

CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

4251



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE FERDINAND L. HERNANDEZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to convert the Surallah National Agricultural School (SUNAS), Province of South Cotabato into a State College to be known as the South Cotabato State College (SCSC), and appropriating funds therefor.

The Surallah National Agricultural School was first established in 1976 and is the lone government tertiary agricultural institution in the entire Province of South Cotabato. In spite of the limited resources under its command, the school has virtually succeeded in meeting the demands of upgrading and updating the process of modern higher learning. As mandated by its charter, it has effectively served the people of South Cotabato and other nearby provinces within the region, through various agriculture and technical related courses and has maintained its level of competence as a learning institution.

Now, it is our aspiration to have the school converted into a state college as we see the need to further improve the facilities, infrastructures of the institution in order that better quality of education would be available to our students. We also hope that through this conversion more courses would be available so that students would not need to travel to other provinces.

Finally, it is important to note that South Cotabato is the Regional Seat of Government of Region XII, yet it has no state college that would cater to and address the long-time clamor of the communities for the offering of collegiate courses by a government institution.

And, as the Province of South Cotabato is geared towards industrialization, education - specifically tertiary education, must be able to answer the growing demand of industries and other small and medium business enterprises to complement the industrial growth of the province. All these necessitate the conversion into a state college in the Province of South Cotabato.

In view of the foregoing, passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

FERDINAND L. HERNANDEZ

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Sixteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4251

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE FERDINAND L. HERNANDEZ

AN ACT
CONVERTING THE SURALLAH NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL IN
THE MUNICIPALITY OF POLOMOLOK, PROVINCE OF SOUTH
COTABATO INTO A STATE COLLEGE TO BE KNOWN AS THE SOUTH
COTABATO STATE COLLEGE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Conversion. – The Surallah National Agricultural School in the Municipality of Polomolok, Province of South Cotabato is hereby converted into a State College to be known as the South Cotabato State College, hereinafter referred to as the College.

SEC. 2. General Mandate. – The College shall primarily provide both advanced instruction and research in agriculture and allied technological sciences including education, arts and related sciences. It shall also undertake extension and development programs, and provide the necessary instructional and research leadership in agricultural, environmental and technological development in the SOCCSKSARGEN

SEC. 3. Curricular Offerings. – The College shall offer undergraduate and graduate courses in the fields of agriculture, environmental management, engineering, education, arts and sciences, and other degree courses within its areas of specialization and according to its capabilities, as the Board of Trustees may deem necessary to carry out its objectives and in order to meet the needs of the Province of South Cotabato and the SOCKSARGEN.

SEC. 4. Administration. – The College shall have the general powers of a corporation set forth in Batas Pambansa Blg. 68, as amended, otherwise known as

the "Corporation Code of the Philippines". The administration of the College and the exercise of its corporate powers shall be vested exclusively in the Board of Trustees and the President of the College.

SEC. 5. *The Governing Board.* – The governing board of the College shall be the Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board, which shall be composed of the following:

- (a) The Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Chairperson;
- (b) The President of the College, Vice Chairperson;
- (c) The Chairperson of the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture of the Senate, member;
- (d) The Chairperson of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education of the House of Representatives, member;
- (e) The Regional Director of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), member;
- (f) The Regional Director of the Department of Agriculture (DA), member;
- (g) The President of the faculty association of the College, member;
- (h) The President of the student council of the College, member;
- (i) The President of the alumni association of the College, member;
and
- (j) Two (2) prominent citizens from the private sector who have distinguished themselves in their profession or fields of specialization of the College, members.

The Board shall appoint the two (2) prominent citizens from among a list of at least five (5) qualified persons in the Province of South Cotabato, as recommended by the search committee constituted by the College President, in consultation with the Chairperson of the CHED and other members of the Board, based on the normal standards and qualifications for the position.

The term of office of the President of the faculty association, the President of the student council and the President of the alumni association shall be coterminous

with their respective terms of office, as set forth in their respective constitutions and bylaws.

The two (2) prominent citizens shall serve for a term of two (2) years from the date of appointment.

SEC. 6. *Promulgation and Implementation of Policies.* – The Board shall promulgate and implement policies in accordance with the declared State policies on education and other pertinent provisions of the Philippine Constitution on education, agriculture, science and technology, as well as the policies, standards and thrusts of the CHED under Republic Act No. 7722, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994".

