

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **8829**



Introduced by Representative LEILA M. DE LIMA

AN ACT
CREATING THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS, DEFINING
ITS POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIII, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “[t]he Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good.” Moreover, the Philippines is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which obligates that “States Parties undertake to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability.”

Based on the Department of Health (DOH) data as of June 2025, the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) reported that over 2.5 million Filipinos are now registered as persons with disabilities (PWD).¹ Of the 2.5 million Filipinos with disabilities, 827,189 have physical disabilities that limit the function of their motor abilities, while others have invisible disabilities, including speech impairment (335,763), psychosocial disability (314,210), visual disability (251,302), mental disability (152,762), intellectual disability (137,491), deaf/hard of hearing (129,021), cancer (110,880), learning disability (102,623), and rare disease (49,112).² Across 17 regions in the country, the number of registered persons with disabilities increased from 2024 to 2025, with a national increase of 35% from 1.8 million to 2.5 million.³

¹ Cabalza, D. (19 June 2025). Registered PWDs in PH now at 2.5M. *Inquirer*. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2072065/registered-pwds-in-ph-now-at-2-5m>.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Government agencies attribute this increase in registered persons with disabilities to better reporting mechanisms and greater accessibility of health services primarily provided by the local government units (LGUs),⁴ with the NCDA in recent years striving to create a centralized national database of persons with disabilities through collaborations with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and LGUs.⁵

However, despite the efforts of the NCDA and the numerous laws aimed at improving the welfare of persons with disabilities in the country, the reality remains that many Filipinos with disabilities still do not have adequate access to basic needs, such as healthcare, education, employment, and proper interventions required for their disabilities. Among the reasons for this is the NCDA's need for stronger mechanisms to address complaints and ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are upheld, as admitted by NCDA Executive Director Glenda Relova.⁶ According to Relova, "persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable sectors—together with senior citizens and children—in many aspects such as health, well-being, and economic opportunity."⁷ As such, there is an urgent need for stronger collaboration among agencies and a robust mechanism to ensure that programs and services effectively reach the sector.⁸

This bill seeks to establish the National Commission on Disability Affairs, replacing the National Council on Disability Affairs. As a Commission, the National Commission on Disability Affairs shall be strengthened in its role as the primary agency responsible for the nationwide implementation of policies aimed at fulfilling the rights and improving the welfare of the PWD sector.

Compared to the present Council that merely serves as the lead agency in policymaking and in addressing issues and concerns related to disability affairs but ultimately does not directly implement programs, the Commission shall lead in the implementation of the policies, programs, and services concerning persons with disabilities across the country. The Commission shall also lead the conduct of a National Registration Program for Persons with Disabilities through the Philippine Statistics Authority to gather comprehensive data on persons with disabilities vital for policy formulation, and serve as the main research arm of the government on PWD concerns and central repository of data on the sector. Furthermore, the Commission shall oversee and recommend measures for the effective conduct of a comprehensive assessment program on a provincial, city, and municipal level.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Patron, S.R. (12 March 2026). NCDA cites need for strong mechanism to support PWDs. Philippine Information Agency. Retrieved from <https://pia.gov.ph/news/ncda-cites-need-for-strong-mechanism-to-support-pwds/>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Through establishing a Commission provided with a greater and stronger capacity, coupled with adequate resources, to lead and monitor the implementation of programs and policies on disability, identify the needs of the sector, and recommend and formulate programs and policy measures to address such needs, the Commission shall be better equipped to fulfill its mandate to uphold the rights and improve the welfare of the country's Persons with Disabilities sector.

In the 17th and 18th Congresses, this Representation filed similar bills in the Senate. In the 19th Congress, similar bills were filed by Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri and Representatives Lordan Suan, Dante Garcia, and Patrick Michael Vargas. In the 20th Congress, a similar bill was filed by Representative Lordan Suan. This bill fully adopts this Representation's Senate Bill No. 188 under the 18th Congress.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as “*National Commission*
2 *on Disability Affairs Act of 2026*”.

3
4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State guarantees full respect for the rights
5 of every human being, regardless of their status in life. Likewise, the State recognizes
6 that persons with disabilities (PWDs) are entitled to the same rights as persons without
7 disabilities. It is also the policy of the State to give highest priority to the enactment of
8 measures that will protect, support, and promote the rights of persons with disabilities.
9

10 SEC. 3. *Creation of the National Commission on Disability Affairs.* – There is
11 hereby created the National Commission on Disability Affairs, hereinafter referred to
12 as the Commission. The Commission shall be independent, autonomous, and shall
13 have the same status as that of a national government agency attached to the Office
14 of the President.
15

