

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5136



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ADRIAN MICHAEL A. AMATONG

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Dipolog School of Fisheries (DSF), established in 1961 through Republic Act No. 2635 authored by the late Congressman Alberto Q. Ubay, has long stood as the lone fisheries school in the Province of Zamboanga del Norte. Originally designed to offer secondary and post-secondary technical-vocational programs, the institution was later placed under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) by virtue of Republic Act No. 7796, otherwise known as the "TESDA Act of 1994."

While DSF has played a pivotal role in equipping students with technical and vocational skills, the growing challenges and opportunities in the fisheries sector, marine sciences, and related industries demand a higher level of academic and scientific engagement. The province of Zamboanga del Norte, with its rich marine resources and long coastline, remains one of the poorest in the country, with a poverty incidence rate of 47.6% as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)—the highest in the nation. This stark reality underscores the urgent need for sustainable livelihood opportunities, technological advancement, and industry-responsive education.

The conversion of DSF into the Zamboanga del Norte Polytechnic Institute of Fisheries and Technology (ZN-PIFT) will empower the institution to rise beyond its current mandate by offering advanced programs in fisheries, aquaculture, marine sciences, engineering, and technology. It will serve as a center for research and innovation, producing a highly skilled workforce that can directly address both local and global labor market demands while uplifting the economic conditions of communities long trapped in poverty.

By institutionalizing ZN-PIFT, this measure seeks not only to strengthen the province's fisheries and aquaculture industries but also to provide a viable pathway for reducing poverty by equipping the youth with higher competencies and opening avenues for sustainable development. In doing so, the bill affirms the constitutional mandate that education must be geared toward equitable access, economic productivity, and the advancement of national development.

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


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**AN ACT CONVERTING THE DIPOLOG SCHOOL OF FISHERIES INTO THE
ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE OF FISHERIES AND
TECHNOLOGY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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 “Zamboanga del Norte Polytechnic Institute of Fisheries and Technology Act.”

SEC. 2. **Conversion.** — The Dipolog School of Fisheries (DSF), established through Republic Act No. 2635 and currently administered by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), is hereby converted into the Zamboanga del Norte Polytechnic Institute of Fisheries and Technology (ZN-PIFT).

SEC. 3. **Mandate.** — The Zamboanga del Norte Polytechnic Institute of Fisheries and Technology shall provide advanced and specialized academic, technical, and scientific programs in fisheries, aquaculture, marine sciences, engineering, technology, and allied fields. It shall:

- a. Develop higher-level training and research programs in fisheries and related industries;
- b. Establish linkages and partnerships with industry stakeholders and higher education institutions;
- c. Promote innovation, research, and development in sustainable fisheries and marine technologies;
- d. Align its programs with local, regional, and global labor market demands.

SEC. 4. **Supervision.** — The governance, supervision, and academic standards of the Institute shall be in accordance with policies prescribed jointly by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in consultation with the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR).

SEC. 5. **Curricular Offerings.** — The Institute is authorized to determine, design, and offer undergraduate, graduate, diploma, certificate, and short-term

programs in fields relevant to its mandate, subject to approval of the appropriate regulatory agencies.

SEC. 6. **Appropriations.** — The Secretary of Education, the Director General of TESDA, and the Chairperson of CHED shall immediately include in their respective programs the operationalization of this Act, the funding of which shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Dipolog School of Fisheries. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued operation of the Institute shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** — Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, TESDA, CHED, and DA-BFAR, in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. **Separability Clause.** — If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected.

SEC. 9. **Repealing Clause.** — All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. **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,