SEC. 7. *Powers and Duties of the Board of Trustees.* – The Board shall have the following specific powers and duties, in addition to its general powers of administration and the exercise of all the powers granted to the board of directors of a corporation under existing laws:

- (a) To promulgate rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and functions of the College;
- (b) To receive and appropriate all sums as may be provided for the support of the College in the manner it may determine in its discretion, in order to carry out the purposes and functions of the College;
- (c) To import duty-free economic, technical and cultural books and/or publications, upon certification by the CHED that such imported books and/or publications are for economic, technical, vocational, scientific, philosophical, historical or cultural purposes, in accordance with the provisions of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended;
- (d) To receive in trust legacies, gifts and donations of real and personal properties of all kinds and to administer and dispose of the same when necessary for the benefit of the College, and subject to the limitations, directions and instructions of the donor, if any.

Such donations shall be exempt from the donor's tax and the same shall be considered as allowable deductions from the gross income in the computation of the income tax of the donor, in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as

amended: *Provided*, That such donations shall not be disposed of, transferred or sold;

- (e) To fix the tuition fees and other necessary school charges such as, but not limited to, matriculation fees, graduation fees and laboratory fees, as the Board may deem proper to impose, after due consultations with the involved sectors. Such fees and charges, including government subsidies and other income generated by the College, shall constitute special trust funds and shall be deposited in any authorized government depository bank, and all interests that shall accrue therefrom shall form part of the same funds for the use of the College. Any provision of existing laws, rules and regulations to the contrary notwithstanding, any income generated by the College from tuition fees and other charges, as well as from the operation of auxiliary services and land grants, shall be retained by the College, and may be disbursed by the Board for instruction, research, extension or other programs/projects of the College: *Provided*, That all fiduciary fees shall be disbursed for the specific purposes for which these are collected.
If, for reasons beyond its control, the College shall not be able to pursue any project for which the funds have been appropriated and allocated under its approved program of expenditures, the Board may authorize the use of said funds for any reasonable purpose which, in its discretion, may be necessary and urgent for the attainment of the objectives and goals of the College;
- (f) To adopt and implement a socialized scheme of tuition and school fees for greater access to poor but deserving students;
- (g) To authorize the construction or repair of its buildings, machinery, equipment and other facilities, and the purchase and acquisition of real property, including necessary supplies, materials and equipment;
- (h) To appoint upon recommendation of the President of the College, Vice Presidents, deans, directors, heads of campuses, faculty members, and other officials and employees of the College;
- (i) To fix and adjust salaries of faculty members and administrative officials and employees, subject to the provisions of the Revised Compensation and Position Classification System and other pertinent

budget and compensation laws governing hours of service and such other duties and conditions as it may deem proper; to grant them, at its discretion, leaves of absence under such regulations as it may promulgate, any provision of existing law to the contrary notwithstanding; and to remove them for cause in accordance with the requirements of due process of law;

- (j) To approve the curricula, instructional programs and rules of discipline drawn by the Administrative and Academic Councils herein provided;
- (k) To set policies on admission and graduation of students;
- (l) To award honorary degrees upon persons in recognition of their outstanding contribution in the fields of education, public service, arts, science and technology, agriculture or in any field of specialization within the academic competence of the College; and to authorize the awarding of certificates of completion of non-degree and non-traditional courses;
- (m) To establish and absorb non-chartered tertiary institutions within the Province of South Cotabato as branches and centers in coordination with the CHED, and in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and to offer therein programs or courses, to promote and carry out equal access to educational opportunities as mandated by the Constitution;
- (n) To establish research and extension centers of the College where such will promote the development of the latter;
- (o) To establish professorial chairs in the College and to provide fellowships for qualified faculty members and scholarships to deserving students;
- (p) To delegate any of its powers and duties provided Herein above to the President and/or other officials of the College as it may deem appropriate, so as to expedite the administration of the affairs of the College;
- (q) To authorize an external management audit of the College, to be financed by the CHED, subject to the rules and regulations of the Commission on Audit (COA); and to institute reforms, including

academic and structural changes, on the basis of the audit results and recommendations;

