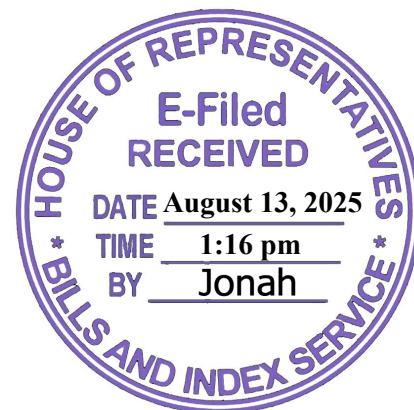




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 3677

Introduced by Representatives Alfelito “Alfel” M. Bascug, Ysabel Maria J. Zamora and Laarni Lavin Roque

**“AN ACT
REDEFINING THE FUNCTION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY
AFFAIRS, REORGANIZING ITS STRUCTURE, PROVIDING FOR ITS FUNDING,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippine Constitution guarantees the fundamental rights of every individual, including the right to equality, non-discrimination, and full participation in society. Consistent with these principles, the State has enacted Republic Act No. 7277, or the “Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities,” as amended by Republic Act No. 9442, and has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), affirming its commitment to a rights-based approach to disability. Despite these legal frameworks, however, persons with disabilities in the country continue to face systemic barriers in accessing education, employment, healthcare, infrastructure, public services, and legal protection. While institutional mechanisms exist, such as the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), they remain limited in mandate, resources, and enforcement authority.

This proposed measure seeks to redefine the function, structure, and authority of the NCDA by converting it into the **National Authority for Disability Rights and Welfare (NADRW)**, a strengthened and reorganized institution attached directly to the Office of the President. This transformation is not merely a change in nomenclature but a necessary evolution to meet the growing and complex demands of disability-inclusive governance. The NADRW shall serve as the primary government agency mandated to formulate, coordinate, and monitor all national policies and programs concerning the rights and welfare of persons

with disabilities, ensuring their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

The bill envisions a holistic and empowered institution, equipped with quasi-judicial authority to investigate complaints, enforce compliance with disability laws and standards, and recommend appropriate legal actions. Through its Subcommittee on Justice, the NADRW shall address cases involving vilification, bullying, and denial of benefits and privileges granted to PWDs. This mechanism addresses the long-standing challenge of weak enforcement and limited access to remedies for PWDs whose rights have been violated.

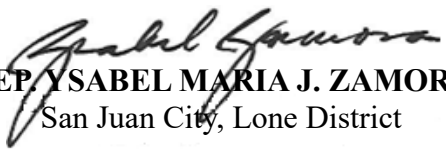
Further, the measure ensures meaningful participation and representation of the disability community in the formulation of national policy by establishing a multi-agency Governing Board. This Board, composed of key Cabinet Secretaries, representatives from organizations of persons with disabilities, and other relevant stakeholders, shall function as the highest policy-making body of the Authority. The measure also establishes a robust organizational structure with specialized bureaus responsible for program development, technical cooperation, accessibility standards, information management, capacity building, and regulatory enforcement. It provides for the creation of Regional Disability Authority Coordinators to ensure effective implementation at the local level, foster collaboration with local government units, and bring services closer to the grassroots.

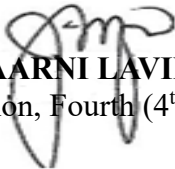
To ensure sustainability, the proposed Act mandates regular appropriations through the annual General Appropriations Act and authorizes the NADRW to receive and manage local and foreign donations, grants, and endowments, which shall be allocated exclusively for disability-related programs and projects. The Authority is likewise tasked with standardizing the issuance of the Persons with Disability Identification Card and maintaining a comprehensive database of all disability-related programs and services, thereby ensuring efficiency, transparency, and data-driven policymaking.

The proposed creation of the NADRW is a bold step toward institutional reform that centers the rights, dignity, and empowerment of persons with disabilities. It reflects the State's recognition that disability is not merely a medical or welfare issue, but a matter of human rights and social justice. It is a recognition that achieving genuine inclusion requires not only legislative intent but also a strong, accountable, and capacitated institution that can translate policies into real, measurable outcomes.

