

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **3129**



Introduced by REP. JASON P. ALMONTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

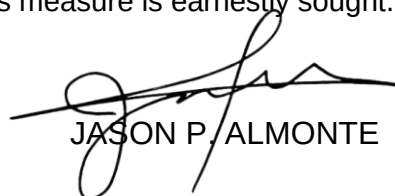
The 1987 Philippine Constitution affirms the duty of the State to protect and promote the right to health of all Filipinos. It likewise mandates the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development, ensuring that essential goods, health, and other social services are made available to the people at affordable cost.

Despite this constitutional guarantee, access to specialized health care remains heavily centralized in Metro Manila. National specialty hospitals such as the Philippine Heart Center, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Lung Center of the Philippines, Philippine Children's Medical Center, and the Philippine Cancer Center are all located in the National Capital Region. As a result, patients from the province who are often in fragile medical and financial conditions are compelled to travel long distances just to receive life-saving care. Many arrive only to be placed on waiting lists or turned away due to overcapacity. In the process, they incur substantial expenses for transportation, accommodation, and other incidental costs -- barriers that hinder timely medical intervention and worsen health inequities.

This proposed legislation seeks to address this longstanding imbalance in our health system by establishing regional branches of national specialty hospitals. By doing so, the State not only fulfills its constitutional mandate but also ensures that Filipinos, regardless of geographic location, have equitable access to world-class specialized medical care.

The establishment of regional specialty hospitals will decentralize critical health services, reduce patient congestion in Metro Manila, and bring quality, focused, and technologically advanced medical treatment closer to underserved populations. This is a vital step toward a more inclusive and resilient healthcare system.

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


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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING REGIONAL BRANCHES OF SPECIALTY HOSPITALS
SUCH AS THE PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER, NATIONAL KIDNEY AND
TRANSPLANT INSTITUTE, LUNG CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES, PHILIPPINE
CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER AND PHILIPPINE CANCER CENTER,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Regional Specialty Hospitals Act."

SECTION 2. Statement of Policy. — Article II, Section 15 of the Constitution states that: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them." Towards this end, it shall be the policy of the State to provide access to affordable and quality healthcare services to Filipinos, including the provision of specialty hospitals in the different regions of the country.

SECTION 3. Establishment of Regional Specialty Hospitals. — There shall be branches of the Philippine Heart Center, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Lung Center of the Philippines, Philippine Children's Medical Center and Philippine Cancer Center to be established in the different regions of the country. Within three (3) years upon the enactment of this Act, there shall be at least one (1) specialty hospital from the abovementioned specialty hospitals in Northern Luzon, Southern Luzon, Visayas, Northern Mindanao, and Southern Mindanao. The Department of Health shall determine the specialty hospital to be established in the different regions, taking into consideration the prevalent illnesses in the area.

SECTION 4. National Government Share. — The National Government shall constitute the necessary land, building, equipment and facilities, to the regional branches of the specialty hospital, and shall pay such obligations for real, personal and mixed properties arising from such undertaking under a deferred payment arrangement within five (5) years, at a preferred rate of interest.

SECTION 5. Property of the Regional Specialty Hospital. - The property of the Regional Specialty Hospital shall consist of such real, personal, mixed, and other type of property, now owned or reserved for, or may hereafter be given, donated, acquired, transferred or conveyed to, the Regional Branch of the Philippine Heart Center, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Lung Center of the Philippines, Philippine Children's Medical Center Visayas, and Philippine Cancer Center as applicable, by the Philippine Government, its branches and instrumentalities, any foreign government, as well as by trust, foundations, corporations, or persons, alien or domestic, in order to carry out its purposes and objectives as set forth herein.

