

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4580



**Introduced by: Representatives Gil P. Acosta, Frederick F. Abueg, Franz
Josef George E. Alvarez**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to institutionalize a Medical Center in Palawan and shall be called Western Philippines Medical Center.

Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution evidently provides that the *"State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill consciousness among them."* More so, Section 11 of Article XIII provides that the *"State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."*

The enactment of RA 10879 marks the establishment of MIMAROPA as a region. This set up provided a unique opportunity for a region of the country, while sharing the Southern Tagalog culture and tradition.

Among the five provinces comprising the MIMAROPA Region, Palawan had the biggest population in 2015 with 1,104,000 inhabitants; 255,000 of which are Puerto Princesa residents.

The Philippine Statistics Authority further revealed that Palawan is the fastest growing province in the region with an average annual population growth rate (PGR) of 1.84 percent during the period 2010 to 2015. It was followed by Occidental Mindoro (1.40 percent), Oriental Mindoro (1.38 percent), and Romblon (0.59 percent). Marinduque posted the lowest provincial PGR of 0.55 percent. Puerto Princesa City posted a PGR of 2.62 percent.

As it is common knowledge, the Province of Palawan has been hailed as the Best Island in the World. Tourists would be attracted to visit the province because of this declaration. For this reason, the Western Philippines Medical Center, established in Palawan, will be more accessible and available to visitors from other places due to the abundant flight availability to the province compared to other provinces in the MIMAROPA region.

In MIMAROPA Region, only Palawan has a membership in the International aggroupation of trading partners in the ASEAN Region. The BIMP-EAGA bolsters Palawan's unique position in the Philippines and in MIMAROPA as a venue for Government institutional establishment and advancement of support mechanisms for regional development.

Among others, a DOH data discloses that renal disease is now one of the top ten causes of death among Filipinos. In fact, seven thousand patients die annually due to kidney malfunction in the country. The DOH predicts 10 to 15 percent increase in a year. In the Province of Palawan alone, the numbers go as high as 157 patients per year.

On the other hand, each year, 170,000 Filipinos die from cardiovascular diseases, according to a 2009 study by the Department of Health. In the Province of Palawan 268 patients per year die of heart-related diseases.

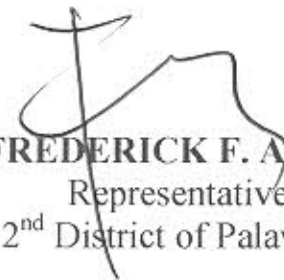
Bearing all these in mind, it is imperative that a medical center be established in the City of Puerto Princesa to address the growing demands for health services vis-à-vis rate of population growth and tourism arrivals of Palawan and Puerto Princesa.

More so, the City of Puerto Princesa, where the airport is located, is the perfect location to house this medical center as it also provides readily available land area and environment conducive for the realization of the goals and purpose of the medical center.

In view of the foregoing, it is of extreme importance that the creation of the Western Philippines Medical Center which specializes in kidney and heart diseases and approval of this bill are earnestly sought.



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1st District of Palawan

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1 **AN ACT CREATING A BODY CORPORATE TO BE KNOWN AS THE**
2 **WESTERN PHILIPPINES MEDICAL CENTER AND FOR OTHER**
3 **PURPOSES**
4

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

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8 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as “The Western
9 Philippines Medical Center Charter Act of 2016.”

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11 **SECTION 2. Creation of the Western Philippines Medical Center.** – There
12 is hereby created a corporate body, for the benefit primarily of the Province of
13 Palawan, to be known as the “Western Philippines Medical Center,” hereinafter
14 referred to as the WPMC.

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16 **SECTION 3. BOARD OF TRUSTEES.** – THE WPMC shall be administered
17 by a Board of Trustee composed of the following members:

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20 (a) The Governor of the Province of Palawan;

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23 (b) The Chairman of the Committee on Budget and Appropriations of the
24 Sangguniang Palalawigan of Palawan;

(c) The Chairman of the Committee on Health and Sanitation of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Palawan;

(d) The Provincial Health Officer of the Province of Palawan;

(e) The Mayor of the City of Puerto Princesa;

(f) The Chairman of the Committee on Budget and Appropriations of the City Council of Puerto Princesa;

(g) The Chairman of the Committee on Health and Sanitation of the City Council of Puerto Princesa ;

(h) The City Health Officer of the City of Puerto Princesa;

(i) The Regional Director of the Department of Health MIMAROPA Region;

(j) The Chief of Hospital of the WPMC.

The term of the representative from the private sector and the representative from social, civic or religious sector organization in the province shall be three (3) years.

The members of the Board of Trustees, except for the Chief of Hospital, shall serve without compensation and allowances for the entire duration of their terms. However, each member of the Board of Trustees shall be entitled to per diem for every board meeting actually attended. The Board of Trustees shall fix the amount of per diem its members may be entitled to, subject to the pertinent budgetary laws, rules, and regulations on compensation, honoraria and allowances.

The Governor of the Province of Palawan shall serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees and shall be its presiding officer. The Mayor of Puerto Princesa shall serve as Co-chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The members of the Board of Trustees shall elect from among themselves the Vice Chairman of the Board.

A majority of six (6) members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum to transact business. Any decision of the majority of such six (6) members on matters duly presented to the Board of Trustees shall constitute a valid and binding act of WPMC, except on matters where existing laws and the by-laws, rules, and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees require a great number.

SECTION 4. The Chief of Hospital. – The Chief of Hospital shall be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the WPMC. He shall be appointed by the Chairman, with the concurrence of the Board of Trustees, and shall serve for a term of four (4) years, unless sooner removed for cause, resigns, dies, or is incapacitated. He shall receive regular salaries, allowances and other emoluments as may be determined by the Board of Trustees. He shall, among others, recommend the appointment, removal, compensation structure of the personnel thereof, for the approval of the Board of Trustees. He shall also exercise such other powers and functions as provided in the by-laws, rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5. Property of the WPMC. – The property of the WPMC shall consist of such real, personal, mixed and other type of property, now owned or reserved for, or may hereafter be given, acquired, donated, transferred or conveyed to the WPMC by the national government, its branches and instrumentalities, other local government units, any foreign government, as well as by the trusts, foundations, corporations or persons, alien or domestic, in order to carry its purposes and objectives as set forth herein.

SECTION 6. Purposes and Objectives. – The purposes and objectives of the WPMC are as follows:

- (a) To establish, operate, manage and maintain a general hospital in the Province of Palawan, specifically in the City of Puerto Princesa, for the benefit and welfare primarily of the people of Palawan;
- (b) To promote and develop a center for the delivery of quality and affordable medical and surgical care to the people of Palawan in particular, and MIMAROPA Region in general;
- (c) To promote, develop and undertake a comprehensive family medicine program with emphasis on the preventive and curative aspects of health care;

- (d) To develop a multi-specialty center with focus on the diagnostic and therapeutic components of difficult specialized cases;
- (e) To facilitate, encourage and/or undertake the training of provincial and paramedical health care providers on the practical and scientific conduct and implementation of medical services and related activities.
- (f) To promote and develop a research center for locally-based health concerns; and
- (g) To extend medical services to the general public, to prevent, relieve, or alleviate afflictions and maladies of the people, especially the poor and less fortunate in life without regard to race, creed, or political belief.

SECTION 7. Powers – For the attainment and furtherance of the above-cited purposes and objectives, the WPMC, as a body corporate acting through its Board of Trustees, shall have all the powers pertaining to a juridical person, and is therefore authorized, among others:

- (a) To acquire, hold and own in any manner, property of whatever nature or description, and to dispose of such property under any mode of encumbrance or conveyance.
- (b) To enter into, make, perform, carry out contracts of every kind and for any lawful purpose with any person, firm association or corporation, whether public or private, domestic, or foreign;
- (c) To mortgage, lease, sell, transfer, convey, or otherwise dispose of its properties;
- (d) To solicit and receive donations, endowments and funds in the form of contributions, whether in cash or in kind, from both the public and private sectors and from domestic or foreign sources;
- (e) To open such accounts in banks and other financial institutions, and to disburse such funds or invest the same as the Board of Trustees may direct to accomplish or advance the purposes or interest of the WPMC;
- (f) To invite foreign or local specialists and similar experts in various medical fields to train the personnel, trainees or residents of the WPMC;

- (g) To send the personnel of the WPMC to research institutes, medical institutes or universities for advance training or observation and to attend international or regional conventions, conferences or seminars as the Board of Trustees may deem necessary to accomplish the purposes and objectives of the WPMC;
- (h) To enter into such agreements and arrangements with other medical or similar institutions, domestic or foreign, as may be deemed desirable by the Board of Trustees toward promoting the purposes and objectives of the WPMC;
- (i) To adopt a set of by-laws, rules, and regulations, policies, guidelines and procedures consistent with law and provisions hereof to govern the administration and operation of the WPMC; and
- (j) To do all such other acts and things as are or may be necessary for or incidental to the accomplishment for the purposes and objectives of the WPMC.

SECTION 8. Program for Indigents. – The Board of Trustees shall ensure that the WPMC shall institute a program for indigent patients. The number of beds allocated for indigent patients shall not be less than twenty five percent (25%) of the total number of hospital beds.

SECTION 9. Ospital ng Palawan.– The Ospital ng Palawan shall be a developed and integrated into the **Western Philippines Medical Center** as a medical facility that specialize in kidney and heart diseases.

SECTION 10. Security of Tenure of Civil Service Officers and Employees of the WPMC. – The provisions of Republic Act. No. 6656, entitled: “ An Act to Protect the Security of Tenure of Civil Service Officers and Employees in the Implementation of Government Reorganization,” existing civil service laws, rules and regulations and other applicable laws shall apply to all officers and employees of the WPMC, except to the members of the Board of Trustees and the Chief of Hospital.

SECTION 11. Funding. – The DOH shall allocate the amount necessary for the design and construction of the WPMC.

The Province of Palawan and the City of Puerto Princesa shall each allocate a yearly amount which corresponds to 15% of Annual expenditure program of the WPMC.

SECTION 12. Assistance from other Government Entities. – The WPMC may call upon any department, bureau, office, agency or instrumentality of the national government, including government-owned and/or controlled corporations and local government units, for technical assistance it may need in the pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

SECTION 13. Annual Report. – The WPMC shall render to the Provincial Government of Palawan and the City Government of Puerto Princesa an annual report of its activities and recommendations.

SECTION 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The Department of Health shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations as necessary to carry out this act.

SECTION 15. Repealing Clause . – All laws, decrees, ordinances, rules, and regulations, executive or administrative orders, and other presidential issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 16. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect immediately upon its approval.

Approved,