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


REP. ALFELITO "ALFEL" M. BASCUG
Agusan Del Sur, First (1st) District


REP. YSABEL MARIA J. ZAMORA
San Juan City, Lone District


REP. LAARNI LAVIN ROQUE
Bukidnon, Fourth (4th) District

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

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

ARTICLE I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the "*National Authority for Disability Rights and Welfare Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to uphold and protect the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Constitution, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and Republic Act No. 7277, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities," as amended by Republic Act No. 9442. The State recognizes that persons with disabilities are an integral part of society and shall ensure their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability. Towards this end, the State shall strengthen the institutional framework for disability-inclusive development, ensure effective implementation of disability laws, promote accessibility, foster an inclusive environment, and provide avenues for redress against violations of their rights and privileges.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a. **Persons with Disabilities** – refer to those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

b. **National Authority for Disability Rights and Welfare (NADRW)** – refers to the primary government agency mandated to formulate, coordinate, and monitor policies and programs concerning PWDs.

c. **Accessibility Audit** – refers to a systematic process of evaluating the built environment, transportation systems, and information and communication technologies to identify barriers that hinder access and participation of PWDs.

d. **Built Environment** – refers to all man-made structures, facilities, and spaces, including buildings, roads, sidewalks, parks, and public spaces.

e. **Transportation** – refers to all modes of public and private transport, including vehicles, terminals, and infrastructure.

f. **Accreditation** – refers to the formal recognition by the NADRW that an organization of PWDs meets specified standards of quality, capacity, and effectiveness.

g. **Quasi-Judicial Function** – refers to the power of the NADRW, through its designated subcommittee, to hear and decide disputes, investigate complaints, and impose administrative sanctions concerning violations of disability laws and rights.

h. **Vilification** – refers to the act of speaking or writing about PWDs in an abusively disparaging manner, or the act of defaming or slandering PWDs.

ARTICLE II

CREATION AND MANDATE OF THE NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS AND WELFARE

SEC. 4. *Renaming and Placement.* The National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), created under Executive Order No. 709, s. 1981, as amended, and further strengthened by Executive Order No. 33, s. 1986, is hereby renamed as the **National Authority for Disability Rights and Welfare (NADRW)**. The NADRW shall be an attached agency directly under the Office of the President.

SEC. 5. *Powers and Functions.* The NADRW shall exercise the following powers and functions:

a. Formulate, coordinate, and monitor the implementation of national plans, policies, and programs for the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities, consistent with the UNCRPD and RA 7277, as amended;

b. Serve as the central coordinating body for all disability-related programs and services of national government agencies, local government units, and non-government organizations;

- c. Conduct, or cause to be conducted, regular Accessibility Audits of public and private establishments, facilities, and services to ensure compliance with accessibility standards;
- d. Develop, issue, and enforce national standards on built environment and transportation to ensure universal design and accessibility for persons with disabilities, in coordination with relevant government agencies such as the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Transportation (DOTr), and the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD);
- e. Accredite organizations of persons with disabilities to ensure their legitimacy, capacity, and adherence to ethical standards in advocating for and serving the disability sector;
- f. Provide technical assistance and capacity building to national and local government agencies, private entities, and organizations of persons with disabilities on disability-inclusive policies and programs;
- g. Conduct research and studies on disability issues, collect and maintain a comprehensive database on persons with disabilities, and disseminate information to promote public awareness and understanding of disability;
- h. Advocate for the inclusion of disability perspectives in all development plans, policies, and programs of the government;
- i. Recommend legislative and policy measures to further protect and promote the rights and welfare of PWDs.
- j. Perform such other functions as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of this Act;
- k. Standardize the design and issuance of the Identification Cards of Persons with Disabilities in Partnership with the Local Government Unit (LGUs); and
- l. Establish a database for all information related to disability programs and services.

SEC. 6. *Quasi-Judicial Function.* The NADRW, through its Governing Board's Subcommittee on Justice, shall have the quasi-judicial function to investigate, hear, and decide on complaints pertaining to:

- a. Non-compliance with disability laws, rules, and regulations;
- b. Acts of vilification against persons with disabilities;
- c. Acts of bullying against persons with disabilities; and
- d. Non-recognition or denial of rights and privileges granted to persons with disabilities under existing laws. The Subcommittee on Justice shall have the

power to issue cease and desist orders, impose administrative fines, and recommend appropriate legal action to relevant government agencies. The rules of procedure for the exercise of this quasi-judicial function shall be promulgated by the Governing Board within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

ARTICLE III

GOVERNING BOARD

SEC. 7. Composition of the Governing Board. The NADRW shall be governed by a Board, hereinafter referred to as the "Governing Board," which shall be composed of the following:

- a. The Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as Chairperson;
- b. The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) as Vice-Chairperson;
- c. The Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd);
- d. The Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
- e. The Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH);
- f. The Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOTr);
- g. The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- h. The Secretary of the Department of Justice (DOJ);
- i. The Secretary of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD);
- j. The Director-General of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
- k. The Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
- l. A representative from the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), representing the Persons with Disabilities Sector;
- m. Three (3) representatives from legitimate organizations of persons with disabilities, to be appointed by the President from a list of nominees submitted by the recognized organizations of persons with disabilities; and
- n. The Executive Director of the NADRW, who shall serve as an ex-officio member and Board Secretary.

