

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **2497**



Introduced by Honorable EULOGIO “LEO” R. RODRIGUEZ

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Cabugao School of Handicraft and Cottage Industries (CSHCI), established in 1970 in Barangay Cabugao, Municipality of Bato, Catanduanes, aims to provide technical and vocational education to the people of Cabugao and its surrounding communities. Over the years, the CSHCI continuously expanded its service coverage, growing from a secondary vocational high school to a post-secondary school. In 1997, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) formally assumed administration of CSHCI, transforming it into the sole TESDA-operated institution in the Province, catering to learners across Catanduanes.

Fifty-five years from its foundation, to further develop and broaden the reach and capacity of the school, this bill seeks to modernize and convert the CSHCI into the Bicol Technical-Vocational Institute (BTVI). From serving a handful of barangays, the BTVI shall open its service coverage to the entire Bicol Region, offering industry-relevant, TESDA-registered programs and certifications aligned with the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF), ASEAN economic integration goals, and evolving labor demands.

The BTVI shall offer one- to three-year TESDA-registered programs, short-term trainings, and modular courses in high-demand fields such as tourism, engineering, construction, agriculture, livelihood trades, and digital technology. It will also serve a broad range of learners, including out-of-school youth, unemployed and underemployed employees, returning OFWs, women, LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities, drug surrenderers, and qualified inmates and detainees, equipping them with technical and practical skills for gainful employment and entrepreneurship.

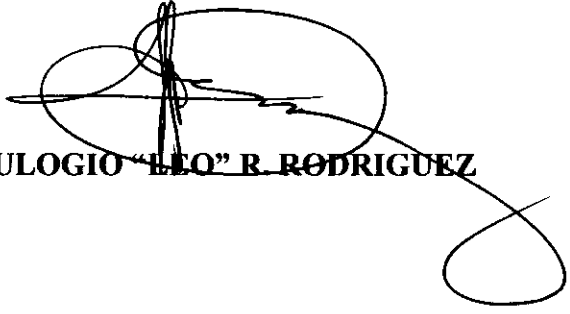
To maximize accessibility, the bill converts the TESDA training centers in the municipalities of Viga, Pandan, and San Andres into BTVI extension campuses, while providing the authority for addition of satellite and mobile training centers across the Bicol region. The BTVI also encourages collaboration between government agencies. The institute will partner with DepEd to support senior high schools offering the TVL track and coordinate with DOLE, DTI, DILG, NEDA, and other stakeholders to ensure that training programs are aligned and responsive to industry demands.

More importantly, this measure underscores the State’s commitment to inclusive, equitable, and quality technical education, recognizing the vital role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in poverty reduction, workforce development, and

nation-building. The establishment of the BTVI paves the way for the empowerment of individuals, economic upliftment of families, and foster regional economic resilience, enabling graduates to actively shape their futures and contribute meaningfully to the betterment of their communities.

Notably, the House of Representatives had already approved this bill seeking to establish the BVTI on Third Reading during the 19th Congress. However, due to lack of material time, the Senate was unable to consider and approve the said measure. In this view, to address the pressing education and employment needs of the Bicol Region, this representation has filed the same bill in the 20th Congress.

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



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AN ACT
MODERNIZING AND CONVERTING THE CABUGAO SCHOOL OF HANDICRAFT
AND COTTAGE INDUSTRIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BATO, PROVINCE OF
CATANDUANES, INTO A POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, TO BE KNOWN AS THE
BICOL TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE, TO BE ADMINISTERED AND
SUPERVISED BY THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Bicol Technical-Vocational Institute (BTVI) Act.”

SEC. 2. *Conversion.* – The Cabugao School of Handicraft and Cottage Industries (CSHCI) located in Barangay Cabugao in the Municipality of Bato, Province of Catanduanes, is hereby modernized and converted into a polytechnic institute under the supervision and administration of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), to be known as the “Bicol Technical-Vocational Institute (BTVI)”.

The existing campus of the CSHCI in Barangay Cabugao in the Municipality of Bato, Province of Catanduanes shall serve as the main campus of the BTVI. The TESDA training centers in the Province of Catanduanes, namely, the PAVIBA Training Center in the Municipality of Viga; the PANCAR Training Center in the Municipality of Pandan; and the BOSSTE Training Center in the Municipality of San Andres, are converted into extension campuses of the BTVI.

