

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5173



Introduced by Representative **Reynolds Michael T. Tan**

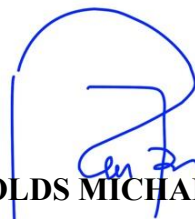
AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE SAMAR ISLAND INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE OF SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to provide access to quality medical education and training to Filipinos through the Samar Island Institute of Medicine (SIIM) in the Samar State University (SSU) in the City of Catbalogan, Province of Samar. Republic Act No. 9313 provides that the SSU shall offer graduate courses within its areas of specialization and according to its capabilities, as the Board of Regents may deem necessary to carry out its objectives, particularly to meet the needs of the Province of Samar and the Region. This current bill will support the SSU's in the performance of its mandate.

Moreover, this will address the lack of qualified doctors in Eastern Visayas. Based on current estimates, the Eastern Visayas region has only about 0.25 doctors for every 1,000 people. This is well-below the ideal ratio of 1 doctor for every 1000 people.¹ In this regard, the Samar State University (SSU) Board of Regents (BOR) passed BOR Resolution No. 166, (s. 2020) approving the establishment of the SIIM in order to increase the doctor-to-population ratio in the Eastern Visayas, particularly in Samar Island. The recently established Samar Island Institute of Medicine of Samar State University is a crucial opportunity to address this shortage. However, the institution requires significant support to fulfill its potential as a leading medical education center in Eastern Visayas and the country.

The passage of this Act will demonstrate the government's commitment to health equity and ensure that all Filipinos, regardless of their geographic location or economic status, have access to quality healthcare services delivered by competent and compassionate medical professionals.


REYNOLDS MICHAEL T. TAN
Second District of Samar

¹ Samar Island Institute of Medicine "My Classroom, My Community, My Responsibility" 8.

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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy to promote and ensure quality medical education accessible to students from underserved regions, address the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in Eastern Visayas, particularly in rural and remote areas, strengthen regional medical institutions to reduce brain drain and encourage local healthcare workforce retention, support the development of medical research capabilities focused on rural health challenges prevalent in the region, and ensure equitable access to medical education regardless of socioeconomic background.

SECTION 2. *General Mandate.* – The Samar Island Institute of Medicine in Samar State University located at Catbalogan City, Samar, hereinafter referred to as the “Institute”, is currently offering a Doctor of Medicine Program which is a four (4) year post-baccalaureate program consisting of basic sciences and clinical courses, using learner-centered, community-based and outcome-based approach. Its goal is to develop professionally competent and socially responsive physicians so as to respond to the human resource development needs of the Samar Island and Region VIII and strengthen the healthcare system of the country.

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SECTION 3. *Curriculum.* - The curriculum shall be designed to ensure that medical graduates are not just competent, but also committed and relevant to the community they are meant to serve. While the program is focused to address the needs of the Eastern Visayas region and specifically the island of Samar, graduates will also be trained to be nationally and globally competitive. Specifically, the program intends to develop medical doctors who can be a primary care physician after passing licensure examination and may pursue the following career i.e., family and community health practitioner (Universal Health Care ready).

SECTION 4. *Compliance with Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Requirements.* – The provisions of this Act notwithstanding, the strengthening of the Samar Island Institute of Medicine shall become effective upon the determination and declaration by the CHED, based on the recommendation of a panel of experts it shall constitute for the purpose, that the institution has complied with policies, standards and guidelines on CHED Memorandum Order No. 18, Series of 2016 for the Doctor of Medicine Program.

SECTION 5. Governance. - Being part of Samar State University (SSU), the governance of the Institute shall be vested in the Board of Regents of the SSU, hereinafter referred to as the Board, whose powers are defined under Section 7 of Republic Act No. 9313, otherwise known as “*An Act Converting the Samar State Polytechnic College in the Municipality of Catbalogan, Province of Samar into a State University to be known as the Samar State University, Integrating Therewith the Wright Vocational School in Paranas, Samar, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes*” and other applicable laws and regulations, unless otherwise provided or amended elsewhere in this Act.

SECTION 6. Administration. – The administration of the Institute shall be vested in the President of the SSU, insofar as authorized by the Board. Nevertheless, this power and duty may be delegated by the Board to the Dean of the Institute in order to expedite the administration of the affairs of the Institution.

SECTION 7. The Dean. – The Institute shall be headed by a Dean who shall be appointed by the Board, subject to its guidelines on qualifications and standards, and based on the recommendation of the President of the SSU following a process of consultation with the constituents of the Institute. The Dean shall render full-time service, serve a term of four (4) years, and may be reappointed to another term.

The Dean shall exercise the powers and duties which usually pertain to the Office of the Dean of similar state universities and colleges and those delegated by the President.

The salary of the Dean of the Institute shall be in accordance with Republic Act No. 11466 or the “Salary Standardization Law of 2019”, and such other laws amendatory thereto, which may hereinafter be enacted, and shall be comparable to that being received by the Deans of similar educational institutions. In addition, the Board may provide for other benefits and allowances, including but not limited to housing and allowance, in favor of the Dean.