The representatives from organizations of PWDs shall serve for a term of three (3) years and can be on a hold over capacity until their replacement has been appointed.

SEC. 8. *Powers and Functions of the Governing Board.* The Governing Board shall be the policy-making body of the NADRW and shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Formulate and approve the overall policies, plans, and programs of the NADRW;
- b. Oversee the implementation of disability laws and programs;
- c. Create subcommittees as may be necessary, including the Subcommittee on Justice, to effectively carry out its functions;
- e. Promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act;
- f. Exercise such other powers as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of this Act;

SEC. 9. *Subcommittee on Justice.* The Governing Board shall constitute a permanent Subcommittee on Justice, which shall be composed of members of the Governing Board with legal expertise, representatives from the Department of Justice, and legal experts from persons with disabilities organizations. This subcommittee shall be responsible for the exercise of the quasi-judicial functions of the NADRW as provided in Section 6 of this Act.

ARTICLE IV

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

SEC. 10. *Executive Director.* The NADRW shall be headed by an Executive Director, who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines with the rank of an Undersecretary. The Executive Director shall serve for a fixed term of six (6) years and can stay on a hold over capacity until a replacement has been appointed. The Executive Director shall be the chief executive officer of the NADRW and shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations and implementation of the policies and programs approved by the Governing Body.

SEC. 11. *Deputy Executive Directors.* The Executive Director shall be assisted by two (2) Deputy Executive Directors, both with the rank of **Assistant Secretary**, who shall be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Executive Director.

- a. **Deputy Executive Director for Operations** – shall oversee the implementation of all programs, projects, and services of the NADRW, ensuring their effective and efficient delivery to persons with disabilities.
- b. **Deputy Executive Director for Administration** – shall be responsible for the overall administrative and financial management of the NADRW, including human resources, procurement, and general services.

SEC. 12. *Bureaus.* The NADRW shall be organized into the following Bureaus to effectively carry out its functions:

A. Under the Deputy Executive Director for Operations:

1. Programs and Innovation – Responsible for the development and monitoring of disability-inclusive programs and projects, and for fostering innovative solutions to address the needs of persons with disabilities;
2. Technical Cooperation – Responsible for forging and maintaining partnerships with international organizations, foreign governments, and local stakeholders for technical assistance and resource mobilization;
3. Support to Operations – Provides direct support services to persons with disabilities and their organizations, including referral services, case management, and advocacy support;
4. Capacity Building and Training – Develops and implements training programs for persons with disabilities their families, caregivers, and service providers, as well as for government agencies and private entities on disability awareness and inclusion;
5. Standards and Regulatory – Responsible for developing, disseminating, and enforcing standards on accessibility, universal design, and the accreditation of persons with disabilities organizations. This Bureau shall oversee Accessibility Audits; and
6. Information and Communication – Manages the NADRW's information systems, public relations, communication strategies, and the comprehensive database on PWDs.

B. Under the Deputy Executive Director for Administration:

1. Administration and General Services – Handles general administrative functions, property management, records management, and logistical support;
2. Finance – Responsible for budget preparation, financial management, accounting, and disbursement of funds;
3. Human Resources and Development – Manages personnel matters, including recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and employee welfare; and
4. Procurement – Handles all procurement activities of the NADRW in accordance with existing laws and regulations;

SEC. 13. *Regional Disability Authority Coordinators.* There shall be a Regional Disability Authority Coordinator in each administrative region of the Philippines, who shall be responsible for coordinating and overseeing the implementation of NADRW programs and policies at the regional and local levels. The Regional Coordinators shall establish strong

linkages with local government units, regional line agencies, and PWD organizations to ensure effective outreach and service delivery.

ARTICLE V

APPROPRIATIONS AND FUNDING

SEC. 14. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 15. *Special Fund.* The NADRW is authorized to accept donations, grants, and endowments from local and foreign sources, which shall constitute a special fund to be used exclusively for disability-related programs and projects, subject to existing government accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

ARTICLE VI

TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

SEC. 16. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* The Governing Board, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

SEC. 17. *Transitory Provisions.* All personnel, assets, liabilities, and records of the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) shall be transferred to the National Authority for Disability Rights and Welfare (NADRW). The existing personnel of NCDA shall be absorbed by the NADRW in accordance with Republic Act (RA) No. 6656 or An Act to Protect the Security of Tenure of Civil Service Officers and Employees in the Implementation of Government Reorganization and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

SEC. 18. *Repealing Clause.* Executive Order No. 709, s. 1981, Executive Order No. 33, s. 1986, and all other laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules, and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 19. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 20. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,