

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
19th CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8784



Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Sorsogon National Agricultural School in Castilla, Sorsogon, originally named Castilla Agricultural High School was enacted by virtue of Republic Act No. 6565 (An Act Establishing an Agricultural High School in Barrio Cumadcad, Municipality of Castilla in the 2nd District of Sorsogon) on 1972. It was later renamed to its present name, Sorsogon National Agricultural School, by authority of former President Ferdinand Marcos on 1974.

Over the years, Sorsogon National Agricultural School has evolved into more than just an agricultural institute, showcasing distinctive areas of competencies that extend beyond agriculture. Today, the school has already diversified its offerings to include disciplines such as Tourism, Garments, Electronics, Metals and Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Health and Community Services, Land and Automotive Transportation, Construction, and Technical-Vocational Education Training. These programs are all accredited under Unified TVET Program Registration and Accreditation System (UTPRAS). Currently, there are 27 registered programs, 35% of which are Agriculture and 70% are from other sectors.

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


BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO

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Introduced by **REP. BERNADETTE "DETTE" G. ESCUDERO**

**AN ACT
CONVERTING THE SORSOGON NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL IN
MUNICIPALITY OF CASTILLA, PROVINCE OF SORSOGON, INTO A POLYTECHNIC
INSTITUTION TO BE ADMINISTERED AND SUPERVISED BY THE TECHNICAL
EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE
SORSOGON POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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 "*Sorsogon Polytechnic Institute (SPI) Act.*"

Section 2. *Conversion.* – The Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS) located in the Municipality of Castilla, Province of Sorsogon, is hereby converted into a polytechnic institute, to be known as the "Sorsogon Polytechnic Institute", under the supervision and administration of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). It shall be established in a highly accessible location in the Municipality of Castilla, Province of Sorsogon, pursuant to the purposes of this Act, and to the mutual agreement of the TESDA and the concerned local government unit (LGU).

Section 3. *The General Mandate.* – In line with the adoption of the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) and the Senior High School Program of the Department of Education (DepEd), the SPI shall endeavor to restructure its technical-vocational education training (TVET) curricular programs to make them responsive to the rapidly changing demands of the industry and the domestic and international labor markets, within the context of the mutual recognition arrangements embodied in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) economic integration framework and other relevant international agreements for TVET.

To this end, the SPI shall continually upgrade its curricular standards as a postsecondary polytechnic institution.

The SPI shall offer a wide array of TESDA-registered TVET programs and certificate courses that aim to meet the competency requirements under Level V of the PQF, which is the Diploma Level in TVET. The undergraduate technical-vocational education it provides is geared on employable skills, practical livelihood and entrepreneurship.

The SPU shall play a lead role in helping students and out-of-school youths and residents from low-income families and persons with disabilities in the Municipality of Castilla and adjacent municipalities in the Province of Sorsogon become productive and self-reliant, and to become part of a globally competitive middle to high-level skilled labor force.

In the design relevant TVET training programs and course offerings the NSPI shall conduct a competency assessment of the socioeconomic profile, employment conditions and opportunities, business climate, market and industry potentials, resources available and presence of support structures, including the literacy level and skills readiness, and the overall development needs of the host area, Castilla, and adjacent communities within its operational radius. It shall likewise consider the relevant skills and trade competencies, craftsmanship training programs, and entrepreneurship activities that are needed to make Castilla and all localities comprising the Province of Sorsogon human resource and economic productivity hubs.

The SPI shall also serve as a TESDA-accredited Assessment Center, subject to the accreditation requirements of the Philippine TVET Competency Assessment and Certification System, for acquired competencies in technical-vocational skills in the entire Province of Sorsogon.

Priority admission to the SPI, including scholarships, grants-in-aid, and other forms of student financial assistance, however, shall be given to the most disadvantaged citizens of the Municipality of Castilla and to the most economically depressed areas in the province.

Further, as deemed necessary and practicable, in coordination with the DepEd and the TESDA, the SPI shall render relevant teachers' training assistance and curriculum design the technical-vocational livelihood track under the DepEd and TESDA in the communities and areas within the operational radius of the SPI.

Section 4. Curricular Offerings and Training Programs. – The SPI shall offer one (1)-year to three (3)-year diploma courses and undergraduate certificate, including short-term courses and modular trainings in diverse relevant technical-vocational and industrial technology education to comply with employment standards in preferred market-driven labor opportunities, and shall promote skills specialization to support the developmental needs of the Municipality of Castilla and the other municipalities in the Province of Sorsogon, in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the National Economic and Development Authority, business-industry partners, and such other relevant agencies.

The SPI may establish research and technology hubs, mobile training programs and satellite/extension training centers in priority areas within the Province of Sorsogon to strengthen linkages among industries, the academe and the technological programs of the SPI

and to provide greater access to TVET and other skills training programs. It shall likewise adopt the use of innovative training modes of learning such as information technology-assisted instruction, dual learning system, open distance learning, community laboratory, and such other instructional programs.

