



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



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4469

Introduced by **Representative KATRINA REIKO CHUA - TAI**
1st District, Zamboanga City

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act No. 11223, also known as the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act, establishes a framework for an integrated, equitable, and people-centered health system. It emphasizes the development of local health systems and networks that deliver comprehensive and inclusive care. Similarly, Republic Act No. 11959, also known as the Regional Specialty Centers Act, aims to decentralize specialized healthcare services by mandating the establishment of specialty centers in various regions across the country.

Building on these two landmark laws, this proposed measure recognizes that health and education are deeply interlinked, especially for children with disabilities or developmental conditions. Access to early diagnosis, therapeutic interventions, and inclusive education should not be limited to health facilities alone but must be integrated into the public school system, which serves as the most accessible institution for Filipino families.

While some local government units (LGUs) and the Department of Education (DepEd) have begun integrating Special Education (SPED) programs in public schools, there is currently no institutional mandate or national funding mechanism to ensure that every child with a disability has access to a properly resourced SPED center. Additionally, the shortage of trained SPED teachers, lack of specialization programs, and inadequate support structures continue to undermine the inclusive goals of our educational system.

This bill aims to establish Special Education (SPED) Centers in all public schools, with a focus on priority and underserved areas. It aims to fund the training, specialization, and continuous professional development of SPED teachers through scholarships and career advancement opportunities. Furthermore, the measure integrates SPED and developmental services into the mandate of local health and education networks under the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act and the Regional Specialty Centers Act. It promotes inter-agency and local government unit (LGU) collaboration to ensure the delivery of holistic services, including diagnostics, therapy, and individualized learning plans, within the school setting. Finally, the bill provides additional compensation, incentives, and benefits to qualified SPED teachers and allied professionals to recognize and support their vital role in inclusive education.

By combining the mandates of the UHC Act and the Regional Specialty Centers Act with a focused investment in inclusive education, this measure affirms the right of every Filipino child, regardless of ability, to access quality, equitable, and appropriate education and care.

Education cannot be truly universal if it excludes those with special needs. Health cannot be truly comprehensive if it does not support cognitive, emotional, and developmental well-being. Through this legislation, we move closer to a future where every child is valued, supported, and given the opportunity to succeed.

IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



KATRINA REIKO CHUA - TAI



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AN ACT

INSTITUTIONALIZING SPECIAL EDUCATION (SPED) CENTERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, PROVIDING FUNDS FOR SPED TEACHER TRAINING, SPECIALIZATION, AND SUPPORT, AND EXPANDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11223 (UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE ACT) AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11959 (REGIONAL SPECIALTY CENTERS ACT) TO INCLUDE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENTAL AND SPECIALIZED EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the “Inclusive Education and Development Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of every child to quality and inclusive education, health, and holistic development. In recognition of the interdependence of health and education, and in fulfillment of its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the State shall institutionalize Special Education (SPED) Centers in public schools and integrate developmental and therapeutic services into the public education and healthcare systems.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are defined as:

“**Child**” shall refer to a person below eighteen (18) years of age, or those over eighteen (18) who are unable to fully take care of themselves or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation, or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition, in accordance with Republic Act No. 7610 and other relevant laws.

“**Children with Disabilities**” shall refer to children who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, developmental, or sensory impairments that may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

1 **“Private Entities”** Includes corporations, partnerships, cooperatives, and sole
2 proprietors engaged in business or non-profit operations in the Philippines.

3 **“SPED Center”** shall refer to a facility within a public school that provides special
4 education services, individualized instruction, developmental assessments, therapeutic
5 interventions, and other related services for children with disabilities.

6 **“Allied Professionals”** shall refer to but is not limited to speech and language
7 pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, developmental pediatricians,
8 behavioral therapists, psychologists, and guidance counselors.

9 **“Inclusive Education”** shall refer to a system of education that accommodates all
10 children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other
11 conditions.