SEC. 3. *General Mandate.* – The BTVI shall restructure its technical-vocational education and training (TVET) curricular programs to respond to the needs of the local and international labor markets for technical skills, and align its curriculum with:

- a) The Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF);
- b) The goals of economic integration of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); and
- c) The rapidly changing labor demands of local industries and the global market.

The BTVI shall continue to provide technical-vocational education and shall effect a major curricular program shift towards the development of a world-class Filipino workforce equipped with practical, analytical, and technical skills. It shall offer courses and programs that are aligned with the goals of ASEAN integration, including practical specialty courses in tourism, entrepreneurship, engineering, electrical and electronics, garments, agriculture, building and construction, and other related trade industry, as well as higher level competency qualifications in technical industrial education, and trade technology. It shall upgrade its curricular standards as a tertiary TESDA supervised institution that caters to wide-ranging specialized technical skills courses and competency compliant practical knowledge application.

Likewise, it shall offer a wide array of one to three-year TESDA-registered TVET programs and certificate-courses, and shall aim to meet, as a long-term goal, the maximum competency requirement under Level V of the PQF, which is the diploma level in technical-vocational education. It shall also provide tertiary undergraduate TVET and various skills trainings and trade specialization geared towards the acquisition of employable skills, practical livelihood, and entrepreneurship relevant to the needs of the province.

To promote inclusivity, BTVI shall provide programs that shall help out-of-school youth and residents from low-income families, including persons with disabilities within the Bicol Region, to become productive, self-reliant, and globally competitive middle to high-level skilled labor force that will hasten the social and economic development of the Bicol region, in particular, as well as meet the manpower placement need of both local and international labor market, in general.

To ensure that its programs and course offerings are relevant to the needs of the community, it shall conduct an 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 and adjacent communities within the operational radius of the BTVI. Relatedly, it shall also determine the relevant skills and trade competencies, craftsmanship training programs, and entrepreneurship activities needed to deliver the effective employment and development interventions required to make the Bicol Region as one of the prolific human resource capital and economic productivity hubs of the Philippines.

In support of the aforementioned development goals, BTVI shall serve as a TESDA-accredited assessment center, subject to the accreditation requirements under the Philippine TVET Competency Assessment and Certification System, for acquired competencies in technical-vocational skills in the Bicol Region. It shall likewise conduct admission examinations and prioritize the rural poor in the grant of technical-vocational scholarships and grants-in-aid.

Finally, it shall render relevant teacher's training assistance and curriculum design to the secondary schools offering technical-vocational livelihood track under the K to 12 Program of the Department of Education (DepEd) in the communities within the Bicol Region.

SEC. 4. Curriculum Offerings and Training Programs. – The BTVI shall offer one to three year technical-vocational courses, 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, but shall give premium

efforts to skills specialization for local employment requirements geared towards achieving the development needs for a robust inclusive economy of the Bicol Region within the operational radius of the BTVI, in consultation with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Economic and Development Authority, business-industry partners, and such other relevant agencies, both local and international.

The BTVI may establish, as necessary and practicable, research and technology hubs, mobile training programs, and satellite or extension training centers in priority areas throughout the Bicol Region to strengthen linkages among the industry, the academe, and the technology programs thereat.

The BTVI may offer the following TESDA-registered technical-vocational courses and short-term training programs and shall conduct the necessary competencies assessment to appropriately qualify graduates to National Certification Levels I to V, as applicable:

- (a) Agriculture and aquaculture-related trainings and skills development in such areas as farming fishing operations technology, backyard farming and homes-based aquaculture and propagation innovations, mechanized farm and fishing tools and equipment operation, agribusiness, agri-aqua trade technology and innovations, and relevant farmers and fisher folk continuing trainings for increased productivity and entrepreneurship;
- (b) Skills training in industrial technology and hard trades such as metal and steel works, machine fabrication and operation, heavy equipment operation, automotive mechanic, refrigeration and air conditioning, electronics, and operation of power tools and equipment for both medium skills grade and industrial preferred skills;
- (c) Tourism and hospitality-related courses relating to hotel, restaurant and tourism development and management, including personality development and social communication skills training, language proficiency courses in English and other language competence for business outsourcing or call center employment and overseas job placement;
- (d) Livelihood skills development courses for preferred skills employment, small-scale income generating opportunities, and entrepreneurship training, including practical skills education in crafts and arts, workmanship and designing such as fabric, woodwork, jewelry, and metalwork, high-speed sewing, dressmaking, and tailoring, horticulture, livestock raising, and breeding, food processing technology, home technology, culinary arts and commercial cooking, including baking, beauty culture including cosmetology, hair and nail styling, health and wellness trainings;
- (e) Basic business literacy training in financial management and marketing, practical accountancy, bookkeeping and office procedures, business processes and application procedures including registration, licensing, documentation, business patent and intellectual property regulation, business financing on investment opportunities sourcing, import-export accreditation, including online home-based business operation and use of social media for business marketing;
- (f) Technical-vocational occupation and trade skills such as carpentry, masonry, plumbing, practical electricity and installation, automotive technician and

