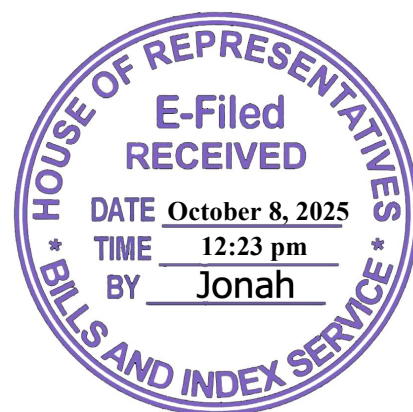


TWENTIETH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



HOUSE BILL NO. 5289

Introduced by Honorable Celso G. Regencia

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines continues to face a shortage and unequal distribution of physicians. With only 7.9 doctors per 10,000 population as of 2021, the country falls below international benchmarks, leaving wide gaps in health service delivery, especially in Mindanao's underserved areas.¹

The State has responded through landmark measures such as the Universal Health Care Act (RA 11223²) and the Doktor Para sa Bayan Act (RA 11509³), which created a scholarship and return-service program for future physicians. However, these initiatives can only succeed with more publicly funded medical training institutions. Establishing additional medical colleges is therefore a necessary complement to these laws.

Mindanao State University–Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), created under RA 5363, is one of the country's leading state universities in science and technology, and is recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as a Center of Excellence in multiple disciplines. With its strong pre-medical programs, research capacity, and service orientation,

¹ Pepito, V. C. F., Loreche, A. M., Legaspi, R. S., Guinanan, R. C., Capeding, T. P. J. Z., Ong, M. M., & Dayrit, M. M. (2025). *Health workforce issues and recommended practices in the implementation of Universal Health Coverage in the Philippines: A qualitative study*. *Human Resources for Health*, 23(1), Article 21. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12960-025-00988-3>

² Congress of the Philippines. (2019). *Republic Act No. 11223: An Act instituting Universal Health Care for all Filipinos, prescribing reforms in the health care system, and appropriating funds therefor*. Official Gazette. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2019/02/20/republic-act-no-11223>

³ Congress of the Philippines. (2020, December 23). *Republic Act No. 11509: An Act establishing a medical scholarship and return service program for deserving students, and appropriating funds therefor (Doktor Para sa Bayan Act)*. Official Gazette. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2020/12/23/republic-act-no-11509/>

MSU-IIT is well-positioned to host a College of Medicine serving Northern Mindanao.

Northern Mindanao's population reached 5,178,326 as of July 1, 2024,⁴ reflecting sustained demand for physicians and training capacity in the public sector. A College of Medicine in the Lone District of Iligan City will broaden access to medical education for students from Lanao del Norte and neighboring provinces, and will strengthen the pool of physicians committed to return service in the region.

The proposed MSU-IIT College of Medicine is envisioned as a research-intensive, multidisciplinary institution of innovation in health and medicine, anchored on the University's strong tradition of scientific inquiry and technological excellence. It aims to train competent and compassionate physicians while cultivating clinician-scientists and innovators capable of addressing the complex health challenges of the nation.

Building on MSU-IIT's recognition in international university rankings such as the Times Higher Education (THE), the College will harness the University's research strength and collaborative culture to advance medical innovation and evidence-based public health solutions for Iligan City, the Province of Lanao del Norte, and the Northern Mindanao Region.

By establishing this College, Congress affirms its commitment to equitable access to quality medical education, to strengthening the health system of Mindanao, and to ensuring that every community has access to competent, ethical, and service-driven physicians.

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



CELSO GOMERA REGENCIA
Lone District, Iligan City

⁴ Philippine Statistics Authority. (2024). *Highlights, Region X (Northern Mindanao) population — Census 2024*. <https://psa.gov.ph/content/highlights-region-x-northern-mindanao-population-2024-census-population-2024-popcen>

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5289

Introduced by Honorable Celso G. Regencia

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A COLLEGE OF MEDICINE IN MINDANAO STATE
UNIVERSITY–ILIGAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE LONE
DISTRICT OF ILIGAN CITY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Establishment.* — There is hereby established a medical school in the Mindanao State University–Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), located in the Lone District of Iligan City to be known as the **MSU-IIT College of Medicine**, hereinafter referred to as the College.

SECTION 2. *General Mandate.* — The College shall primarily offer a Doctor of Medicine (MD) Program, including an Integrated Liberal Arts and Medicine Program, consisting of basic science and clinical courses, and employing a learner-centered, competency-based, and community-oriented approach. It shall be established as a research-intensive and multidisciplinary institution of innovation in health and medicine, committed to advancing medical education, research, and health-care delivery.