- (r) To collaborate with other governing boards of the state colleges and universities within the Province of South Cotabato or the REGION XII (SOCCSKSARGEN), under the supervision of the CHED and in consultation with the DBM, and work towards the restructuring of the College to become more efficient, relevant, productive and competitive;
- (s) To enter into joint ventures with business and industry for the profitable development and management of the economic assets of the College, the proceeds from which shall be used for the development and strengthening of the College;
- (t) To develop consortia and other economic forms of linkages with local government units, institutions and agencies, both public and private, local and foreign, in the furtherance of the purposes and objectives of the College;
- (u) To develop academic arrangements for institutional capability building with appropriate institutions and agencies, public and private, local and foreign, and to appoint experts/specialists as consultants, part-time or visiting or exchange professors, scholars or researchers, as the case may be;
- (v) To set up the adoption of modern and innovative modes of transmitting knowledge such as the use of information technology, the dual learning system, open or distance education and community laboratory for the promotion of greater access to education;
- (w) To establish policy guidelines and procedures for participative decision-making and transparency within the College;
- (x) To privatize, where most advantageous to the College, management of non-academic services such as health, food, building or grounds or property maintenance and such other similar activities; and
- (y) To extend the term of the President of the College beyond the age of retirement but not beyond the age of seventy (70), whose performance has been unanimously rated by the Board as outstanding based on the guidelines, qualifications and/or standards set by the Board, after unanimous recommendation by the search committee.

SEC. 8. Meetings of the Board. – The Board shall regularly convene at least once every quarter. However, the Chairperson of the Board may, upon three (3) days' prior written notice, call a maximum of two (2) special meetings whenever necessary.

A quorum of the Board shall consist of majority of all its members holding office at the time of the meeting: *Provided, however,* that the Chairperson of the Board or the President of the College is among those present in the meeting.

In the absence of the Chairperson of the CHED, a Commissioner of the CHED, duly designated by him/her, shall represent him/her in the meeting with all the rights and responsibilities of a regular member: *Provided, however,* That during this meeting, the President of the College as Vice Chairperson shall be the Presiding Officer: *Provided, further,* That this *provison* notwithstanding, the Chairperson of the CHED is hereby authorized to designate a CHED Commissioner as the regular Chair of the Board, in which case said CHED Commissioner shall act as the Presiding Officer.

In case the Chairpersons of the Congressional Committees on Education shall not be able to attend the Board meeting, they may duly designate their respective representatives to attend the said meeting, who shall have the same rights and responsibilities as a regular member of the Board.

The members of the Board shall not receive any salary but shall be entitled to reimbursements for actual and necessary expenses incurred, either in their attendance to meetings of the Board or in connection with other official business authorized by resolution of the Board, subject to existing laws and regulations.

SEC. 9. The College President. – The College shall be headed by a President, who shall render full-time service. He/she shall be appointed by the Board, subject to the guidelines, qualifications and/or standards set by the Board, upon recommendation of a duly constituted search committee.

He/she shall serve for a term of four (4) years and shall be eligible for reappointment for another term: *Provided,* That in order to effect a smooth transition to a state College, the incumbent President of the Surallah National Agricultural School shall *ipso facto* become the first President of the College.

Within six (6) months before the expiration of the term of office of the incumbent President of the College, the Board shall constitute the Search Committee for the Presidency (SCP).

In case of vacancy in the Office of the President by reason of death, compulsory retirement, resignation, removal for cause or incapacity of the president to perform the functions of his/her office, the Board shall have the authority to designate an Officer-in-Charge of the College pending the appointment of a new President.

In case of vacancy in the Office of the President as mentioned in the immediately preceding paragraph, his/her successor or the Officer-in-Charge shall serve only the unexpired portion of the term.

The powers and duties of the President of the College, in addition to those specifically provided in this Act, shall be those usually pertaining to the Office of the President of similar universities, and those delegated by the Board.

The salary of the President of the College shall be in accordance with the Revised Compensation and Position Classification System and shall be comparable to that being received by the Presidents of similar educational institutions.

The President of the College shall be assisted by a Vice President for Academic Affairs and a Vice President for Administration, who shall be appointed by the Board upon recommendation of the President.

SEC. 10. *The Administrative Council.* – There shall be an Administrative Council consisting of the President of the College as Chairperson, Vice Presidents, deans, directors and other officials of equal rank as members, whose duty is to review and recommend to the Board the policies governing the administration, management and development planning of the College.