SECTION 6. Purposes and Objectives. ~ The purposes and objective of the Regional Specialty Hospital are:

- a) To construct, establish, operate and maintain regional branches of specialty hospitals for the public welfare;
- b) To promote, encourage and engage in scientific research on the prevention of heart, kidney, liver, cancer and pulmonary diseases and the care and/or treatment of such diseases and related activities, including sponsorship and conduct of relevant congresses, conventions, seminars, and conferences;
- c) To stimulate and/or underwrite scientific researches on the biological, demographic, social, economic, eugenic, physiological aspects of heart, kidney, liver, cancer and pulmonary disorders and abnormalities and its control; and gather, compile, and publish the findings of such researches for public dissemination;
- d) To facilitate and encourage the dissemination and exchange of ideas and information on the prevention, treatment and control of heart, kidney, liver, cancer and pulmonary diseases, to arouse, enhance and develop public interest on such diseases and arouse consciousness or awareness on general health and physical fitness;
- e) To encourage and/or undertake the training of physicians, nurses, medical technicians, health officers and social workers on the practical and scientific conduct and implementation of heart, kidney, liver, cancer and pulmonary services and related activities;
- f) To assist universities, hospitals and research institutions in their studies of heart, kidney, liver, cancer and pulmonary anomalies, to encourage advanced training on

matters of, or affecting the heart, kidney, liver, cancer and lungs, and related fields and to support educational programs of value to general health;

g) To encourage the formation of other organizations on the national, provincial, city, municipal or barangay level and to coordinate their various efforts and activities for the purpose of achieving a more effective programmatic approach on the common problems relative to the objectives herein enumerated; and,

h) To extend medical and heart, kidney, liver, cancer and pulmonary services to the general public, to help prevent, relieve or alleviate the innumerable heart, kidney, liver, cancer and pulmonary afflictions and maladies of the people specially the poor and less fortunate in life, without regard to race, creed, color or political belief.

SECTION 7. Governing Board. — The Governing Board of the Regional Specialty Hospitals shall be the Governing Board of their respective mother units: Provided, That the medical director or chief of hospital of the Regional Branch shall be present or invited to the Board meeting whenever matters concerning his/her Regional Branch are in the agenda or for discussion of the Board.

SECTION 8. Tax Exemptions and Privileges. — All existing tax exemptions and privileges of the Philippine Heart Center, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Lung Center of the Philippines, Philippine Children's Medical Center and Philippine Cancer Center shall be availed of by their Regional Branches.

SECTION 9. Transportation and Lodging Subsidy for Medical Specialists and Experts. — To encourage the assignment and/or temporary practice of medical specialists and experts in the Regional Branches of Specialty Hospitals, especially during the initial stage of their establishment, the Regional Branches are allowed to provide transportation and lodging subsidy and other necessary subsidies over and above of their salary, professional fee and other emoluments.

SECTION 10. Assistance From Government Offices. — The Regional Specialty Hospital may call upon any Department, Bureau, Office, agency or instrumentality of the government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, particularly the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, for such assistance it may need in the pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

SECTION 11. Government Subsidy and Contributions. — The amount of Five Billion Pesos (P5,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated as contribution of the National Government for the initial establishment, operations and maintenance of the Regional

Specialty Hospitals, for the year 2023. Thereafter, the amount necessary to ensure the continued operations and maintenance of the Regional Specialty Hospitals shall be duly provided for, appropriated and released from the General Appropriations Act. The respective funds therefrom shall be administered by the respective Board of each specialty hospital.

SECTION 12. Annual Report. — Each Regional Specialty Hospital shall render to their respective mother units, the Department of Health, the President of the Philippines, and the Congress of the Philippines annual reports of its activities, accomplishments, and recommendations.

SECTION 13. Effect of Dissolution of the Regional Specialty Hospital. — If for any reason, the Regional Specialty Hospital is dissolved, its assets and properties remaining at the time of dissolution shall revert to the Philippine Government for disposition in accordance with law.

SECTION 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — The Secretary of the Department of Health, in consultation with the Medical Director or Chief of Hospital of the respective mother unit of the Specialty Hospital, shall issue such rules, regulations, and other issuances as may be necessary to ensure the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 15. Separability Clause. — Any portion or provision of this Act that is declared unconstitutional shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

SECTION 16. Repealing Clause. — All laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 17. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publications in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,