

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2493



Introduced by Honorable Dr. Edwin Ledesma Cruzado, M.D.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXTENSION CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MINDANAO (USM) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PIGCAWAYAN, PROVINCE OF COTABATO, TO BE KNOWN AS THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MINDANAO-PIGCAWAYAN CAMPUS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Access to quality education is a main driving force of sustainable national development. The Philippine Constitution mandates the State to promote and protect the right of all citizens to quality education and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.¹ However, accessible education provided by State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) is still limited. In Region XII, only 22% of the A.Y. 2022-2023 higher education enrollees availed of the SUC educational facilities and other services.² Based on the CHED 2023 data, there are only four SUCs within Region XII and the University of Southern Mindanao (USM) is still the only SUC available in the province of North Cotabato³ and with only one satellite campus in Kidapawan City.⁴ There is a need for opening new satellite campuses within North Cotabato to address the underlying problem of lack of accessibility and affordable quality education.

This bill seeks to establish an extension campus of the USM in the Municipality of Pigcawayan, Province of Cotabato, to be known as the University of Southern Mindanao-Pigcawayan Campus (USM-Pigcawayan Campus). This campus is imperative considering Pigcawayan's geographic distance from USM's main campus, 63 kilometers. As such, this campus offers access to USM's top education to constituents of the First District of Cotabato. USM-Pigcawayan shall offer graduate and undergraduate programs for priority areas aligned with local and regional development needs, particularly of Cotabato Province. This bill is consonant with the constitutional right of all citizens to quality education and to make quality education accessible to all.


Hon. Dr. Edwin Ledesma Cruzado, M.D.

¹ Section 1, Article XIV, 1987 Philippine Constitution

² *2023 Higher Education Facts and Figures*, COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION, Available at: <https://ched.gov.ph/2023-higher-education-facts-and-figures/> (Accessed: 23 June 2025).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Satellite Campuses*, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MINDANAO, Available at: <https://www.usm.edu.ph/about-usm/satellite-campuses/> (Accessed: 23 June 2025).

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Representative 1st District of Cotabato

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXTENSION CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MINDANAO (USM) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PIGCAWAYAN, PROVINCE OF COTABATO, TO BE KNOWN AS THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MINDANAO–PIGCAWAYAN CAMPUS, 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 the “University of Southern Mindanao–Pigcawayan Campus Act.”

Section 2. **Establishment of Pigcawayan Extension Campus.** It is hereby established an extension campus of the University of Southern Mindanao (USM) in the Municipality of Pigcawayan, Province of Cotabato, to be known as the University of Southern Mindanao–Pigcawayan Campus (USM–Pigcawayan Campus).

Section 3. **Mandate.** The USM–Pigcawayan Campus shall offer graduate and undergraduate programs within fields determined by the Board of Regents (BOR) of USM, and other priority areas aligned with local and regional development needs, particularly of Cotabato Province. The campus shall also undertake research and extension services and provide progressive leadership in its areas of specialization.

Section 4. **Campus Administration.** The USM–Pigcawayan Campus shall be headed by a Campus Administrator who shall render full-time service and shall be appointed or designated by the BOR of USM upon the recommendation of a search committee and the University President, subject to the guidelines, qualifications, and standards set by the BOR.

Section 5. **Compliance with CHED Requirements.** The establishment of the USM–Pigcawayan Campus shall ensure that the minimum requirements for its operation and program offerings, including faculty qualifications, facilities, and academic standards, are complied with as prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

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Section 6. ***Post-Enactment Institutional Requirements.*** In coordination with the main campus of USM, and within a period of one year after the approval of this Act, the USM–Pigcawayan Campus shall:

- (a) Submit a five (5)-year development plan, including its corresponding program budget, to CHED for appropriate recommendation to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM);
- (b) Undergo a management audit in cooperation with CHED; and
- (c) Organize its administrative, academic, and operational structure, including the appointment or designation of key officials.

Section 7. ***Governing Law and Applicability of Existing Laws.*** All relevant laws and jurisprudence regulating higher education remain applicable to USM–Pigcawayan Campus. All other powers, functions, privileges, responsibilities, and limitations to state universities and/or their officials under existing laws shall be deemed granted to or imposed upon the USM–Pigcawayan Campus and/or its officials whenever and to the extent they are appropriate.

Section 8. ***Appropriations.*** The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Section 9. ***Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.