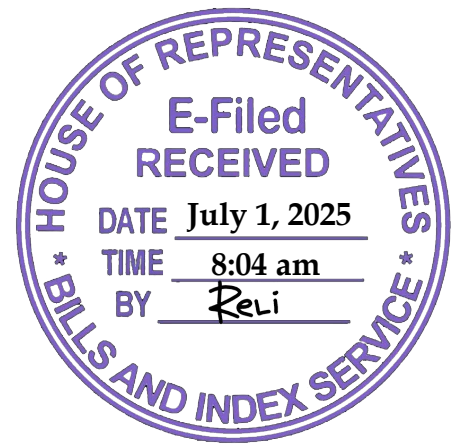


Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 702**



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Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL "JAVI" L. BENITEZ**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The 1987 Constitution recognizes the role of sports in fostering nationalism, social transformation and human development (Section 17, Article II). In his speech during the opening ceremony of the 2018 Palarong Pambansa, President Rodrigo Duterte echoed this notion and told student-athletes that competing in the Palaro beckons "the beginning of your greater participation in nation-building." "Your ability to balance academics and other interests measures your aptitude for skills such as multi-tasking, time management and decision-making – skills that you will need as you take on greater responsibilities in the future," the President said.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, the discipline and diligence that balancing academics and athletics requires and instills in the youth prepare them for a successful career as athletes or sports and fitness professionals. It is critical therefore to provide an enabling environment for young Filipinos with athletic potential to develop the skills and values necessary to become great athletes who bring honor to our country.

The recently signed Republic Act No. 11470 provides for this enabling environment, creating the National Academy of Sports (NAS) System to establish high school campuses around the country with world-class sports facilities offering free education and training for student-athletes. The flagship campus will be located in the New Clark City Sports Complex in Tarlac, the site of the 30<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asian Games last year.

The next NAS campus to rise should be in the Visayas. And there is no better location for a high school for sports in Visayas than Negros Occidental.

Negros Occidental is hosting the Palarong Pambansa for the sixth time in 2021, holding the record of hosting the most number of Palaro events.<sup>2</sup> Negros

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<sup>1</sup> [https://pcoo.gov.ph/news\\_releases/president-duterte-opens-palarong-pambansa-2018/](https://pcoo.gov.ph/news_releases/president-duterte-opens-palarong-pambansa-2018/)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1066544>

Occidental athletes have also made a name for themselves in international and national sports competitions.

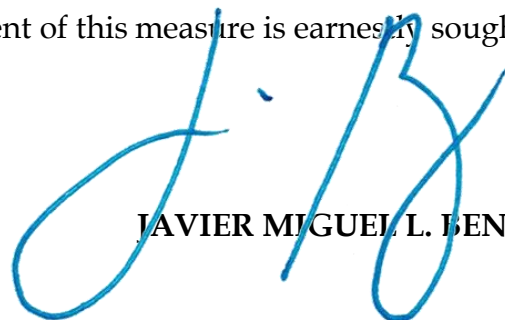
Mansueto “Onyok” Velasco, a native of Bago City, Negros Occidental, earned the country a silver medal in boxing in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, while his elder brother Roel had won a bronze medal also in boxing in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona.

Athletes from Negros Occidental, led by 2016 Rio Olympian Roden Ladon (also a Bago City native), also scored medals in the 30<sup>th</sup> SEA Games. Ladon had won a silver medal in the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Sander Severino from Silay City won two golds in chess in the 2018 Asian Para Games hosted also by Indonesia.

Meanwhile, Negrosanon student-athletes have shined in the Palarong Pambansa. In the 2019 Palarong Pambansa, Bacolod City’s Trexie dela Torre and Jamela de Asis set new record highs in long jump and shot put, respectively, and Silay’s Alexi Cabayaran broke a five-year record in swimming (200-meter freestyle).<sup>3</sup> Negros Occidental is consistently among top performing provinces in the Palaro; in 2019, Negrosanon athletes bagged a total of 79 medals – 28 gold, 17 silver, and 34 bronze medals.

An NAS campus in Negros Occidental will cultivate the talent of young Negrosanons to become accomplished professional athletes and raise Filipino pride. But perhaps more importantly, a dedicated sports program, with a strong values formation component, will divert young people from vices that would otherwise occupy their time and attention.

In view of the foregoing, the enactment of this measure is earnestly sought.



**JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

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<sup>3</sup> <https://dailyguardian.com.ph/wv-athletes-win-gold-shatter-paloro-records/>

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AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HIGH SCHOOL FOR SPORTS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ENRIQUE B. MAGALONA, PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL TO BE KNOWN AS THE NEGROS OCCIDENTAL HIGH SCHOOL FOR SPORTS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

**SECTION 1. Establishment of the Negros Occidental High School for Sports.** – There is hereby established a high school for sports in the Municipality of Enrique B. Magalona, Province of Negros Occidental to be known as the “Negros Occidental High School for Sports,” hereinafter referred to as the “School”.

The School shall be integrated into the National Academy of Sports (NAS) System and supervised by the Department of Education (DepEd), in close coordination with the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), subject to the provisions of Republic Act No. 11470.

**SEC. 2. Objectives.** – The School shall offer a special secondary education curriculum to develop the skills of talented youth in different sports, and produce successful athletes and sports and fitness professionals. The School shall instill discipline, diligence, teamwork, excellence and integrity in its students.

**SEC 3. Admission.** – Notwithstanding the provision of Section 8 (i) of

Republic Act No. 11470, no student shall be admitted to the School unless he/she is a bona fide resident of the Province of Negros Occidental.

**SEC. 4. Academics-Athletics Balance.** To ensure both academic and athletic excellence of student athletes, the School shall:

- a) adopt flexible learning methods;
- b) grant stipends, allowances and other financial assistance; and,
- c) provide mentoring and mental health support.

**SEC. 5. School Director.** The School shall be headed by a School Director who shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees of the NAS System. The Board shall determine the term and compensation of the School Director, pursuant to Section 8 (d) of Republic Act No. 11470.

The School Director shall be responsible for the administration and operation of the School, and perform the functions determined by the Board. The School Director may create consultative bodies to provide guidance in the formulation of policies and activities of the School.

**SEC. 6. Appropriations.** The initial funding for the operations of the School shall be charged against the current appropriations of DepEd. Thereafter, the amount needed for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** The Department of Education, in coordination with the Philippine Sports Commission and other stakeholders, shall issue the implementing rules and regulations within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

**SEC. 8. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

**SEC. 9. Repealing Clause.** All other laws, decrees, executive orders and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 10. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,