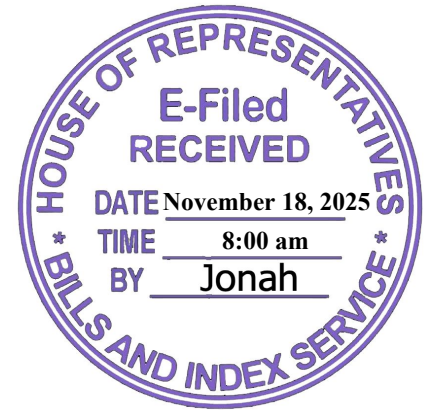




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6075



Introduced by Representatives Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Yedda Marie K. Romualdez, Andrew Julian K. Romualdez and Jude A. Acidre

AN ACT
MANDATING VISION AND HEARING SCREENING FOR ALL CHILDREN BEFORE THE AGE OF SIX (6) AS A REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES FOR EARLY INTERVENTION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A child's ability to learn depends greatly on his or her capacity to see and hear clearly. Undetected vision and hearing impairments can lead to developmental delays, reduced academic performance, misdiagnosed learning disabilities, and even social isolation. Many cases of poor school performance are later traced to simple problems with eyesight or hearing that could have been corrected if diagnosed earlier.

In the Philippines, children from poor and rural communities are disproportionately affected, as their families cannot afford regular medical check-ups. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that up to 60% of childhood vision and hearing problems are preventable or treatable when detected early.

This measure seeks to:

- a. Institutionalize mandatory vision and hearing screening before the

- age of six (6) as a prerequisite for enrollment in public elementary schools;
- b. Guarantee free screening services through DOH, DepEd, and LGU collaboration;
 - c. Provide support for indigent families through government health programs; and
 - d. Impose penalties for non-compliance on schools, personnel, and health professionals to safeguard accountability and prevent abuse.

By ensuring that every Filipino child enters school with the ability to see and hear properly, this measure promotes fairness in education, protects children's health, and strengthens human capital development. The Children's Vision and Hearing Check-Up Act is thus both a health and education reform, aligning national policy with global commitments under the WHO and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



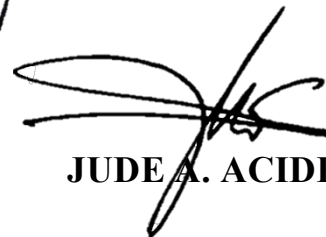
FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ



YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ



ANDREW JULIAN K. ROMUALDEZ



JUDE A. ACIDRE



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6075

Introduced by Representatives Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Yedda Marie K. Romualdez, Andrew Julian K. Romualdez and Jude A. Acidre

AN ACT
MANDATING VISION AND HEARING SCREENING FOR ALL CHILDREN BEFORE THE AGE OF SIX (6) AS A REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES FOR EARLY INTERVENTION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “*Children’s Vision and Hearing Check-up Act.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to safeguard and promote the right of children to health and education. Recognizing that undetected vision and hearing impairments negatively affect learning outcomes, the State shall institute early detection and intervention programs to ensure that all children can learn effectively in school.

SEC. 3. *Coverage.* – All children aged five (5) years old or younger shall undergo

mandatory vision and hearing screening as a prerequisite for enrollment in public elementary schools.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Agencies.* – The Department of Education (DepEd) shall be mandated to require all incoming students to present proof of vision and hearing screening as a prerequisite for formal enrollment. The Department of Health, in coordination with the National Nutrition Council and the local government units (LGUs), shall be tasked with the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of screening programs to be conducted in schools and community health centers. The LGUs, through their respective offices and instrumentalities, shall extend logistical support and shall mobilize barangay health workers to facilitate the conduct of pre-enrollment screening, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

SEC. 5. *Screening Services.* – Vision and hearing screening shall be conducted by licensed health professionals, including but not limited to pediatricians, ophthalmologists, optometrists, audiologists, or other trained personnel duly accredited by the Department of Health. Such screening shall be provided free of charge in all public health facilities and public schools. Children who are found to have impairments as a result of the screening shall be immediately referred for appropriate treatment and early intervention programs.

SEC. 6. *Assistance for Indigent Families.* – Indigent children diagnosed with vision or hearing problems shall be provided with appropriate medical assistance, including prescription eyeglasses, hearing aids, or referrals for specialized treatment, through government health programs and PhilHealth benefits.

SEC. 7. *Information and Education Campaign.* – The Department of Health and Department of Education shall jointly conduct a nationwide information drive to

educate parents, teachers, and communities on the importance of early detection of vision and hearing problems.

SEC. 8. *Penalties for Non-Compliance.* –

- a. *Schools.* – Any public elementary school that knowingly accepts a student without proof of screening, without coordinating with the Department of Health or LGU for compliance, shall be subject to the following penalties:
 - i. First Offense – Written warning and mandatory corrective action within thirty (30) days.
 - ii. Second Offense – Fine of ₱50,000 against the responsible school official, and mandatory compliance audit.
 - iii. Third Offense – Fine of ₱100,000 and administrative liability for the school head or principal, subject to DepEd rules.
- b. *School Personnel.* – Any school official or employee found falsifying or disregarding the requirements for screening shall be subject to disciplinary action under Civil Service rules, including suspension or dismissal, without prejudice to criminal liability under existing laws.
- c. *Health Professionals.* – Any licensed professional who falsifies or negligently issues screening certificates shall be subject to:
 - i. Administrative fines of not less than ₱20,000 but not more than ₱50,000; and
 - ii. Suspension or revocation of professional license upon recommendation of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

SEC. 8. *Compliance and Monitoring.* – The Department of Education and

Department of Health (DOH) shall jointly establish a monitoring and reporting system to ensure school compliance with this Act. Local government units shall submit annual compliance reports to the DOH, which shall consolidate and transmit the national report to Congress.

SEC. 9. *Appropriations.* – The funds necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the annual appropriations of the Department of Health and Department of Education under the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectiveness of this Act, the Department of Health and Department of Education, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, other parts of provisions thereof not affected shall thereby continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and other issues or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,