SEC. 11. *The Academic Council.* – There shall be an Academic Council to be composed of the President of the College, who shall act as Chairperson, and all the academic staff with the rank of at least an assistant professor, as members.

The Academic Council shall have the power to review and recommend the curricular offerings and rules of discipline of the College, subject to the approval of the Board. It shall fix the requirements for the admission of students as well as for their graduation and the conferment of degrees, subject to review and/or approval by the Board through the President of the College. It shall have the disciplinary power

over students of the College and shall formulate academic policies and rules and regulations on discipline, subject to the approval of the Board.

SEC. 12. *The Secretary of the College.* – The Board shall appoint a Secretary, who shall serve as such for both the Board and the College and shall keep all records and proceedings of the Board. He/she shall serve upon each member of the Board the appropriate notice of the Board meetings.

SEC. 13. *The Treasurer of the College.* – The Treasurer of the Philippines shall be the *ex officio* treasurer of the College.

SEC. 14. *The Faculty.* – No political beliefs, gender preference, cultural or community affiliation or ethnic origin, and religious opinion or affiliation shall be a matter of inquiry in the appointment of faculty members of the College: *Provided, however,*

That said appointment shall be subject to the guidelines, qualifications and/or standards set by the Board: *Provided, further,* that no member of the faculty shall teach for or against any particular church or religious sect.

SEC. 15. *Scholarship Program/Admission.* – The College shall provide a scholarship program and other affirmative action programs to assist poor but deserving students who qualify for admission to the College. No student shall be denied admission to the College by reason of sex, religion, cultural or community affiliation or ethnic origin.

SEC. 16. *Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy.* – The College shall enjoy academic freedom and institutional autonomy, pursuant to paragraph 2, Section 5 of Article XIV of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

SEC. 17. *Authority to Loan or Transfer Apparatus/Equipment/Supplies and Detail of Personnel.* – The heads of the bureaus and offices of the national government are hereby authorized to loan or transfer, upon the request of the President of the College, such apparatus, equipment or supplies as may be needed by the College, and to detail employees for duty therein when, in the judgment of the head of bureau or office, such apparatus, equipment, supplies or services of such employees can be spared without serious detriment to the public service. The employees so detailed shall perform such duties as required of them by the President of the College, and the time so employed shall be counted as part of their regular services.

SEC. 18. Assets, Liabilities and Personnel. – All assets, real and personal, personnel and records of the Surallah National Agricultural School, as well as liabilities or obligations, are hereby transferred to the College. The positions, rights and security of tenure of faculty members and personnel therein employed under existing laws prior to the conversion into a College shall be respected.

All parcels of land belonging to the government occupied by the **The Surallah National Agricultural School** are hereby declared to be property of the College and shall be titled under that name: *Provided*, That should the College cease to exist or be abolished or should such parcels of land aforementioned be no longer needed by the College, the same shall revert to the national government.

SEC. 19. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the The Surallah National Agricultural School. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued operation and maintenance of the South Cotabato State College shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 20. Development Plan, Management Audit/Organizational/ Administrative/ Academic Structure. – Within the period of one hundred twenty (120) days after the approval of this Act, the College shall accomplish the following:

- (a) Submit a five (5)-year development plan, including its corresponding program budget to the CHED, for corresponding recommendation to the DBM;
- (b) Undergo a management audit in cooperation with the CHED;
And
- (b) Accordingly set up its organizational, administrative as well as academic structure, including the appointment of the College key officials.

SEC. 21. Filing of Report. – On or before the fifteenth (15th) day of the second (2nd) month after the opening of the regular classes each year, the Board shall file with the Office of the President of the Philippines through the Chairperson of the CHED, and with both Houses of Congress a detailed report on the progress, conditions and needs of the College.

SEC. 22. *Supplementary Application.* – The provisions of Republic Act No. 8292, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997", shall be an integral part of this Act and shall serve as part of the Governing Charter of the College.

SEC. 23. *Parity Clause.* – All other powers, functions and privileges, responsibilities and limitations to state universities and/or their officials under existing laws shall be deemed granted to or imposed upon the College and/or its officials, whenever appropriate.

SEC. 24. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Board, in consultation with the CHED, shall formulate the guidelines to fully implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 25. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 26. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 27. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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