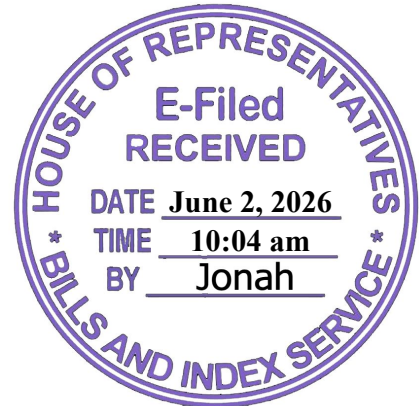




Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

TWENTIETH (20<sup>TH</sup>) CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9620



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Introduced by KAMANGGAGAWA Partylist  
Representative **ELIJAH R. SAN FERNANDO**

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The right of every Filipino to quality education is not merely a political aspiration but a solemn constitutional obligation. Section 1, Article XIV of the Constitution declares that *“the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.”* Section 5(2) of the same Article guarantees academic freedom in all institutions of higher learning, while Section 5(5) affirms that the State shall assign the highest budgetary priority to education. These provisions are not decorative clauses but are enforceable obligations binding upon every branch and instrumentality of government. When the State fails to equip its public universities with the governance structures, the resources, and the institutional autonomy they need to fulfill their mission, it does not merely fall short of a policy goal but violates a constitutional duty owed to every Filipino child who cannot afford to go anywhere else.

It is in the light of this constitutional imperative that the modernization of the Charter of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) becomes not only warranted but urgent. The PUP traces its origins to the Manila Business School, established in 1904, and has since grown into one of the largest and most consequential public universities in the nation, with campuses spanning the National Capital Region and multiple provinces serving students from the most underserved communities in the country. Its current foundational charter, Presidential Decree (PD) No. 1341 enacted on April 1, 1978, has, for nearly five decades, served as the legal foundation of an institution that has produced principled, competent, and socially committed graduates

who now serve in every government agency, in every vital industry, and in countless communities across the archipelago and beyond. Surveys on the most preferred graduates by employers in the Philippines consistently place PUP alumni at the very top of the list, a testament not to privilege or resources but to the resilience and excellence of a university that has done more with less than almost any comparable institution in the country.

Yet a decree conceived in 1978 cannot govern a university that must compete in the 21st century and beyond. PD 1341 was crafted in an era that could not have anticipated the global dominance of artificial intelligence, the imperative of computational literacy across all sectors of the economy, the depth of digital transformation reshaping labor markets, or the scale of demand for inclusive, flexible, and technology-enabled higher education. The result is an institutional framework that, however admirable at its inception, has become structurally inadequate. PUP's branches and campuses operate under chronic underfunding, with a documented funding gap of over ₱9 billion in 2026 alone. Several campuses face the very real threat of closure due to the absence of sustained national government support. Faculty positions remain unfilled. Infrastructure remains incomplete. Research capacity remains constrained. These are not administrative inconveniences but are failures of the State to honor its constitutional promise to the working families whose children fill PUP's classrooms.

Legislative efforts to correct this injustice have spanned successive Congresses. In 2019, President Rodrigo Duterte vetoed a bill that sought to designate PUP as the National Polytechnic University. In 2025, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. vetoed a similar measure, once again deferring what had become an overdue legislative commitment. These repeated vetoes have not extinguished the imperative for reform, but rather sharpened it. Every day that PUP operates as an underfunded institution under its old charter is another day its students learn in deteriorating facilities, its faculty serve without adequate support, and its campuses in the provinces remain vulnerable to the political vagaries of annual appropriations. The passage of this bill is, therefore, not a matter of institutional prestige but a matter of constitutional fidelity and social justice. The State must not allow yet another generation of Filipinos to bear the cost of inaction.

This measure seeks to repeal Presidential Decree No. 1341 and enact the Revised Polytechnic University of the Philippines Charter, thereby strengthening PUP as the National Polytechnic University and providing it with the governance architecture, institutional autonomy, fiscal security, and expanded mandate that its students, its faculty, and the nation's working class have long deserved. The reforms introduced by

this bill are substantive, structural, and long overdue. They address, in a direct and concrete manner, the deficiencies that decades of delay have allowed to accumulate.