16 SEC. 4. *Mandate.* – The Commission shall be the central national government
17 agency that attends to the needs of persons with disabilities, providing them with the
18 necessary services, supervision, regulation, and guidance in the pursuit of their
19 welfare and well-being. Likewise, the Commission shall be the lead policy-making,
20 planning, monitoring, and coordinating body that develops, formulates, and
21 implements programs for the prevention of the causes of disability, rehabilitation, and
22 equalizing of opportunities in the concept of a rights-based society for persons with
23 disabilities.
24

1
2 SEC. 5. *Powers and Functions.* – The Commission shall exercise the following
3 powers and functions to carry out its mandate:
4

- 5 (a) Ensure that the status, rights, welfare, and interests of persons with
6 disabilities are upheld, in accordance with the Constitution, the UN
7 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and
8 applicable laws;
- 9 (b) Formulate policies and propose legislation, as well as regulations,
10 concerning the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities, and lead
11 in the implementation of programs and services concerning the same;
- 12 (c) Conduct consultative meetings and symposia, including summits and
13 dialogues, with all stakeholders, and undertake program evaluation and
14 monitoring to ensure that comprehensive, relevant, and timely programs
15 and services are adequate and accessible to persons with disabilities;
- 16 (d) Identify and address gaps in the implementation and enforcement of
17 domestic laws and international commitments benefiting persons with
18 disabilities;
- 19 (e) Conduct relevant researches and studies for policy formulation to
20 promote and enhance, at all levels, the rights of persons with disabilities;
- 21 (f) Establish, develop, and maintain a data bank on disability through a
22 National Registry of PWDs which shall be obtained through the National
23 Registration Program for PWDs, on a provincial, city, and municipal-wide
24 level, in partnership with concerned government agencies and non-
25 governmental organizations, and strengthen referral services to ensure
26 availability of data on stakeholders and services to persons with
27 disabilities, including provision of assistive devices;
- 28 (g) Establish and maintain linkages and networking with local and
29 international organizations, including organizations of and for persons
30 with disabilities, to generate resources, maximize utilization of existing
31 resources, and achieve a level of convergence most beneficial to
32 persons with disabilities;
- 33 (h) Assist in the establishment of self-help organizations and the setting up
34 of specific projects through the provision of technical and financial
35 assistance to draw out the active participation of persons with disabilities
36 for the social and economic development of the country;
- 37 (i) Create, organize, restructure, and otherwise manage such offices of the
38 Commission;
- 39 (j) Provide guidance to Persons with Disability Affairs Offices (PDAO) of
40 local government units for the expeditious and effective fulfillment of their
41 mandate and for specific thematic and functional matters;
- 42 (k) Submit annual reports to both Houses of Congress on the processes and
43 implementation of policies; and
- 44 (l) Exercise such powers or perform such other functions as may be
45 delegated or assigned by the President.
46

47 SEC. 6. *The Composition.* – The Commission shall be composed of the
48 following members:
49

- 50 (a) A Chairperson;

- (b) Seven (7) Commissioners, each representing a specific disability, to wit:
1. Learning and Intellectual Disabilities;
 2. Development Disabilities;
 3. Hearing Impairment;
 4. Visual Impairment;
 5. Physical and Mobility Impairments;
 6. Emotional/Behavioral Disorders; and
 7. Multi-handicaps.

The seven (7) Commissioners shall be appointed by the President from among the list submitted by each disability sector they represent. The Chairperson shall also be appointed by the President from at least three (3) nominees submitted by all disability sectors. They shall serve for a term of six (6) years, without reappointment. The Chairperson shall have the rank and privileges of a department undersecretary, and the appointive commissioners shall have the rank and privileges of assistant secretaries of a department.

SEC. 7. *Duties and Responsibilities of a Chairperson.* – The Chairperson shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- (a) Direct and supervise the affairs of the Commission in accordance with its policies, programs, rules and regulations;
- (b) Provide leadership direction and overall administration and management of the Commission;
- (c) Call and preside over the meetings of the Commission;
- (d) Monitor the implementation of policies approved by the Commission;
- (e) Sign communications for the Commission and represent the Commission, whenever necessary;
- (f) Solicit and accept, on behalf of the Commission, gifts, grants, or donations in accordance with government rules, regulations, and policies;
- (g) Execute contracts in the pursuit of the Commission's objectives as may be authorized by the Commission, in accordance with government rules and regulations; and
- (h) Organize permanent or ad-hoc committees, consisting of members of the Commission or such other experts as are deemed necessary for the full execution of the functions and objectives of the Commission.

SEC. 8. *Executive Director.* – The Chairperson shall be assisted by the Executive Director, who shall be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Chairperson. The Executive Director shall serve for a term of six (6) years, without reappointment, and shall have the rank and privileges of an assistant secretary of a department. They shall be responsible for managing the day-to-day affairs, activities, and operations of the Commission, in accordance with the policies, standards, rules, and regulations adopted and promulgated by the Commission.