The primary goal of the College shall be to develop a corps of competent, ethical, and research-oriented physicians who shall contribute to the strengthening of the health-care system of the country and respond to the human resource development needs of Iligan City, the Province of Lanao del Norte, and the Northern Mindanao Region.

In pursuit of its mandate, the College shall undertake cutting-edge research, promote collaboration across disciplines, foster innovation in medical education and practice, and provide progressive leadership in health, medicine, and public health policy.

SECTION 3. *Governance.* — The governance of the College shall be vested in the Board of Regents of the Mindanao State University System (MSUS), hereinafter referred to as the Board, whose powers and functions are defined under the Charter of the Mindanao State University (Republic Act No. 1387, as amended by Republic Act No. 1893, Republic Act No. 3791, and Republic Act No. 3868), unless otherwise provided or amended by law.

SECTION 4. *Administration.* — The administration of the College shall be vested in the Dean, as authorized by the Board.

SECTION 5. *The College Dean.* — The College shall be headed by a Dean who shall be appointed by the Board, subject to the guidelines, qualifications, and standards set by the Board, and upon the recommendation of the President, following a process of consultation with the constituents of the College. The Dean shall render full-time service for a term of three (3) years and may be reappointed to another term.

Within six (6) months from the effectivity of this Act, the President of the MSU System shall constitute the Search Committee for the Deanship.

The powers and duties of the Dean of the College, in addition to those specifically provided for in this Act, shall include those usually pertaining 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 College shall be in accordance with Republic Act No. 11466, otherwise known as the “Salary Standardization Law of 2019,” and such other laws as may hereinafter be enacted, and shall be comparable to that being received by the Deans of similar educational institutions.

In case of 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 shall designate an Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the College, pending the appointment of a new Dean: Provided, That the OIC shall serve only during the unexpired portion of the term.

The Dean of the College shall be assisted by a College Secretary, who shall be appointed by the Board.

SECTION 6. *The Faculty.* — The Board, upon recommendation of the MSU System President, shall appoint the faculty members of the College:

Provided, that no political belief, sex, gender, cultural or community affiliation, ethnic origin, religious opinion or affiliation shall be a matter of inquiry in the appointment of faculty members of the College:

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 religious denomination.

SECTION 7. *Scholarship Programs and Admissions.* — The College shall provide scholarships and other affirmative action programs to assist poor but deserving students who qualify for admission to the College. Students who have availed themselves of nationally-funded scholarship programs to complete the Doctor of Medicine Program under the College shall be required to render a return service as provided by applicable laws and regulations, or under a contract to be signed between the student and the College.

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

SECTION 8. *Academic Freedom.* — The College shall enjoy academic freedom, pursuant to Section 5, Paragraph 2 of Article XIV of the Constitution.

SECTION 9. *Loan or Transfer of Supplies, Apparatuses, or Equipment, and Detail of Personnel to the College.* — Heads of national government agencies and instrumentalities may, upon request of the Board through the MSU System President, loan or transfer supplies, apparatuses, or equipment, and detail personnel to the College: Provided, that such loan, transfer, or detail shall not be detrimental to public service.

The personnel so detailed to the College shall perform such duties as may be deemed required by the Dean of the College, and the time spent for

such duties shall be counted as part of the detailed personnel's regular service.

SECTION 10. *Assets, Liabilities, and Personnel.* — All assets, real and personal, personnel, and records of the College, as well as its liabilities or obligations, shall be titled under or named after the MSU-IIT.

All parcels of land belonging to the government to be occupied by the College shall be the property of the MSU-IIT and titled accordingly:

Provided, that should the MSU-IIT cease to exist or be abolished or such parcels of land be no longer needed by the MSU-IIT, the same shall revert to the local government unit concerned or to the Republic of the Philippines, as the case may be.

SECTION 11. *Duty and Tax Exemptions.* — The importation by the College 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 College, shall be exempt from donor's tax and the same shall be considered as allowable deductions 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 12. *Compliance with CHED Requirements.* — The MSU-IIT, prior to the establishment of the College and offering of new and revised courses and programs related thereto, shall ensure compliance with the applicable policies, standards, and guidelines of the CHED.

SECTION 13. *Suppletory 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 14. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the Board shall, in consultation with the CHED, issue rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 16. *Separability Clause.* — If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 17. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, repealed, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 18. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,