In case of a vacancy in the Office of the Dean by reason of death, compulsory retirement, resignation, removal for cause, or incapacity of the Dean to perform the functions of the office, the Board, upon the recommendation of the President, shall designate an Officer-in-Charge of the Institute, pending the appointment of a new Dean: Provided, That the Officer-in-Charge shall serve only during the unexpired portion of the term.

The Dean of the Institute shall be assisted by an Associate Dean, who shall be appointed by the Board.

SECTION 8. The Faculty. – The Board shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the President of the SSU, the faculty members of the Institute, based on the CHED Technical Panel of Expert’s required number: Provided, That no political belief, gender preference, cultural or community affiliation or ethnic origin, nor religious opinion or affiliation shall be a matter of inquiry in the appointment of faculty members of the Institute: Provided, further, That said appointment shall be subject to the guidelines, qualifications, and standards set by the Board: Provided, finally, That no member of the faculty shall teach for or against any particular church or religious sect.

SECTION 9. Student Admission and Scholarships. – The student admission policy shall be designed to be inclusive with equal priority to social, economic and academic criteria for admission. The selection shall be fair allocation to deserving students from the three provinces in Samar Island, other areas in Region VIII and the rest of the country. The Institute shall implement

measure to improve student retention and promotion without sacrificing the quality of medical graduates.

No student shall be denied admission to the Institute by reason of gender, religion, cultural or community affiliation, physical disability, or ethnic origin. All students shall be covered by return-service agreement with the objective of serving the underserved areas in Samar Island, Region VIII and other areas in the country.

The Institute shall provide scholarships and other affirmative action programs to assist poor but deserving students who qualify for admission to the Institute. The scholarship program shall be implemented in accordance with the objectives and conditions laid down in Republic Act No. 11509 otherwise known as the “*Doktor Para sa Bayan Act*” and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 10. *Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy.* – The Institute shall enjoy academic freedom and institutional autonomy, pursuant to paragraph 2, Section 5 of Article XIV of the Constitution.

SECTION 11. *Funding.* – To support the SIIM, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall allocate an annual Special Development Fund over five (5) years for the Institute’s comprehensive strengthening and development. This enhanced funding from the Department of Budget and Management is essential for ensuring program sustainability and quality, meeting the healthcare needs of 1.2 million Samar Island residents, supporting national health equity goals, and maximizing return on investment in healthcare. The funding provided above shall be divided into the following subject to the discretion of the Board: a) infrastructure development; b) faculty hiring and development, c) equipment, d) student scholarship and support, e) research and development, and f) maintenance and other operational expenses.

SECTION 12. *Authority to Loan or Transfer Apparatus, Equipment or Supplies and Detail of Personnel.* – Upon the request of the Board, through the President of the SSU, the heads of the bureaus and offices of the national government may loan or transfer to the Institute such apparatus, equipment or supplies as may be needed by it, and detail employees for duty therein when, in the judgment of the head of bureau or office, the apparatus, equipment, supplies or services of such employees can be spared without serious detriment to public service.

The employees so detailed shall perform such duties as required of them by the Dean of the Institute, and the time so served shall be counted as part of their regular service.

SECTION 13. *Assets, Liabilities and Personnel.* – All appropriations, assets, both real and personal, personnel, and records of the Institute, as well as its liabilities or obligations, shall be titled or named after the SSU.

All parcels of land belonging to the government to be occupied by the Institute shall be the property of the SSU, and shall be titled under its name: Provided, That should the Institute cease to exist or be abolished or should such aforementioned parcels of land be no longer needed by the SSU, the same shall revert to the concerned local government unit or to the Republic of the Philippines, as the case may be.

SECTION 14. *Duty and Tax Exemptions.* – The importation by the Institute of medical books or publications, medical equipment or instruments which are for medical, laboratory or scientific

purposes shall, upon certification by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), be exempt from customs duties in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10863, otherwise known as the “Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA)”;

All grants, bequests, endowments, donations, and contributions made to and used actually, directly and exclusively for educational purposes by the Institute, shall be exempt from donor’s tax and the same shall be considered as allowable deduction from gross income for purposes of computing the taxable income of the donor in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

SECTION 15. *Filing of Report.* - On or before the fifteenth (15th) day of the second (2nd) month after the opening of the regular classes each year, the Board shall file with the Office of the President of the Philippines, through the Chairperson of the CHED, and with both Houses of Congress, a detailed report on the progress, conditions and needs of the College.

SECTION 16. *Supplementary Application.* - The provisions of Republic Act No. 8292, otherwise known as the “Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997,” shall form part of this Act.

SECTION 17. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 18. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* –Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the Board shall, in consultation with the CHED, issue the rules and regulations to fully implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 19. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected are in full force and effect.

SECTION 20. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are amended, repealed, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 21. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,