

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 65, October 18, 1946]

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN OF THE PHILIPPINE ARMY AND OF RECOGNIZED OR DESERVING GUERRILLA ORGANIZATIONS, AND VETERANS OF THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTIONS, CREATING THEREFOR A PHILIPPINE VETERANS BOARD IN THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Officers and enlisted men in good standing of the Philippine Army and of recognized or deserving guerrilla organizations who took active participation in the resistance movement, and/or in the liberation drive against the enemy, who, in civilian life, were actually occupying appointive positions in any office, instrumentality, branch or agency of the Commonwealth Government, or in any government-owned or subsidized corporation, and who, upon being inactivated or mustered out of the armed forces, desire to resume their old positions or employments, are hereby granted the right to do so, and, upon proper application shall be recalled to their respective pre-war positions or employments, unless they have committed any act which under existing laws would disqualify them from further holding public office. For the purpose herein set forth, it shall be the duty of the official who is by law authorized to recall and/or make the appointments of officials and employees above mentioned to hold open the positions and employments referred to in this section until six months after the approval of this Act: *Provided, however,* That if any such positions had already been filled with the appointment of any person other than the veteran, the said position is automatically declared vacant and open upon the application of the veteran.

SEC. 2. Officers and enlisted men in good standing of the Philippine Army, and of any recognized or deserving guerrilla organization who took active participation in the resistance movement and/or in the liberation drive against the enemy who desire to study, shall upon certification of the Chairman of the Philippine Veterans Board, be admitted to any school, college, university, or institute free from tuition or matriculation fees or other school fees: *Provided, however,* That no private school, college, university, or institute can be compelled to accept any number which exceeds twenty per centum of its entire enrollment.

SEC. 3. The benefits of the next preceding section shall be available only to those who signify their desire to study to the Chairman of the Philippine Veterans Board before the end of the year nineteen hundred and forty-seven.

SEC. 4. Applications for enrollment in any school, college, university, or institute shall be filed with the Philippine Veterans Board, hereunder created, which shall make the necessary arrangements for the applicant's enrollment.

SEC. 5. The persons mentioned in sections one and two hereof may also be allowed to take promotional examinations to allow them to graduate from any school, college, or university, if they would have graduated there from had they studied without interruption during the war; or to any grade or year to which they would now be if they had continued with their studies during the whole period of the war: *Provided*, That the applications to take such promotional examinations are filed within one year from the date of the approval of this Act.

SEC. 6. In order to carry into effect the purposes of this Act there is hereby created a Philippine Veterans Board in the Department of National Defense which shall take charge of effectuating the duties herein or hereinafter assigned to it by law. In connection therewith, the Board shall compile a permanent list of (1) officers and enlisted men of the Philippine Army who joined the colors at the start of the war, (2) members in good standing of recognized or deserving guerrilla organizations, (3) political prisoners who were killed by the Japanese Armed Forces, or were left by them to die in prison, and their widows, minor children and other dependents, (4) parents of deceased soldiers, (5) officers and enlisted men of deserving guerrilla organizations who died in line of duty, and their widows, orphans and other dependents, (6) veterans of Philippine revolutions against Spain and the United States. It shall also be the duty of the Board to pass upon the merits and qualifications of persons applying for the rights and/or privileges extended by this Act, pursuant to such rules as it may adopt to insure the speedy and honest fulfillment of its aims and purposes. For the purposes of this section, any officer or enlisted man of the Philippine Army or of any recognized or deserving guerrilla organization or any political prisoner shall be presumed to have died in line of duty if they have not been heard from by the nearest of kin within one year after September 2, 1945. For the purposes of this section persons who are buried in military cemeteries shall be presumed members of the Philippine Army or of deserving guerrilla organizations.

SEC. 7. The Board shall be composed of a Chairman and four other members to be appointed by the President with the consent of the Commission on Appointments from among veterans of the Philippine Army and of recognized or deserving guerrilla organizations. If not already in the service of the Government, the Chairman and members of the Board shall be entitled to a per diem of fifteen pesos each for every meeting actually attended by them. The Chairman shall be executive officer of the Board and shall be assisted by such officers and employees as may be detailed from the Department of National Defense or from any bureau or office under said Department with the approval of the President: *Provided*, That the President, upon recommendation of the Secretary of National Defense, may appoint such officers and employees from among veterans of the Philippine Army and of recognized or deserving guerrilla organizations who are not already in the government service, and fix their compensation: *Provided, further*, That the President may, in his discretion, grant additional compensation to the Chairman aside from the *per diems* to which the latter may be entitled. The Board shall adopt with the approval of the Secretary of National Defense such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act and is hereby empowered to award appropriate medals of honor, diplomas or insignias for distinguished service to persons who have patriotically participated in the resistance movement and liberation of the Philippines, or have given valuable information, aid, help and comfort to those engaged in such resistance movement and liberation not entitled to receive pensions