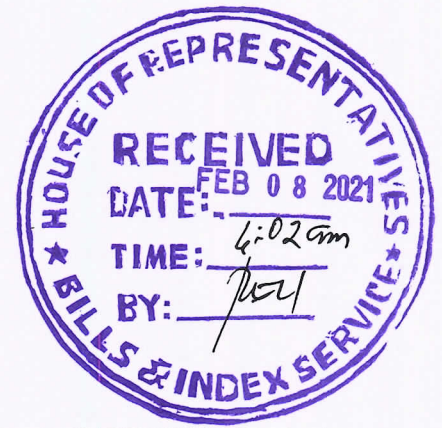


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8636



Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 160 children worldwide has an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ASD generally begins in childhood, with most cases having conditions apparent during the first five years of life, and this tends to persist into adolescence and adulthood. Some individuals with ASD can live independently and then there are those who present co-occurring conditions such as epilepsy, depression, and anxiety and other severe disabilities which requires life-long care and support. While there is no cure for ASD, early detection of ASD and appropriate intervention allow for an over-all improvement in an individual. Early treatments for infants and children allow them to acquire valuable skills and tools which would enable them to be more independent throughout their lives.

It is the responsibility of the State to proactively take measures that will enable individuals with ASD the chance to live their lives freely and as independently as possible. In this light, this proposed measure provides a framework for the identification, assessment, and education of children with ASD in order to provide them with the potential for a better and a more independent life, and assist them and their families in dealing with special needs.

On behalf of the people of Parañaque City's Second District, and for the common good of the Filipino people, the approval of the said measure is earnestly sought.


REP. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING
2nd District, Parañaque City

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EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 8636

Introduced by **HON. JOY MYRA S. TAMBUNTING**

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

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Autism Spectrum Disorder Management Act."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

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

Sec. 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, the terms below shall mean as follows:

- a) "Autism spectrum disorder" is a complex developmental disability that includes Autism, Asperger Syndrome, Pervasive Development Disorder, NOS, Rett Syndrome, and Child Disintegrative Disorder, as diagnosed by a licensed physician;
- b) "Differently-abled children" are those under the age of eighteen years who have not completed an approved high school program and who, because of mental, physical, emotional or learning problems, including but not limited to autism spectrum disorder as defined in this section, require special educational services;
- c) "Gifted children" are those under the age of eighteen years who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a 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 three 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 (P 50,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the programs established under this Act. This shall be included in the annual budget of the Department of Education.

Sec. 9. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

Sec. 10. Repealing Clause. – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

Sec. 11. Effectivity Clause. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,