Before describing those reforms, however, it is necessary to address the misinformation that has too often distorted public discourse on measures of this kind, and that has been weaponized, whether through ignorance or bad faith, to obstruct progress for the University. To begin with, this bill does not rename the PUP, since the designation of National Polytechnic University confers an elevated mandate and nothing more, functioning in precisely the same manner as the national university status of the University of the Philippines and the national engineering university designation of Batangas State University. PUP will remain PUP. Equally without basis is the claim that this bill abolishes social science programs, humanities, or any existing academic offering, given that the proposed charter's enumeration of disciplines is deliberately broader than the one it replaces, contains no enrollment ratio requirements, and imposes no prohibition on non-technical programs. More flagrant is the assertion that this bill eliminates free tuition, since RA 10931 or the *"Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act"* is law this charter revision does not override, and in fact, the proposed charter itself expressly requires that any fee-setting authority be exercised in conformity with that law. Most egregiously false is the claim that this bill privatizes the university, a charge that fundamentally misreads both the measure and the legal framework within which it operates. The provisions on joint ventures and the outsourcing of non-academic services are not novelties introduced by this charter but restatements of authorities that have governed all State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) for nearly three decades. In fact, the proposed charter strengthens the surrounding safeguards by expressly prohibiting the sale of existing university real property, requiring supermajority Board approval and competitive public bidding for significant asset transactions, mandating that all joint venture proceeds be used exclusively for the development and strengthening of PUP, and restricting outsourcing strictly to non-academic functions while requiring the university to continuously build its own capacity to eventually perform those services directly. Those who spread these falsehoods do a disservice not only to factual discourse but to the students and workers whose futures depend on this university being strengthened, not paralyzed by manufactured controversy.

The reforms this bill introduces are grounded in institutional necessity and the demands of a rapidly changing economy, and they address, in concrete and structural terms, the deficiencies that decades of legislative delay have allowed to accumulate. The proposed charter restructures PUP's Board of Regents by elevating the President of PUP to Co-Chairperson and replacing regional agency directors with cabinet-level Secretaries, ensuring that PUP's governance is directly connected to the agencies most

consequential to the labor market and the technological future, while the inclusion of a representative for non-teaching personnel further democratizes the Board by extending meaningful institutional voice to a constituency that has too long been invisible in governance decisions.

Equally consequential are the fiscal reforms this bill introduces, which address PUP's chronic material crisis with the seriousness it demands. The proposed charter appropriates substantial initial funding from the national treasury, supplemented by dedicated annual allocations for campus development and infrastructure modernization, provisions that are not symbolic gestures but a direct legislative response to the documented funding gaps, unfinished classrooms, and deteriorating facilities that have for years undermined the quality of education available to hundreds of thousands of students from working-class and marginalized communities. Beyond these appropriations, the charter guarantees that PUP's annual budget shall not be reduced below the amount appropriated for the previous year and shall be automatically and regularly released, insulating the university from the budgetary volatility and political discretion that have historically constrained its operations and that represent, more than anything else, the difference between a university that merely exists and one that can genuinely fulfill its mandate.

On the frontiers of learning, the proposed charter establishes a dedicated institutional center for artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, positioning PUP to build national competencies in the disciplines that will define the global economy of the coming decades, not for an elite, but for the broader Filipino workforce, and signaling unambiguously that polytechnic education is not a second-tier alternative to traditional academic instruction but a dynamic, forward-looking pathway to professional excellence and national development.

The proposed charter likewise strengthens the foundations of inclusive access that have always defined PUP's identity, affirming that no student shall be denied admission on the basis of any form of discrimination, that scholarship programs and affirmative action mechanisms shall continue to serve poor but deserving students, that democratic student representation is protected and guaranteed across every campus and constituent unit, and that the autonomy of student publications shall at all times be upheld. These provisions are not peripheral details but are the institutional backbone of a university whose fundamental purpose is to serve those for whom higher education would otherwise remain permanently out of reach.