servicing, electronics technician and servicing, welding technician, personal computer servicing, and such other relevant practical technical skills courses;

- (g) Computer literacy on information technology-related skills, digital technology, web design, animation, photoshop and online photography, computer design and advertising;
- (h) Personality development, career counseling and job placement, work ethics and values; and
- (i) Other preferred priority skills and trades training courses relevant to the needs of the Bicolano people.

SEC. 5. *Compliance with TESDA Requirements.* – The provisions of this Act notwithstanding, the BTVI 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 BTVI has satisfactorily complied with the minimum requirements and quality standards prescribed by TESDA governing the following:

- (a) Standard procedures and guidelines for the establishment, or conversion and operation of TESDA polytechnic institute and TESDA technology institution;
- (b) Operational sustainability of the polytechnic institute including licensed faculty-trainers and personnel, equipment, training and laboratory facilities, instructional materials, and other standard requirements;
- (c) Sustainable funding source and allocation of budget requirement of the BTVI;
- (d) Assurance that the training programs offered are fully aligned with the minimum standards of competency-based quality technical-vocational skills and technology needs of the host municipality and adjacent areas in the Bicol Region in the context of the ASEAN and PQF framework for technical-vocational education; and
- (e) Compliance with such other conditions as may be necessary and applicable.

The BTVI shall not offer undergraduate higher-education courses without prior approval of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and must comply with the minimum requirements stipulated in the CHED Memorandum Order No. 46, Series of 2012, to operate as a college or higher education institution. The BTVI shall remain under the supervision and administration of the TESDA and shall continue to offer one to three-year technical-vocational course in the fields of tourism, entrepreneurship, engineering, electrical technology and electronics, garments, agriculture, building and construction, other related trade industries, and such other relevant TVET programs and other related courses to meet the needs of the Province as a whole.

SEC. 6. *Administration.* – The BTVI shall be headed by a School Superintendent under the supervision of the TESDA and appointed by the TESDA Director General in accordance with civil service rules and regulations and the qualification requirements and standards for such office.

The School Superintendent shall render full-time service and shall be responsible for the administration and operation of the BTVI. The duties and responsibilities of the School Superintendent shall follow the position qualification standards of the TESDA for such office.

Subject to approval by the TESDA Director General, the School Superintendent herein appointed may enter into mutual agreements with local-based counterpart agencies or instrumentalities and persons, both private and government, for such assistance as may be necessary to effectively implement this Act.

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

SEC. 7. *Assets, Liabilities, and Personnel.* – All assets, fixed and movable, personnel records, and documents of the CSHCI, as well as its liabilities or obligations, are transferred to the BTVI. The positions, rights, and security of tenure of faculty and personnel therein employed pursuant to existing laws prior to its conversion into the BTVI shall not be impaired.

All parcels of land belonging to the government occupied by the CSHCI, including its three extension campuses in the Municipalities of Viga, Pandan, and San Andres, are declared property of the BTVI and shall be titled under the name of the BTVI. In case the BTVI ceases to exist or such aforementioned parcels of lands be no longer needed by the BTVI, the same shall revert to the concerned local government units (LGUs) in the municipalities or cities within the Bicol Region.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount needed to initially implement the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the CSHCI. Thereafter, such amount necessary for the continued operation of the BTVI shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the TESDA shall, in coordination with the DOLE, DTI, Department of Agriculture, DILG, Department of Budget and Management, DepEd, the concerned LGUs, and such other relevant agencies and industry-business partners of any applicable host municipality or local government unit, prepare and issue rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts hereof shall not be affected and shall remain in force and in effect.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, letters of instruction, administrative rules and regulations or parts thereof, which are contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,