

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
*First Regular Session*

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2843**



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Introduced by Lone District of Agusan del Norte Representative  
**HON. DALE B. CORVERA**

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**AN ACT**  
**CONVERTING THE AGUSAN DEL NORTE PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL IN BUTUAN CITY, PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL NORTE INTO A LEVEL III TEACHING AND TRAINING HOSPITAL TO BE KNOWN AS THE AGUSAN DEL NORTE GENERAL HOSPITAL AND TRAINING CENTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

With Population being one of the key elements of the State, no less than the supreme law of the land recognizes the importance of a healthy citizenry.

Section 11, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution provides that 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.

Furthermore, Section 15, Article II of the Constitution declares that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

At present, the Agusan del Norte Provincial Hospital, located at the center of the province in Butuan City, caters to the medical and health needs of the people of the highly urbanized city of Butuan, the Province of Agusan del Norte, and nearby provinces in the Caraga and Northern Mindanao Regions. The Hospital is a Level 1 medical institution with a one hundred (100) bed capacity. For the past five years, the hospital is operating on a 120.4% bed occupancy rate which is far from the 85% standard.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hospital is spending average per patient cost of P14,847.19 and P17,720.96 in years 2018 and 2019, respectively. During the pandemic these figures doubled. Average per patient cost jumped to P28,211.99 in 2020 and P34,119.75 in 2021. Since 2020, the Province of Agusan del Norte has been allocating more than P200 million

annually for the operation of the Hospital, which is difficult to sustain, especially that the economy is still recovering from the pandemic.

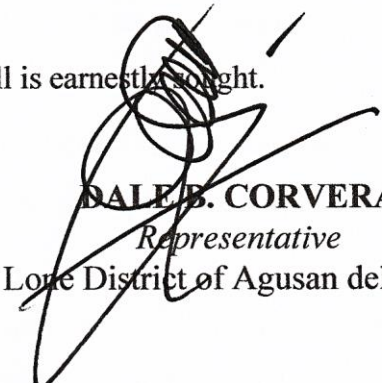
The proposed conversion of the Hospital will upskill and train not only the medical personnel of the hospital but also doctors and other health workers serving in other government hospitals and medical facilities surrounding the Hospital, thereby improving the access of the citizens of Agusan del Norte and nearby provinces to quality healthcare and decreasing the mortality rate.

Integrating the budget of the Hospital directly into the budget of the Department of Health not only guarantees the continuous delivery of health services to the people but also rectifies a long-standing fiscal injustice – the Hospital is being funded by the money from taxpayers of the Province of Agusan del Norte but the Hospital is located in the independent highly-urbanized City of Butuan which is equally empowered to raise funds and provide services to its constituents. Although the Hospital does not discriminate on which patients will be the beneficiaries of its medical services, mere proximity and accessibility favor those living in the City of Butuan. These data on the origin of patients availing the Out Patient Services of the Hospital are convincing:

Origin	Share in Total		
	2019	2020	2021
Butuan City	63%	70%	72%
Agusan del Norte	35%	28%	26%
Other Neighboring Places	2%	2%	2%

For these reasons, Hon. Ma. Angelica M. Amante-Matba and Hon. Imee R. Marcos also deemed it proper to file bills during the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress on the same matter - House Bill (HB) No. 5501 and Senate Bill (SB) No. 1657, respectively. HB 5501 was approved by the House of Representatives on third and final reading on 17 March 2022. Unfortunately, its counterpart bill, SB 1657, was still pending with the Committees on Health and Demography and Finance when the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress concluded.

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

  
**DALE B. CORVERA**  
*Representative*  
Lone District of Agusan del Norte

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

**SECTION 1.** The Agusan del Norte Provincial Hospital in Butuan City, Province of Agusan del Norte is hereby converted into a Level III hospital with capacity as a teaching and training facility, in accordance with the standards of the Department of Health, to be known as the Agusan del Norte General Hospital and Training Center (hereinafter referred to as the Hospital).

**SEC. 2.** The authorized bed capacity of the Hospital shall be increased from one hundred (100) to three hundred (300) beds, to be implemented for a period of not more than two (2) years from the effectivity of this Act.

**SEC. 3.** The existing professional health care services, medical equipment and facilities, operating funds and construction of the needed infrastructure of the Hospital shall be upgraded to conform with and be commensurate to the increase in its bed capacity as provided in the immediately preceding Section.

**SEC. 4.** The DOH shall, in coordination with the Department of Budget and Management and the Civil Service Commission, and upon prior consultation with the Chief of Hospital of

the Hospital, determine the additional plantilla positions to be created and filled upon for the effective implementation of this Act.

**SEC. 5.** The amount necessary for the upgrade, including the acquisition of additional medical equipment and facilities, and the construction of needed infrastructure shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DOH. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act and continuous operation of the Hospital shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SEC. 6.** If, for any reason, any section, clause or term of this Act is held to be illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional, such parts not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

**SEC. 7.** All laws, presidential decrees, issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 8.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*