Likewise, the Executive Director shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- 1 (a) Advise and assist the Chairperson in the formulation and implementation
2 of the objectives, policies, plans, and programs of the Commission;
3 (b) Implement policies, plans, and programs approved by the Commission;
4 (c) Exercise direct supervision, control, and disciplinary authority over all the
5 organizational units placed under their jurisdiction, pursuant to existing
6 civil service rules;
7 (d) Prepare and submit to the Commission the annual report of operations
8 of the Commission and such other reports as may be required by the
9 Commission; and
10 (e) Perform such other functions as may be provided by the Commission *En*
11 *Banc*.

12
13 SEC. 9. *Deputy Executive Directors*. – The Executive Director shall have three
14 (3) deputies: a Deputy Executive Director for Finance and Administration, a Deputy
15 Executive Director for Policy and Programs, and a Deputy Executive Director for
16 Information and Research. The Deputy Executive Directors shall be appointed by the
17 President upon the recommendation of the Chairperson: *Provided*, that at least one
18 (1) Deputy Executive Director shall be a career officer.

19
20 SEC. 10. *Qualifications*. – No person shall be appointed Chairperson, Executive
21 Director, or Deputy Executive Director of the Commission unless they are a citizen and
22 resident of the Philippines, of good moral character, of known probity, of proven
23 integrity, and with at least seven (7) years of understanding, expertise, competence,
24 and experience in delivering services to persons with disabilities.

25
26 SEC. 11. *Divisions*. – To achieve the mandates stated above, the Commission
27 shall have the following Divisions:

- 28
29 (a) *Finance and Administrative Division* – This Division shall be responsible
30 for providing efficient and effective services relating to personnel,
31 information, records, supplies, equipment, collection, disbursement,
32 security, and other matters.
33 (b) *Policy Formulation and Research Division* – The Policy Formulation and
34 Research Division shall be responsible for the formulation of policy
35 recommendations based on surveys, researches, and studies relating to
36 disability-related issues and concerns. In line with this, the Division shall
37 undertake continuing research, study and statistics updating on issues
38 related to persons with disabilities, with the purpose of recommending
39 reliable policy reforms, development programs, and administrative and
40 legislative measures that will address the economic, social, and cultural
41 rights of persons with disabilities and further enhance their quality of life.
42 This Division shall be the repository of all processed data concerning
43 disability topics and shall maintain a National Registry for PWDs.
44 (c) *Program and Project Division* – The Programs and Project Division shall
45 plan, conduct, and evaluate national programs on the prevention of the
46 causes of disabilities, rehabilitation, and equalization of opportunities.
47 The Division shall provide technical assistance through training and
48 other related activities concerning disability. It shall likewise develop
49 strategic framework, guidelines, and standards on program/project
50 development, management, monitoring and evaluation. The Division

1 may create Sectoral and Industry Task Forces, technical working
2 groups, advisory bodies, or committees, including inter-division ad hoc
3 teams, for the furtherance of its objectives. Additional private sector
4 representatives, such as from the academe, civil society organizations,
5 federation of private industries directly involved in persons with
6 disabilities, as well as representatives from LGUs and government-
7 owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), may be appointed by
8 these working groups. Government disability affairs professionals may
9 also be tapped to partake in the work of the Commission.

10 (d) *Public Information Division* – The Public Information Division shall
11 develop and maintain a public information system and such facilities that
12 would educate and orient the public regarding the Commission's
13 policies, advocacies and key programs. It shall advocate, communicate,
14 and disseminate national and regional plans, policies, thrusts, and
15 priorities of the Commission. This Division shall coordinate closely with
16 the Policy Formulation and Research Division in maintaining a National
17 Registry of PWDs.

18
19 SEC. 12. *Establishment of Regional Offices.* – There shall be Regional Offices
20 for the NCDA. Each Regional Office shall be headed by a Regional Manager who shall
21 supervise the official activities of all provinces, cities, and municipalities under the
22 jurisdiction of the concerned Regional Office. They shall be the primary coordinating
23 and overseeing authority over the Persons with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO), duly
24 established by local government units (LGUs).

