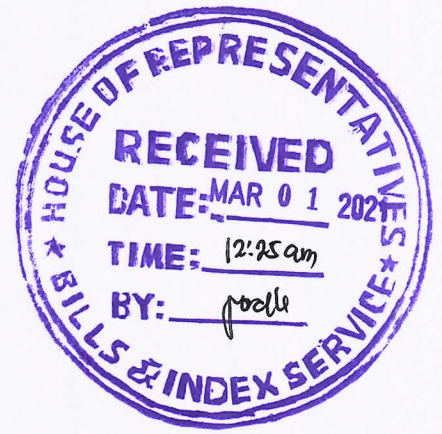




REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY, METRO MANILA



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. **8819**

Introduced by
Representative **SHIRLYN L. BAÑAS-NOGRALES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is the bounden duty of the State to provide the best quality and affordable health care services to the people and to bring these health services to the people in the most convenient and efficient possible way. This responsibility was embedded in Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution¹.

Relatively, with the passage of Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care Law that aims to automatically enroll all Filipino Citizens in the National Health Insurance Program and prescribes complementary reforms in the health system², it is high time for Region XII to develop and construct a Medical Center that is well-equipped to provide the medical needs, care and services that are responsive to the needs of the people.

The Dr. Jorge P. Royeca City Hospital, the present local public hospital in General Santos City, has stretched to the limit its capabilities in providing the health requirements of its patients. It has been the only hospital of its kind that caters to the healthcare needs of the general public especially the underprivileged. For several years now, it has more than 100% hospital bed occupancy rate. The hospital's high occupancy rate is further exacerbated by the inadequacy of modern equipment, facilities and similar resources, thus, cannot address the more specialized services for complex diseases and illnesses of its patients consisting mostly of indigents and underprivileged members of the community.

The existing city government-run hospital once transformed into a state-of-the-art medical facility will house the following institutes: the Center for Disease Control, Lung Center, Kidney and Transplant Center, Heart Center, Trauma Center, Burn Center, Dialysis Center, Birth Center, Imaging and Radiology Center, Orthopedic and Other Rehabilitation Centers, Wellness Center, Blood Banks, Clinics and Medical Offices, and the like. The establishment of these centers will bring the much-needed health services closer to the people of Region XII in the most convenient, affordable and efficient possible ways.

¹Section 11. 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.

² World Health Organization: *UHC Act in the Philippines: a new dawn for health care*, 14 March 2019.

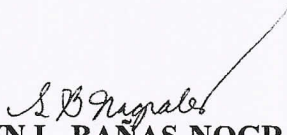
Added to that, the increasing or growing population³ of Region XII (SOCCSKSARGEN), which was around 4,545,276 based on the 2015 Census of Population, is alarming considering the lack of sufficient and proper medical facilities. More medical facilities, experts and equipment are clearly needed by patients in the SOCCSKSARGEN. This need for sufficient and better medical services have forced the people in the region, especially the patients, to seek medical help elsewhere, usually in Manila, Davao City, or other places which are quite far from their residences. Long-distance travel for medical attention would not only be too physically rigorous on the part of the patient but also too costly for most patients and families as this would require medical, travel, board and lodging expenses for the patients and their loved ones who would need to accompany the patient.

These common scenarios clearly and definitely would discourage our average citizens from going to hospitals and receiving the proper medical attention. Instead, they may opt to just stay home because traveling out of town would be too expensive and taxing on the body despite their need for medical assistance.

Designating Dr. Jorge P. Royeca Hospital as a regional medical center is also in line with the Duterte administration's pursuit of its *Kalusugan Pangkalahatan* program, otherwise known as the Universal Healthcare Law. Universal healthcare is not just about making health service accessible, but also providing quality healthcare that can be only made possible with new technologies, knowledge, and services.

The additional financing and expanded capacity shall cover the centers for fatal diseases, the expanded bed capacity, establishment of a research center to aid in health service and treatment, educational and training programs in coordination with medical educational institutions, knowledge exchange programs, and other areas where health services shall be optimized, improved, and updated regularly.

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


SHIRLYN L. BANAS-NOGRALES

³ Philippine Statistics Authority Population of Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN (Based on the 2015 Census of Population), Reference Number: 2016-077, Release Date: Wednesday, June 8, 2016



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY, METRO MANILA

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **8819**

AN ACT

CONVERTING DR. JORGE P. ROYECA CITY HOSPITAL IN GENERAL SANTOS CITY INTO A MEDICAL CENTER TO BE KNOWN AS THE GENERAL SANTOS CITY MEDICAL CENTER, UPGRADING ITS PROFESSIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by
Representative **SHIRLYN L. BAÑAS-NOGRALES**

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

Section 1. The Dr. Jorge P. Royeca City Hospital in General Santos City is hereby converted into a medical center to known as the General Santos City Medical Center. The medical center shall be under the supervision and control of the Department of Health.

Section 2. The existing service capability, professional health care services and medical staff complement of Dr. Jorge P. Royeca City Hospital is also hereby upgraded and increased to conform with and be commensurate to the requirements of a medical center.

Section 3. The bed capacity of Dr. Jorge P. Royeca City Hospital shall be increased from two hundred (200) to six hundred (600) beds to accommodate the institution's requirement as a medical center. It shall be immediately implemented upon the approval of this Act.

Section 4. The Department of Health, in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management and the Civil Service Commission, and in consultation with the management of the hospital, shall determine the additional plantilla positions to be created pursuant to this Act.

Section 5. The Chief of the Medical Center shall develop a plan to be submitted to the Department of Health to reflect the development goals of the hospital, consistent with the increase in bed capacity and service capability. Requests for the staffing requirements, capital outlay investments, and budgetary needs for operations shall be based on the regional medical center development plan.

Section 6. The Medical Center shall be encouraged to conduct health research and development, training and education, and other similar activities with existing medical research and educational institutions, both foreign and domestic. It shall be allowed to accept grants that contribute to its health research, capacity-development, or educational interests. The aforementioned activities shall be subject to relevant rules, laws, or regulation of the Republic of the Philippines.

Section 7. The Secretary of Health shall immediately include in the Department's programs the funding requirement for the implementation of this Act. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the operation and maintenance of the medical center shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

To further strengthen the capacity of the General Santos City Medical Center in service capability, medical equipment, professional health care services, medical staff complement, research and development, training and instruction, and the establishment of Centers for Disease Control, Lung, Kidney, Dialysis and Transplant, Heart, Trauma, Burn, Birth, Imaging and Radiology, Orthopedic and Other Rehabilitation, Wellness, Blood Bank, Clinics and Medical Offices, and the like, an initial budget in the amount of ₱500,000,000.00 for the establishment of General Santos City Medical Center shall be appropriated immediately upon the approval of this Act.

Section 8. Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Health shall prepare the implementing rules and regulations upon consultation with the City Government of General Santos and other stakeholders and shall be implemented consistent with the medical center development plan.

Section 9. If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 10. All laws, executive orders, issuances, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 11. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,