

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
20th Congress
First Regular Session
HOUSE BILL NO. 8304



Introduced by **Representative RAYMOND ADRIAN SALCEDA**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE SCIENCE INSTITUTE UNDER THE
SUPERVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Sections 10 and 11, Article XIV of the Constitution expressly mandate the State to give priority to science, technology, research, innovation, and education as pillars of national development. Yet despite these constitutional directives, the Philippines continues to lag behind its regional peers in research output, innovation capacity, and the number of scientists, engineers, and research professionals per capita. The country's fragmented research ecosystem, limited world-class facilities, and persistent brain drain constrain our ability to translate scientific knowledge into industries, jobs, and inclusive growth.

This bill seeks to address these structural gaps through the establishment of the **Philippine Science Institute (PSI)** as a specialized, research-based, degree-granting institution under the supervision of the Department of Science and Technology. The PSI shall serve as the country's premier center for advanced instruction, applied research, and innovation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

The proposed Institute will develop a critical mass of highly trained scientists, engineers, and researchers by offering specialized degree programs, merit-based scholarships, and intensive research training. It will provide state-of-the-art laboratories, modern research infrastructure, and an academic environment comparable to leading international science institutions. By integrating education with research and industry collaboration, the PSI will ensure that scientific outputs translate into practical solutions that strengthen agriculture, health systems, manufacturing, digital technologies, energy security, and climate resilience.

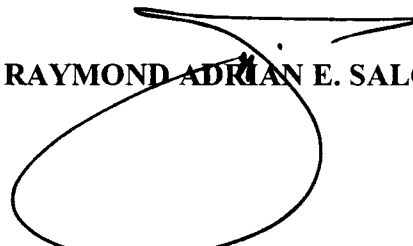
To attract and retain top talent, the measure grants academic and administrative flexibility consistent with global research universities, including streamlined hiring of faculty, engagement of foreign experts, exemption from restrictive civil service and licensing barriers, and the provision

of Magna Carta benefits for science and technology personnel. Safeguards on land use, asset management, and public accountability are likewise incorporated to protect government resources and ensure transparency, with annual reporting and auditing requirements.

The bill further encourages private sector and philanthropic participation through tax incentives, donations, and partnerships, recognizing that innovation thrives through collaboration between government, academia, and industry.

Ultimately, the creation of the PSI is a strategic national investment. It institutionalizes a permanent platform for knowledge creation, technology development, and human capital formation—key drivers of productivity and long-term economic competitiveness. By strengthening the country’s scientific foundation, this measure aims to secure a more self-reliant, innovative, and future-ready Philippines.

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



RAYMOND ADRIAN E. SALCEDA

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* — There is hereby established a research-based, degree-granting institute to be known as the "Philippine Science Institute (PSI)," an attached agency of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — Sections 10 and 11 of the Philippine Constitution recognize that science and technology are essential for national development and progress. The State shall give priority to research and development, invention, innovation, and their utilization, as well as to science and technology education, training, and services. It shall support indigenous, appropriate, and self-reliant scientific and technological capabilities and their application to the country's productive systems and national life. Towards this end, Congress is empowered by the Constitution to provide incentives, including tax deductions, to encourage private participation in programs of basic and applied scientific research, and other incentives such as scholarships, grants-in-aid, and support for deserving science students, researchers, scientists, inventors, technologists, and specially gifted citizens.

Section 3. *Objectives.* — In implementing the foregoing policy, the State shall pursue the following objectives:

- (a) Promote research and development (R&D) in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) as a tool for national development;
- (b) Facilitate the creation of a critical mass of R&D professionals in the country to aid in socio-economic transformation;
- (c) Establish a science institute that will assume a leadership role in tertiary-level STEM education, specializing in applied science research and development;

- (d) Offer scholarships to deserving and gifted Filipino scholars with high aptitude for STEM and R&D careers or courses;
- (e) Create a pathway for students to earn degrees in STEM R&D;
- (f) Provide a campus patterned after international science institutions, with world-class facilities, a conducive environment for research, and sufficient land and space for student and faculty housing, including accommodations for visiting international scientists;
- (g) Establish international collaborations for the holistic development of students, staff, and institutional leadership;
- (h) Support scholars and teachers in participating in local and international competitions, academic symposia, research projects, and other scholarly activities, subject to the availability of funds and compliance with government accounting and audit regulations.