12 **SECTION 4. Establishment of SPED Centers in Public Schools.** - DepEd, in
13 coordination with LGUs and barangays, shall establish at least one (1) SPED Center in every
14 public elementary and secondary school, prioritizing schools in underserved and marginalized
15 areas. SPED Centers shall have infrastructure design appropriate for SPED students, adequate
16 facilities, learning materials, diagnostic tools, and assistive technologies. Each SPED Center
17 shall be staffed with at least one qualified SPED teacher per ten (10) children with disabilities,
18 and supported by a pool of allied professionals. Schools may also serve as satellite hubs for
19 therapy and diagnostic services in partnership with DOH Regional Specialty Centers and local
20 health offices.

21 **SECTION 5. Integration into UHC and Regional Specialty Centers.** - The
22 Department of Health (DOH) shall ensure that developmental and therapeutic services for
23 children with disabilities are included in the service packages under the UHC Act and the
24 Regional Specialty Centers Act. The Regional Specialty Centers shall establish partnerships
25 with DepEd SPED Centers to deliver early diagnosis, medical referrals, therapy, and
26 developmental monitoring within the school setting. It shall integrate health and educational
27 services at the community level through coordination between school health units and barangay
28 health centers.

29 **SECTION 6. Training, Specialization, and Professional Development.** - The DepEd,
30 in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and
31 Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and accredited academic institutions, shall develop
32 and implement SPED training and specialization programs for teachers and allied
33 professionals. Scholarships, grants, and continuing education incentives shall be provided to
34 individuals pursuing SPED-related courses or professional certifications. The Department of
35 Education (DepEd) shall establish **Centers for SPED Excellence** to serve as national and
36 regional hubs for research, innovation, training, and technical assistance.

37 **SECTION 7. Compensation and Incentives for SPED Personnel.** - Qualified SPED
38 teachers and allied professionals shall receive additional compensation equivalent to at least
39 fifteen percent (15%) of their basic salary. SPED personnel shall be entitled to hazard pay,
40 continuing education allowances, and access to mental health support services. Importantly,
41 career advancement pathways specific to SPED teachers shall be established under the DepEd
42 Human Resource framework.

43 **SECTION 8. Role of Barangays and Local Government Units (LGUs).** - Each
44 barangay shall designate a SPED Focal Person to coordinate with the school and local health
45 center for the identification, monitoring, and support of children with disabilities. LGUs shall
46 allocate local funds to support SPED Centers, including infrastructure improvements,
47 transportation for learners, and honoraria for allied professionals. Barangay Development
48 Councils shall include SPED and inclusive education as key components of their annual
49 investment plans.

1 **SECTION 9. *Inter-Agency Council on Inclusive Education and Development***
2 ***(IACIED)***. - An Inter-Agency Council on Inclusive Education and Development (IACIED)
3 shall be created to oversee the implementation of this Act, composed of the following:

- 4 • Secretary of Education (Chair)
- 5 • Secretary of Health (Co-Chair)
- 6 • Secretary of Social Welfare and Development (Member)
- 7 • Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights (Member) Representative from the
- 8 National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA)
- 9 • Representative from the League of Provinces/Cities/Municipalities
- 10 • Three (3) representatives from SPED professional organizations and parent groups

11 The IACIED shall convene quarterly and report annually to Congress on the
12 implementation and impact of this Act.

13 **SECTION 10. *Appropriations***. – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of
14 this Act shall be charged against the current year’s appropriations of the DepEd and DOH.
15 Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General
16 Appropriations Act (GAA).

17 **SECTION 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)***. – Within ninety (90) days
18 from the effectivity of this Act, the DepEd, in coordination with the DOH, DSWD, and LGUs,
19 shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this
20 Act.

21 **SECTION 12. *Separability Clause***. – If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is
22 held invalid, all other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid.

23 **SECTION 13. *Repealing Clause***. – All laws, decrees, issuances, rules and regulations
24 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

25 **SECTION 14. *Effectivity Clause***. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
26 complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

27 *Approved,*