

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4628



Introduced by
Rep. Gil "Kabarangay Jr" A. Acosta and Rep. Jose C. Alvarez

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ABORLAN, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN, A
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE OF THE WESTERN PHILIPPINES UNIVERSITY, TO
BE KNOWN AS THE WESTERN PHILIPPINES UNIVERSITY-COLLEGE OF VETERINARY
MEDICINE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The livestock and poultry industry, as well as aquaculture and fisheries, are vital sectors in the Philippine economy, particularly in Palawan, which is blessed with vast agricultural lands, rich marine resources, and growing livestock production. However, access to veterinary services, research, and professional expertise remains limited, especially in rural and island municipalities.

At present, **there is no College of Veterinary Medicine in the entire Region IV-B (MIMAROPA)**. Neither Palawan nor the rest of the region offers a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program. Students aspiring to pursue veterinary studies are compelled to leave the region and enroll in universities located in distant areas such as Luzon, Visayas, or Mindanao—often at high financial and social costs to their families. This lack of a local institution results in fewer qualified veterinarians serving Palawan and the rest of MIMAROPA, where the demand for animal health professionals continues to grow due to the increasing importance of livestock, poultry, and fisheries in ensuring food security and rural development.

The establishment of the **Western Philippines University-College of Veterinary Medicine** at its main campus in Aborlan, Palawan, will directly address this gap. The College will:

1. Provide affordable and accessible veterinary education to students from Palawan and other provinces within the MIMAROPA region;
2. Produce competent and globally competitive veterinarians trained in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and control of animal diseases affecting both terrestrial and aquatic animals;

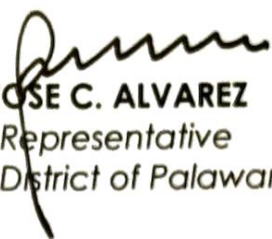
3. Support the agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries sectors through research, extension programs, and community service;
4. Strengthen the region's capacity to safeguard animal and public health, promote sustainable livestock and fisheries production, and enhance food safety.

This proposed measure is aligned with the mandate of the State to promote accessible quality education and to foster scientific and technological advancement, as provided under Article XIV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution. It also complements national goals on agricultural modernization, food security, and rural development.

In light of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is fervently sought.



GIL "Kabarangay Jr" A. ACOSTA
Representative
3rd District of Palawan



JOSE C. ALVAREZ
Representative
2nd District of Palawan

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

1 Section 1. *Establishment.* — There is hereby established a College of
2 Veterinary Medicine in the Western Philippines University (WPU), to be located
3 in the Municipality of Aborlan, Province of Palawan, which shall be known as
4 the *Western Philippines University–College of Veterinary Medicine*.

5 Sec. 2. *General Mandate.* — The Western Philippines University–College
6 of Veterinary Medicine, hereinafter referred to as the “College,” shall primarily
7 offer a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) Program. The program shall be a
8 six-year course consisting of a two-year preparatory veterinary medicine
9 curriculum, including general education courses, and a four-year professional
10 veterinary medicine curriculum consisting of basic animal sciences and
11 veterinary medical sciences. It shall adopt learning competency-based
12 standards and an outcomes-based approach to produce veterinary
13 physicians adept in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and control of animal
14 diseases, including terrestrial and aquatic animals.

15 Sec. 3. *Governance.* — The governance of the College shall be vested
16 in the Board of Regents of the Western Philippines University, whose powers are
17 defined under existing law. The DVM Program, and all related programs,
18 projects, and activities, shall be implemented in accordance with State
19 policies on education, the Philippine Constitution, and the standards and
20 guidelines of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

21 Sec. 4. *Compliance.* — The WPU, prior to the establishment of the
22 College and the offering of new and revised courses and programs related
23 thereto, shall ensure compliance with applicable policies, standards, and
24 guidelines of the CHED.

1 *Sec. 5. Scholarship Programs and Admission.* — The College shall provide
2 scholarships and other affirmative action programs to assist poor but deserving
3 students who qualify for admission. Students who avail themselves of
4 nationally-funded scholarships to complete the DVM Program shall be required
5 to render a return service, as provided by law or under a contract signed
6 between the student and the College.

7 No student shall be denied admission to the College by reason of sex,
8 gender, religion, cultural or community affiliation, physical disability, ethnic
9 origin, or any other form of discrimination.

10 *Sec. 6. Duty and Tax Exemptions.* — The importation by the College of
11 medical, scientific, and technical books or publications, as well as medical,
12 laboratory, or scientific equipment and instruments, certified by the CHED as
13 necessary, shall be exempt from customs duties in accordance with the
14 provisions of Republic Act No. 10863, otherwise known as the "Customs
15 Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA)."

16 All grants, bequests, endowments, donations, and contributions made
17 to and actually, directly, and exclusively used for educational purposes by the
18 College shall be exempt from donor's tax and shall be considered allowable
19 deductions from gross income for purposes of computing taxable income of
20 the donor under the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

21 *Sec. 7. Appropriations.* — The amount necessary to carry out the
22 provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations
23 Act.

24 *Sec. 8. Suppletory Application.* — The provisions of Republic Act No.
25 8292, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997,"
26 shall form part of this Act.

27 *Sec. 9. Separability Clause.* — If any part or provision of this Act is
28 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected shall
29 remain in full force and effect.

30 *Sec. 10. Repealing Clause.* — All laws, presidential decrees, executive
31 orders, and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions
32 of this Act are hereby amended, repealed, or modified accordingly.

33 *Sec. 11. Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
34 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

35 *Approved,*