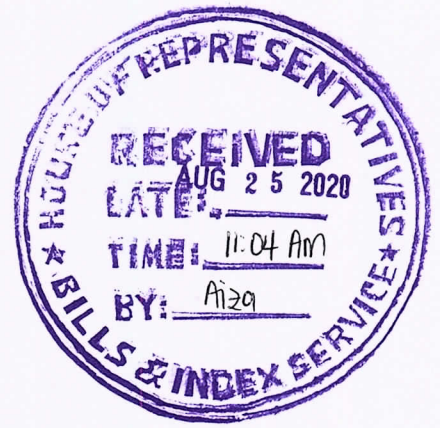




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7485

Introduced by HON. JESUS “BONG” C. SUNTAY

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The World Health Organization estimates that 1 in every 160 children have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This is a condition that can be characterized by some degree of impaired social behavior, communication and language, and a narrow range of interest and activities that are both unique to the individual and carried out repetitively. It can begin in childhood and persist during adolescence and adulthood.

Currently, in the Philippines, there is no law that forwards early identification, assessment, and education of children with ASD. This is very crucial as it plays a vital role in addressing the disorder. Appropriate educational instruments and curriculum must be provided for the condition.

This bill seeks to address this gap in our educational system. Public school teachers will be properly trained and educated in handling ASD-specialized education, in pursuance of helping both the teachers and students, and making advancements in our educational system.

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


ATTY. JESUS “BONG” C. SUNTAY

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7485

Introduced by HON. JESUS “BONG” C. SUNTAY

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, AND EDUCATION OF
CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This act shall be known as the “*Autism Spectrum Disorder*
2 *Management Act.*”

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and
4 promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

5 It is also the policy of the State to promote and protect the physical, moral,
6 spiritual, intellectual and social well0being of the youth recognizing their vital role in nation-building.

7 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – For purposes of this Act, the terms below shall mean as
8 follows:

- 9 a. “Autism spectrum disorder” is a complex developmental disability that includes
10 Autism, Asperger Syndrome, Pervasive Development Disorder, NOS, Rett Syndrome,
11 and Child Disintegrative Disorder, as diagnosed by a licensed physician;
- 12 b. “Differently-abled children” are those under the age of eighteen years who have no
13 completed an approved high school program and who, because of mental, physical,
14 emotional or learning problems, including but not limited to autism spectrum disorder
15 as defined in his section, require special educational services;
- 16 c. “Gifted children” are those under the age of eighteen years who exhibit precocious
17 development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent
18 professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation
19 could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a
20 standard grade-level curriculum;

- d. "Special education services" are programs designed to meet the educational needs of differently-abled which include, but are not limited to, the provision of diagnostic and evaluation service, student and parent counseling, itinerant, homebound and referral assistance, organized instructional and therapeutic programs, transportation, and corrective and supporting services.

SEC. 4. *Special Needs Identification and Education Program.* – The Special Needs Identification and Education Program shall involve the special needs identification and education training for selected public school teachers.

SEC. 5. *Autism Ombudsman* – The Secretary of Education shall appoint an autism ombudsman to develop best practice guidelines for the educational assessment and interventions for differently-abled children from here years of age. Regional professional development centers must have an autism specialist available. Early childhood education centers shall be established, subject to appropriations, giving priority to regions where there are limited or nonexistent resource and a significant need.

SEC. 6. *Review of Special Needs Education Services.* – The Secretary of Education shall appoint such regional and city advisory committees as he deems necessary to review special education services to differently-abled children, including children with autism spectrum disorder as defined in this Act and to consider any problems with respect to the provision of educational services to differently-abled children and to give advice thereon. Such committees shall include persons broadly representative of community organizations interested in the differently-abled, professions related to the educational needs of the differently-abled, and the general public. The members of such committees shall serve at the discretion of the Secretary of Education.

SEC. 7. *Autism Spectrum Disorder Research and Report.* – The Department of Health and the Department of Education shall jointly prepare and submit to Congress for its review and consideration of a 10-year strategic plan within one (1) year after the effectivity of this Act to address the growing number of persons who need services for autism spectrum disorder.

The study shall –

- a. Determine the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder among students;
- b. Evaluate the extent to which students with autism spectrum disorder are more likely to miss school, have delayed rates of development, or have reduced cognitive skills; and
- c. Report on current national and local programs to educate the youth about the treatment of autism spectrum disorder, as well as evaluate the value of such programs.

SEC. 8. *Funding.* – The amount of Fifty million pesos (P50,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the programs established under this Act. This shall be included in the annual budget of the Department of Education.

1 **SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or
2 unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

3 **SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees or issuances,
4 letter of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and regulations as well as local ordinances contrary to
5 or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

6 **SEC. 11. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
7 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

8
9 Approved,