Section 11. *Appointment Requisites and Practice of Profession.* — Faculty members, as well as research, extension, and professional staff (REPS) of the PSI, shall be exempt from any civil service examination or regulation as a requirement for appointment. Notwithstanding existing laws, licensing requirements set by professional regulatory boards shall not affect appointments to faculty positions. No religious test shall be applied, and neither religious nor political opinions or affiliations shall be grounds for examination or inquiry.

Section 12. *Student Affairs.* — The PSI shall establish student councils for each academic unit and a general assembly comprising all councils. Each council shall consist of elected student representatives, serving a term of one (1) year, with re-election allowed.

The student council shall serve as the official body representing student interests and welfare. It shall have the power to adopt internal rules consistent with this Act.

Subject to consultation with students, each college or unit shall establish a student publication funded by student fees. Editorial and fiscal autonomy shall be guaranteed, including the selection of its editors and staff.

Section 13. *Land Grants and Other Real Properties of the PSI.* —

- a) The State shall support the PSI through lump sum appropriations, land grants, donations, and real property support. Income from these assets shall be used to support PSI's goals.
- b) Lands previously ceded by law or presidential issuance to the PSI are confirmed under its absolute ownership. Pending land titles shall be processed within six months of this Act's effectivity, provided registration requirements are met.
- c) The Board may plan or implement land leases, provided these are environmentally sound, exclude academic core zones, and align with the academic mission.
- d) Income from real property may be used as security for transactions intended to raise additional educational revenue.
- e) The Board may approve joint ventures involving PSI assets, provided PSI only participates using income derived from property use. No real property may be alienated.

- f) All land use programs must align with PSI's mission and protect it from undue commercial influence. Such plans require Board approval and stakeholder consultation. Revenue from these shall not replace national government appropriations.

Section 14. *Safeguards on Assets Disposition.* — The value of PSI's assets shall be protected. The sale of real property is prohibited, except for post-enactment donations where the donor permits alienation.

Leases longer than five (5) years, or transactions under Section 13, must comply with applicable laws and Board guidelines.

Section 15. *Tax Exemptions.* —

- a) All revenues and assets used for educational purposes shall be exempt from taxes and duties.
- b) Gifts and donations to the PSI shall be exempt from donor's tax and may be deducted from the donor's gross income at 150% of the donation's value.
- c) Importation of certified educational books, materials, and equipment shall be exempt from customs duties.
- d) PSI transactions shall be subject to 0% value-added tax.
- e) Academic awards shall be tax-exempt.
- f) Foreign lecturers or resident scientists shall be exempt from tax, including on personal belongings.

Section 16. *Special Privileges in the Appointment of Foreign/Visiting Professors or Lecturers.* — The PSI shall receive special privileges for hiring foreign nationals, including expedited Alien Employment Certificates (AEP), Work Permits (WP), Special Non-Immigrant Visas (under E.O. 226, as amended by R.A. 8756), and Pre-Arranged Employment Visas for spouses and dependents.

Section 17. *Coverage of Magna Carta Benefits for S&T Workers.* — All PSI personnel shall be classified as "S&T Personnel" under Section 5 of R.A. 8439, as amended by R.A. 11312, and shall receive full benefits and incentives under the Magna Carta for Scientists and Engineers.

Section 18. *Exemption from Age Restrictions for Faculty Members.* — PSI faculty shall be exempt from age limits stated in Section 129 of the Omnibus Rules on Appointments and related issuances.

Section 19. *Reportorial Requirements and Auditing of Accounts.* — The PSI shall submit an annual report to Congress containing financial statements, assets and liabilities, projected income from tuition and other sources, contracts, investments, and expenditure programs. All accounts and disbursements shall be audited by the Commission on Audit (COA).

Section 20. *Appropriations.* — The funds required to implement this Act shall be sourced from the current fiscal year's lump sum appropriations and PSI internal funds. Thereafter, the

necessary amount shall be included annually in the General Appropriations Act (GAA). The Board may authorize the use of unexpended balances for other purposes it deems necessary.

Section 21. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder shall remain valid and effective.

Section 22. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,