 (a) The recipients of the scholarships under this Act agree to reimburse the  
10 CNMI of all scholarship funds received if the student fails to return to the CNMI after  
11 graduation and work at the Public School System or work at the Commonwealth  
12 Health Center for a period of two years for each year of scholarship assistance.

13 (b) The recipients of the scholarships under this Act are ineligible for any  
14 other financial assistance funded by the CNMI Government.

15 (c) The recipients of the scholarships under this Act shall not enroll in an “on-  
16 line” program. An “on-line” program is a program that requires participation solely  
17 through the use of the Internet and does not require physical presence in a classroom  
18 or laboratory setting or other setting that provides practical experience.

19 (d) Graduate or postgraduate applicants or students are not qualified for the  
20 scholarship under § 1601 of this chapter.

21 **§ 1604. Program Administration.**

22 The CNMI Scholarship Office shall administer the Post Secondary Teacher  
23 Education Program and the Medical School Professional scholarships. The CNMI  
24 Scholarship Office may promulgate rules and regulations to effectively implement  
25 this Act.

26 **§ 1605. Reporting.**

27 The CNMI Scholarship Office shall submit an annual report to the presiding  
28 officers of the Legislature, the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, and the  
29 Secretary of Public Health reporting, among other things, the number of students

1 participating in the program, the number of students who have successfully completed  
2 their teaching degree or medical degree at a college or university, the number of  
3 participated students who have returned to the Commonwealth to teach in the schools  
4 or work at the Department of Public Health.

5 **§ 1606. Sunset.**

6 The provisions of this Act shall expire five (5) years after the effective date of  
7 this Act.”

8 **Section 3. Continuous Appropriation.** Notwithstanding any provision of law, the  
9 Legislature hereby appropriates Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00)  
10 annually commencing fiscal year 2008 from revenues generated pursuant to Public Law  
11 13-38 to fully implement the intent Section 2 of this Act. Any balance not awarded yearly  
12 shall be deposited into the CNMI Scholarship Fund for disbursement to CNMI Scholarship  
13 Programs for the Educational Assistance Program (EAP).

14 **Section 4. Amendment.** Article 5 of Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title 3 of the  
15 Commonwealth Code is amended by adding a new § 1344 to read as follows:

16 **“§ 1344. Sunset.**

17 The provisions of this article, as amended by Public Law 14-37, shall expire  
18 five (5) years after the effective date of this Act.”

19 **Section 5. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such  
20 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent  
21 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or  
22 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

23 **Section 6. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be  
24 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes  
25 repealed or under any rule, regulation or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers  
26 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law.  
27 The enactment of this Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying,  
28 any liability civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence at the date this Act,  
29 becomes effective.

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**Section 7. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**ATTESTED TO BY:**

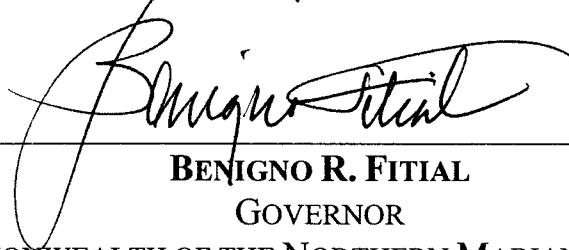


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**OSCAR M. BABAUTA**  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE



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**EVELYN C. FLEMING**  
HOUSE CLERK

APPROVED on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2007



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**BENIGNO R. FITIAL**  
GOVERNOR  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS