

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4750**



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

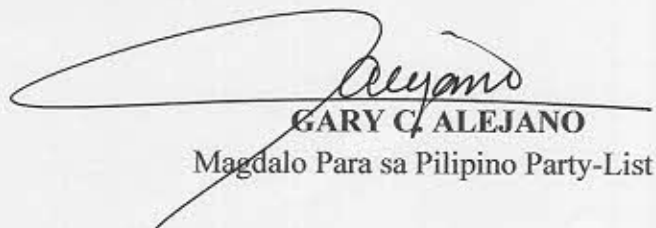
EXPLANATORY NOTE

On June 21, 1969, Republic Act 5680, "An Act Creating the Board for Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists" was approved. Unlike all other regulatory acts that enforce the laws on one profession, Republic Act 5680 was created to regulate two different allied health professions, Physical therapy and Occupational therapy. Since then, said act had never been amended to respond to current global trend and national development.

Physical therapy is a separate and distinct profession from Occupational Therapy by definition, scope of practice and educational requirements. Physical therapy has its own professional association, the Philippine Physical Therapy Association (PPTA) which is duly accredited by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and duly-registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The association is well recognized as a member of the World Confederation of Physical Therapists and Asian Confederation for Physical Therapy. Likewise, Occupational Therapy has a separate and distinct professional association, the Occupational Therapy Association of the Philippines, Inc. (OTAP) which is duly accredited by the PRC and duly registered by the SEC, and well recognized and accepted as a member of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) since 1908.

In the event of the approval of the General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) and its implementation in the ASEAN region, in so far as the business service sector which includes professional services is concerned, the already marketable Filipino physical therapists and occupational therapists will be further catapulted to overseas employment. Global demand tempered by national and regional economic constraints, new immigration laws and international competition is fast requiring more quality in health care professionals, including physical therapists and occupational therapists. It then becomes imperative to align regulatory functions, such as professional standards and competencies, among physical therapists only and separate them only from those for occupational therapists.

Thus, this bill seeks the amendment of R.A. 5680 for the purpose of upgrading and updating the competence, knowledge, skills and attitudes of the Filipino occupational therapists and physical therapists to make them globally competitive and nationally accessible to the disabled population of the Philippines. It is for these reasons that the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


GARY C. ALEJANO
Magdalo Para sa Pilipino Party-List

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AN ACT
REGULATING THE REGISTRATION, LICENSURE, AND PRACTICE OF
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
RELATED PURPOSES

1 **SEC. 1. Short Title of Act.** – This Act shall be known as “*The Philippine Occupational Therapy*
2 *Law of 2017*”.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Statement of Policy.** – The State recognizes the importance of occupational therapists in
5 nation building. Hence, it shall develop and nurture competent, virtuous, productive and well-rounded
6 occupational therapists whose standards of practice and service shall be excellent, world class and
7 globally competitive through inviolable, honest, effective and credible licensure examinations and
8 through regulatory measures, programs and activities that foster their continuing professional growth.

9
10 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

11
12 a.) Occupational therapy - is a client-centered health profession concerned with promoting health
13 and well-being through occupation. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable
14 people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational therapists achieve this
15 outcome by working with people and communities to enhance their ability to engage in the
16 occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or
17 the environment to better support their occupational engagement.

18
19 b.) The Scope and Nature of the Practice of Occupational Therapy – shall embrace, but is not
20 limited to, the analysis and application of purposeful and meaningful activities need to, or are
21 expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their
22 occupational engagement.

23 c.) The Scope and Nature of the Practice of Occupational Therapy – shall embrace, but is not
24 limited to, the analysis and application of purposeful and meaningful activities specifically
25 directed to occupational performance in the areas of self-care, work, play, and leisure.
26 Reference to occupation is in the context of the individual’s goal-directed use of time, energy,
27 interest, and attention. Upon referral, occupational therapists interpret and intervene or
28 address problems impeding functional or adaptive performance. The purpose is to prevent

1 limitations in participation, and to promote, maintain, or restore occupational performance,
2 health, and psychosocial wellbeing. Occupational therapy may be part of the health and/or
3 social services in hospitals, community settings such as residential, vocational, and leisure
4 centers, schools, day programs, private agencies, the academe, clinics, the work place and
5 other organizations which provide preventive or health promotive services.

- 6
7 d.) Occupational Therapist – refers to a person who is a holder of a valid registration and
8 professional license issued by the Board of Occupational Therapy and the Professional
9 Regulation Commission, and who is legally qualified to practice occupational therapy in the
10 Philippines pursuant to this Act.

11
12
13 **ARTICLE II**
14 **CREATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY**
15 **BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**
16

17 **SEC. 4. *Creation and Composition of the Board.*** – There is hereby created a Board of
18 Occupational Therapy, hereafter referred to as the Board, under the administrative supervision of the
19 Professional Regulation Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, composed of a
20 chairperson and two (2) members appointed by the President of the Philippines within six (6) months
21 from the enactment of this Act upon the recommendation of the Commission from among occupational
22 therapists of recognized standing nominated by the accredited and integrated professional organization of
23 occupational therapists.

24
25 **SEC. 5. *Powers and Functions of the Board.*** – The Board shall have the following powers and
26 functions:

- 27
28 a.) Promulgate, administer, and enforce rules and regulations necessary for carrying out the
29 provisions of this Act;
30 b.) Supervise and regulate the registration, licensure and practice of occupational therapy in the
31 Philippines;
32 c.) Administer oaths in connection with the administration of this Act;
33 d.) Adopt an official seal of the Board;
34 e.) Maintain a roster of occupational therapists indicating therein the basic information about the
35 registered professionals;
36 f.) Issue, reinstate, suspend, cancel or revoke the registration and license, or special permits for
37 the practice of occupational therapy;
38 g.) Study and monitor conditions affecting the practice of occupational therapy and adopt such
39 measures as may be deemed necessary for the enhancement of the profession and
40 maintenance of high professional and ethical standards;

- 1 h.) Ensure, in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) or its equivalent,
2 that all educational institutions offering occupational therapy education comply with the
3 prescribed policies, standards, and guidelines;
- 4 i.) Prescribe the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for occupational therapists endorsed
5 by the accredited and integrated professional organization of occupational therapists;
- 6 j.) Hear or investigate any violations of this Act, its implementing rules and regulations and the
7 Code of Ethics, and for this purpose, issue *Subpoena duces tecum* and/or *ad testificandum* to
8 secure the appearance of the witnesses and the production of documents in connection
9 therewith; Provided that the decision of the Board shall, unless appealed to the Commission,
10 become final and executory after fifteen (15) days from receipt of judgment or decision;
- 11 k.) Prescribe guidelines and criteria in the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program
12 for occupational therapists;
- 13 l.) Prescribe the subjects in the licensure examination and table of specifications, determine the
14 syllabi of the subjects and their relative weights, score and the rate examination papers, and
15 submit the results to the Commission within the period provided for in the rules of the
16 Commission;
- 17 m.) Administer the examinations to applicants for the practice of occupational therapy in
18 accordance with the provisions of this Act;
- 19 n.) Adopt a program for the full computerization of the licensure examination;
- 20 o.) Grant registration without examination subject to approval by the Commission;
- 21 p.) Issue special permits to persons admitted to the practice of occupational therapy for a specific
22 duration of time, and certificates of recognition for advanced studies, researches and
23 accomplishments that contribute to the enrichment of the Profession;
- 24 q.) Perform such other powers and functions as deemed necessary to carry out the objectives of
25 this Act.

26
27 The policies, resolutions, rules and regulations, orders or decisions issued or promulgated by the
28 Board shall be subject to review and approval of the Commission.

29
30 **SEC. 6. *Qualifications of Board Members.*** - The members of the Board shall, at the time of
31 their appointment, possess the following qualifications:

- 32 a.) A resident of the Philippines for at least (5) years;
- 33 b.) A duly registered occupational therapists under this Act, with a valid certificate of
34 registration and professional license;
- 35 c.) Has engaged in rendering occupational therapy services for at least five (5) continuous years
36 immediately preceding appointment;
- 37 d.) A member of good standing of the accredited and integrated professional organization of
38 occupational therapists, and not an officer thereof;
- 39 e.) Has no prior conviction by any competent court, of an offense involving moral turpitude; and
- 40 f.) Has no pecuniary interest, directly or indirectly, in any school, college or university or
41 institution conferring an academic degree necessary for admission to the practice of

1 occupational therapy; or where review classes in preparation for licensure examination are
2 offered or conducted; nor be a member of faculty or administration thereof.

3
4 **SEC. 7. Term of Office.** – The members of the Board shall hold office for a term of three (3)
5 years or until their successors have been appointed and duly qualified; *Provided, That*, members of the
6 first Board to be appointed after the approval of this Act shall hold office for the following terms: the
7 chairperson for three years, one member for two years, and the other member for one year; *Provided,*
8 *Further*, that a chairperson or member may be re-appointed for a second term, but may not serve more
9 than two consecutive three-year terms or six consecutive years. Interim vacancies shall be filled for the
10 unexpired term only.

11
12 **SEC. 8. Removal of Board Members.** – Any member of the Board may, upon the
13 recommendation of the Commission after due process of law and investigation conducted by the
14 Commission, be suspended or removed by the President from office for cause such as gross neglect of
15 duty, incompetence, malpractice, unprofessionalism, immorality, unethical or dishonorable conduct, final
16 judgment of crimes involving moral turpitude, and manipulating or rigging of the licensure examination
17 results, disclosure of secret and confidential information in the examination questions prior to the conduct
18 of the said examination, or tampering of grades.

19 **SEC. 9. Compensation and Allowances of the Board.** – The Chairperson and members of the
20 Board shall receive compensation and allowances comparable to that being received by the chairpersons
21 and members of existing regulatory boards under the Commission as provided for in the General
22 Appropriations Act.

23
24 **SEC. 10. Supervision of the Board, Custodian of Records, Secretariat, and Support Services.** –
25 The Board shall be under the administrative supervision of the Commission. All records of the Board,
26 including applications for examination, examination papers and results, minutes of deliberation,
27 administrative cases, and other investigations involving occupational therapists, shall be kept by the
28 Commission.

29
30 The Commission shall designate the Secretary of the Board and shall provide the secretariat and
31 other support services to implement the provisions of this Act.

32
33 **SEC. 11. Annual Report.** – The Board shall, at the close of each calendar year, submit an annual
34 report to the Commission, giving a detailed account of its proceedings and accomplishments during the
35 year and recommending measures to be adopted, with the end in view of upgrading and improving the
36 conditions affecting the practice of occupational therapy in the Philippines.

37 38 **ARTICLE III**

39 **LICENSURE EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION**

40
41 **SEC. 12. Examination Required.** – All applicants for registration for the practice of occupational
42 therapy shall be required to undergo a licensure examination to be given by the Board in such places and

1 dates as the Commission may designate subject to compliance with the requirements prescribed by the
2 Commission.

4 **SEC. 13. *Qualifications for Examination.*** – An applicant for the licensure examination for
5 occupational therapists shall establish, to the satisfaction of the Board, that the following qualifications
6 are met:

- 7 a.) A citizen of the Philippines or a foreigner whose country has reciprocity agreement with the
8 Philippines;
- 9 b.) Has not been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude;
- 10 c.) A graduate of a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy degree or its equivalent degree
11 as determined by the board from a school, college or university in the Philippines or abroad
12 whose occupational therapy program is recognized by the Commission on Higher Education.

13 **SEC. 14. *Scope of Examination.*** – The licensure examination for occupational therapists shall
14 cover the basic sciences and health science foundations integrated into the following domains:

16 a.) Occupational Therapy Application 1

- 17 1. Occupational Therapy Theories and Frames of Reference
- 18 2. Growth and Human Development
- 19 3. Occupational Performance and Behavior Across the Lifespan
- 20 4. Occupational-based practice

22 b.) Occupational Therapy Application 2

- 23 1. Adult Physical Dysfunction
- 24 2. Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics
- 25 3. Occupational Therapy in Geriatrics
- 26 4. Psychosocial Dysfunction
- 27 5. Community-based Practice

29 c.) Occupational Therapy Application 3

- 30 1. Professional Reasoning and Behavior
- 31 2. Professional Competence and Ethics
- 32 3. Organization, Administration and Management
- 33 4. Research Process

35 The Board, subject to approval by the Commission, may revise or exclude any of the subjects or
36 add new ones as the need arises, and may adjust or modify the percentage weight of the subjects in order
37 to keep the examination abreast and in conformity with the latest developments in the profession here and
38 abroad.

1 **SEC. 15. *Ratings in the Examination.*** – To be qualified as having passed the licensure
2 examination for occupational therapists, a candidate must have obtained a general average of seventy-five
3 percent (75%), with no grade lower than sixty percent (60%) in any given subject.
4

5 **SEC. 16. *Report of Ratings.*** – The Board shall submit to the Commission the ratings obtained by
6 each candidate within ten (10) calendar days after the examination, unless extended for just cause.

7 **SEC. 17. *Issuance of the Certificate of Registration, Professional License, and Professional***
8 ***Identification Card.*** – Registration and a professional license shall be issued to examinees who pass the
9 licensure examination for occupational therapists subject to payment of fees prescribed by the
10 Commission. The registration and professional license shall bear the signature of the chairperson of the
11 Commission and the members of the Board, stamped with the official seal, indicating that the person
12 named therein is entitled to practice the profession with all the privileges appurtenant thereto. The
13 registration and license shall remain in full force and effect until revoked or suspended in accordance with
14 this Act.
15

16 **SEC. 18. *Initial.***– The initials OTRP, which stands for Occupational Therapists Registered
17 Philippines, shall be used following the name of the registered occupational therapist, especially when
18 signing documents pertinent to the practice of the profession.
19

20 **SEC. 19. *Refusal to Register.*** – The Board shall refuse to register any successful examinee who
21 has been convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of any criminal offence involving moral turpitude,
22 or has been found guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct after investigation by the Board, or has been
23 declared to be of unsound mind. The reason for the refusal shall be set forth in writing.
24

25 **SEC. 20. *Reinstatement, Re-issuance or Replacement of Certificate of Registration and***
26 ***Professional License.*** – Two years after the date of revocation, the Board may, upon application and for
27 reasons deemed proper and sufficient, reinstate any revoked certificate of registration or professional
28 license, and in so doing, may, in its discretion, exempt the applicant from taking another examination.
29

30 A new certificate of registration, professional license, or special permit, to replace lost, destroyed,
31 or mutilated ones, may be issued subject to the rules as implemented by the Board.
32

33 **SEC. 21. *Oath of Occupational Therapists.*** – Successful examinees qualified for registration,
34 and qualified applicants for registration without examination, shall be required to take an oath of
35 profession before any member of the Board or any government official authorized by the Commission to
36 administer oaths, prior to entering into the practice of occupational therapy in the Philippines.
37

38 **SEC. 22. *Indication of Licensure and Privilege Tax Receipt.*** – The occupational therapist shall
39 be required to indicate his/her registration/professional license number and date of issuance thereof, the
40 duration of validity of said license, including his or her privilege tax receipt number, on the documents
41 he/she signs, uses or issues in connection with the practice of his/her profession.

SEC. 23. *Revocation or Suspension of the Certificate of Registration and Cancellation of Special Permit.* – The Board may, after giving proper notice of hearing to the party concerned, revoke the practitioner’s certificate of registration and professional license, or be suspended from the practice of the profession; or cancel the special permit for any of the causes or grounds mentioned in Section 25 of this Act or for any unprofessional or unethical conduct, malpractice, violation of any of the provisions of this Act, its rules and regulations, the Code of Ethics, and Standards of Practice for occupational therapists.

SEC. 24. Roster of Occupational Therapists. – The Board shall prepare, update and maintain a roster of occupational therapists which shall contain the name of each registered occupational therapist, his residence and office addresses, the date of registration and issuance of certificates, and other data which the Board may deem pertinent. The roster shall be open to the public, copies of which shall be mailed to each person listed therein.

SEC. 25. Issuance of Special and Temporary Permit. – Special or temporary permits upon recommendation of the integrated professional organization of occupational therapists may be issued by the Board, subject to the approval by the Commission and payment of the fees the latter has prescribed and charges, to the following persons:

- 1) Foreign-licensed occupational therapists called for consultation or a specified purpose that is deemed essential to national development; *Provided, That*, the practice shall be limited only for the particular work being engaged; *Provided, Further*, that there is no Filipino therapists qualified for such consultation or purpose.
- 2) Foreign-licensed occupational therapists whose service shall be free and who are highly needed under particular settings;
- 3) Foreign-licensed occupational therapists engaged as professors, lecturers, or critics in fields essential to occupational therapy education in the Philippines, whose engagement is limited to teaching only; and
- 4) Foreign-licensed occupational therapist recognized as an expert or specialist whose service is deemed essential to the advancement of the profession in the Philippines.

The permit shall among other things, include these limitations and conditions: valid only for a period of not more than one year subject to renewal; the branch or specialty of occupational therapy which the permit holder can practice, and; the specific place or places of practice such as clinic, hospital, center, school/college/university offering the course of occupational therapy. The Board, subject to the approval by the Commission, shall prescribe rules and regulations for the implementation of this particular section.

ARTICLE IV

PRACTICE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

SEC. 26. Prohibition on the Practice of Occupational Therapy. – No person shall practice or offer to practice occupational therapy, nor offer to be an occupational therapists, or use the title, word, letter, figure, or any sign tending to convey the impression of being an occupational therapists, nor

1 advertise or indicate in any manner whatsoever to be qualified to perform the work of an occupational
2 therapists without passing the licensure examination given by the Board, except as otherwise provided in
3 this Act.

4
5 **SEC. 27. *Prohibited Acts.*** – No person shall:

- 6 a.) Engage in the practice of occupational therapy by representing himself/herself as an
7 occupational therapists without a valid registration, professional license, or a valid temporary/
8 special permit granted by the Board pursuant to this Act.
9 b.) Represent to be an occupational therapists during the time that his or her professional license
10 is not valid or that his/her certificate of registration has been suspended or revoked, or that
11 his/her temporary or special permit has been cancelled;
12 c.) Allow anybody to use his/her certificate of registration and/or professional license and/or
13 temporary/special permit as an occupational therapist to enable such unqualified individual to
14 engage in the practice of occupational therapy;
15 d.) Use as his/her own the certificate of registration, professional license, or temporary/ special
16 permit of another person; and
17 e.) Violate any provision of the Code of Ethics as recommended by the accredited national
18 organization of occupational therapists.

19
20 **SEC. 28. *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Occupational Therapists.*** – The Board
21 shall adopt and promulgate the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for occupational therapists
22 prescribed and issued by the Accredited and Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO) of occupational
23 therapists.

24
25 **SEC. 29. *Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program.*** – All occupational therapists
26 shall abide with the requirements, rules and regulation on continuing professional development to be
27 promulgated by the Professional Regulatory Board on Occupational Therapy, subject to the approval of
28 the Commission, in coordination with the AIPO of occupational therapists and/or the recognized
29 representative of duly accredited education institutions. For this purpose, the Board may create a CPD
30 council to implement the CPD program, subject to such guidelines as may be prescribed by the
31 Commission.

32 **SEC. 30. *Integration of Occupational Therapists.*** – The occupational therapy profession shall be
33 integrated into one (1) national professional organization of occupational therapists, which shall be duly
34 registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The Board, subject to approval by the
35 Commission, shall accredit the said organization as the one and only Accredited Integrated Professional
36 Organization (AIPO) of registered occupational therapists. All occupational therapists whose names
37 appear in the current Registry Book of Occupational Therapists shall *ipso facto* or automatically become
38 members thereof and shall receive all the benefits and privileges appurtenant thereto upon payment of the
39 required AIPO membership fees and dues.

40
41 Membership in the Accredited Integrated Professional Organization (AIPO) shall not be a bar to
42 membership in other organizations of occupational therapists.