25
26 A Regional Office for PWDs shall have, within its administrative region, the
27 following functions:

- 28
29 (a) Implement laws, rules and regulations, policies, plans, programs, and
30 projects of the Commission;
31 (b) Increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and synchronicity of the
32 Commission through coordination with local government units;
33 (c) Coordinate with the LGUs and ensure that each has its established
34 PDAO or has designated Focal Persons for the fourth (4th), fifth (5th),
35 and sixth (6th) class municipalities; and
36 (d) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Commission.
37

38 SEC. 13. *Advisory Council.* – There shall be an Advisory Council which shall
39 be composed of the Chairperson of the Commission, as Chairperson; the Secretaries
40 of the Department of Health (DOH); the Department of Social Welfare and
41 Development (DSWD); the Department of Education (DepEd); the Department of
42 Labor and Employment (DOLE); the Department of Transportation (DOTr); the
43 Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH); the Department of Interior and
44 Local Government (DILG); the Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education
45 (CHED); the Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development
46 Authority (TESDA); and the Chairpersons of the Senate Committee on Social Justice,
47 Welfare, and Rural Development and the House of Representatives Committee on
48 Social Services. The Secretaries mentioned are authorized to designate an
49 Undersecretary to represent them.
50

1 The Council shall meet once every three (3) months, or as often as may be
2 necessary, upon call of its Chairperson. It shall advise and be consulted by the
3 Commission on important matters relating to the Commission's mandate. The Council
4 may form task forces, which shall convene between the meetings of the Council. The
5 Commission shall provide the technical support required by the Council to function
6 according to this Act.

7
8 SEC. 14. *Annual Report.* – The Commission shall prepare an annual report on
9 the findings of its monitoring activities with regard to the state of the country's
10 compliance with its international obligations concerning persons with disabilities. The
11 report shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- 12
13 (a) Identification of causes that result in the increase or decrease in the
14 number of persons with disabilities;
15 (b) Assessment of the legal mechanisms of existing institutions in providing
16 adequate protection and services for persons with disabilities;
17 (c) Recommendations for legal, legislative, and institutional reforms for
18 greater promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities;
19 (d) Statistics and data indicating the total number of persons with disabilities
20 in the country as culled from the National Registry for PWDs, in
21 coordination with other government agencies.
22

23 SEC. 15. *Disability Support Fund.* – A Disability Support Fund shall be
24 established under this Act. It shall make funds available for individuals with disabilities
25 to access rehabilitation and disability support services, and to support disability-related
26 activities in the local community through programs and projects of the local
27 government units and civil society organizations.
28

29 The fund shall be sourced from the operations of the Philippine Charity
30 Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation
31 (PAGCOR), one (1%) percent from the collections arising from the Sin Tax and
32 amusement taxes collected by other national and local government agencies, and
33 contributions from the private sector. The shares from the collections in sin and
34 amusement taxes shall be automatically remitted to the Disability Support Fund,
35 subject to regulations and guidelines of the Department of Budget and Management
36 and the Department of Finance (DOF).
37

38 SEC. 16. *Transitory Provisions.* – The National Council on Disability Affairs
39 (NCDA) is deemed abolished upon the creation of the Commission. All the powers,
40 functions, assets, liabilities, capital, accounts, contracts, equipment, and facilities of
41 the NCDA which are owned by the government shall be transferred to the
42 Commission.
43

44 All regular or permanent employees of the NCDA shall be absorbed or
45 transferred to the Commission: *Provided*, that they possess the necessary
46 qualifications, and shall not suffer any loss of seniority or rank or decrease in salaries
47 and emoluments.
48

49 Employees separated from the service as a result of the abolition of the NCDA
50 under the provisions of this Act shall, within three (3) months from their separation

1 from service, receive separation pay in accordance with existing laws, rules, and
2 regulations. In addition, those who are qualified to retire shall be allowed to retire and
3 be entitled to all benefits provided under existing retirement laws. The funds of the
4 Commission may be used for this purpose.

5
6 Employees separated and/or retired from the NCDA shall not be eligible for
7 reappointment to or employment in the Commission, whether on a permanent,
8 temporary, casual, or contractual status, within a period of three (3) years after
9 separation or retirement.

10
11 The Chairperson shall recommend to the Commission a work program that
12 shall include the organizational plan and structure, staffing pattern, and compensation
13 plan, budget, programs, projects, and activities of the Commission within ninety (90)
14 days from the approval of this Act. Said work program shall be implemented by the
15 Chairperson within thirty (30) days after its approval by the Commission.

16
17 SEC. 17. *Appropriations.* – The funds needed to initially implement this Act shall
18 be included in the current fiscal year's appropriation of the National Council on
19 Disability Affairs. Thereafter, the amount needed for the operation and maintenance
20 of the Commission shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

21
22 SEC. 18. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from
23 the approval of this Act, the Commission and other relevant government agencies shall
24 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this
25 Act.

26
27 SEC. 19. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid
28 or unconstitutional, the provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force
29 and effect.

30
31 SEC. 20. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
32 presidential proclamations, letters of instruction, rules and regulations, or parts thereof
33 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended
34 accordingly.

35
36 SEC. 21. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
37 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the
38 Philippines.

Approved,