The SPI shall offer skills development options for higher competency qualifications in technical-industrial education, trade technology, tourism, agricultural technology, business literacy, and innovation in TESDA-registered skills courses as follows:

- a. Skills training in industrial technology and hard trades such as metal and steelwork, machine fabrication and operation, heavy equipment operation, automotive mechanical assembly, refrigeration and air conditioning, electronics, and operation of power tools and equipment for both medium skills grade and industrial purposes;
- b. Agriculture and aquaculture-related trainings and skills development in such areas as farming technology, fishing operations technology, backyard farming and home-based aquaculture and propagation innovations, mechanized farm tools and operation, agri-business and agri-aqua trade technology and innovations, and relevant farmers and fisherfolks' trainings for increased productivity and entrepreneurship;
- c. Livelihood skills development courses for preferred skills employment and small scale entrepreneurship, including practical skills education in arts and crafts, workmanship and design, high-speed sewing, dressmaking and tailoring, horticulture, livestock raising and breeding, food processing technology, home technology, culinary arts and commercial cooking, cosmetology, and health and wellness training;
- d. Basic business literacy in financial management, marketing, practical accountancy, bookkeeping, office procedures, business processes and application procedures, including registration, licensing, documentation, business patent and intellectual property regulation, business financing and investment opportunities sourcing, import-export accreditation, online hose-based business operation, social media business marketing;
- e. Technical-vocational occupation and trade skills such as carpentry, masonry, plumbing, welding, practical electricity and installation, automotive servicing, electronics servicing, personal computer servicing, and such other relevant practical skills courses;
- f. Computer literacy and information technology-related skills, digital technology, web design, animation, photoshop or online photography, computer design, and advertising;

- g. Social communication skills development and courses in English proficiency and other languages;
- h. Seminars on personality development, career counseling, and job application strategies, and work ethics and values; and
- i. Other preferred priority skills that may be needed by the economy of Castilla and are relevant to the needs of the other service areas in the Province of Sorsogon.

Section 5. *Compliance with TESDA Requirements.* – The provision of this Act notwithstanding, the conversion of the SNAS into the SPI shall become operationally effective only upon the determination and declaration of the TESDA through the issuance of a formal recommendation and Certificate of Compliance that the SPI has satisfactorily complied with the minimum requirements for standards of quality prescribed by the TESDA governing the following:

- a. Standard procedures and guidelines for the establishment, or conversion and operation of a polytechnic institute;
- b. Operational sustainability of SPI in terms of licensed faculty or trainers and personnel, equipment, training and laboratory facilities, instructional materials, and other standard requirements as an institute;
- c. Sustainable funding source and allocation of budget requirement of the SPI;
- d. Full alignment of training programs offered with the minimum standards of competency-based quality technical-vocational skills technology and needs of the host municipality, Castilla, and adjacent areas served within the context of the PQF and ASEAN framework for technical-vocational education; and
- e. Compliance with such other TESDA conditionalities as may be necessary and applicable in its conversion into the SPI.

Section 6. *Administration.* – The SPI shall be headed by a School Superintendent under the supervision of TESDA and appointed by TESDA Director General in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Civil Service Commission and the qualification requirements and standards for such office.

The School Superintendent shall render full-time service and be responsible for the administration and operation of the SPI.

The academic and administrative staff of the SPI shall be organized according to the staffing pattern prescribed by the TESDA for such type of schools pursuant to existing laws, rules and regulations.

Section 7. *Assets, Liabilities and Personnel.* – All assets, fixed and movable, personnel, records and documents of the SNAS, as well as liabilities or obligations, shall be transferred to the SPI: Provided, That the positions, rights, and security of tenure enjoyed by faculty and personnel therein employed prior to its conversion into the SPI, and pursuant to existing law, shall not be impaired.

All parcels of land belonging to the government occupied by the SNAS are hereby declared property of the SPI and shall be titled under that name: Provided, That should the SPI cease to exist or such aforementioned parcels of land be no longer needed by the SPI, the same shall revert to the Municipality of Castilla, Province of Sorsogon or to the Republic of the Philippines, as the case may be.

Section 8. *Appropriation.* – The amount needed to initially implement the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the Sorsogon National Agricultural School. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continued operation of the SPI shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, TESDA shall, in coordination with the DOLE, DTI, the Department of Budget and Management, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the concerned LGUs, and such other relevant agencies and industry-business partners of the host locality, prepare and issue the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

Section 10. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, any other sections or provisions hereof shall not be affected and shall remain in force and in effect.

Section 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, decrees, instructions, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act are repealed or amended accordingly.

Section 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,