PUP has endured two presidential vetoes. It has endured decades of underfunding, outdated governance, and the compounding inequities visited upon an institution whose students are disproportionately drawn from the households that can least afford for it to fail. Through all of it, PUP has endured, and its graduates have gone on to serve, lead, and build this nation. That resilience, however, is not a justification for continued neglect. It is a demonstration of what PUP and its community are capable of when given even inadequate support, and a measure of what they could accomplish with the support this charter provides. The modernization of PUP's charter is not a gift to an institution but the fulfillment of a promise made to the Filipino working class in the text of the Constitution itself, a promise that every citizen, regardless of origin, income, or circumstance, shall have access to quality education. This Congress and this administration has the power and the duty to keep that promise. As the PUP administration aptly put following the veto of the National Polytechnic University bill, *"every day that this legislation remains unsigned is another day education is treated as a privilege instead of a right. We are losing time and losing futures."*

In solidarity with the working class, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



**ELIJAH R. SAN FERNANDO**  
*Representative*  
KAMANGGAGAWA PARTYLIST



Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

TWENTIETH (20<sup>TH</sup>) CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9620

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Introduced by KAMANGGAGAWA Partylist  
Representative **ELIJAH R. SAN FERNANDO**

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**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF THE  
PHILIPPINES AS THE NATIONAL POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, REPEALING  
FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1341, AND APPROPRIATING  
FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

**SECTION 1.** *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the “*Revised Polytechnic University of the Philippines Charter.*”

**SEC. 2.** *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote, foster, nurture, and protect the right of all citizens to accessible quality education; and establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education that is relevant to the needs of the people and society.

Towards this end, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) shall be strengthened as the National Polytechnic University to enhance its capacity to provide accessible and inclusive quality education and research tailored to the present and future needs of Filipinos; to develop the competencies and specialization of its constituent units; to adopt conventional or alternative instructional methodologies; to foster a unique and distinctive academic leadership in the development and delivery of higher education services in the Philippines, including capacity building in artificial intelligence, computational thinking, and key emerging technologies; and to serve as guide and resource to other polytechnic state universities and colleges in the

development and delivery of professional and technical programs, thereby raising the bar for polytechnic education nationwide.

**SEC. 3. *The University System.*** – The Polytechnic University of the Philippines is a university system and shall be composed of constituent units established solely by its Board of Regents upon the recommendation of the President of the University. It shall comprise of its main campus and existing branches and campuses located in the Cities of Manila, Caloocan, Parañaque, Quezon, San Juan, and Taguig in the National Capital Region; Municipalities of Pulilan and Sta. Maria in the Province of Bulacan; Municipality of Mariveles in the Province of Bataan; Municipality of Cabiao in the Province of Nueva Ecija; Municipalities of Alfonso and Maragondon in the Province of Cavite; City of Sto. Tomas in the Province of Batangas; Cities of Biñan, San Pedro, and Sta. Rosa, and Municipality of Calauan in the Province of Laguna; Municipalities of General Luna, Lopez, Mulanay, and Unisan in the Province of Quezon; Municipality of Bansud in the Province of Oriental Mindoro; Municipality of Sablayan in the Province of Occidental Mindoro; Municipality of Ragay in the Province of Camarines Sur; Municipality of Leyte in the Province of Leyte, and other constituent units, regular and extension campuses, and academic or non-academic units that may be established in the future to improve access to quality education, promote innovation and progress in the academe, and advance its research capabilities.

**SEC. 4. *General Mandate.*** – As the National Polytechnic University, PUP shall adopt a polytechnic program of education designed to provide individuals with employable skills and managerial knowledge to bolster their creativity, productivity, and self-reliance. The PUP shall also provide advanced education, higher technological, professional courses, and training programs in accountancy, engineering, architecture, applied and social sciences, law, education, interior design, psychology, business, and management, among other disciplines, and promote applied research, advanced studies, and progressive leadership in the stated fields.

**SEC. 5. *Curricular Offering.*** – The PUP shall offer undergraduate and graduate courses, advanced professional and technical instruction, and training within its areas of specialization in the fields of accountancy, engineering, architecture, applied and social sciences, law, education, interior design, psychology, business. management, and in other polytechnic areas.

The PUP shall continue to operate and maintain a night school and to collect tuition and other fees in such amounts as may be fixed by the Board.

**SEC. 6. *Administration.*** – The PUP shall have the general powers of a corporation set forth in Republic Act No. 11232, otherwise known as the “Revised Corporation Code of the Philippines”. The exercise of its corporate powers shall be vested exclusively in the Board of Regents and the President of PUP.

**SEC. 7. *Governing Board.*** – The governing board of PUP shall be the Board of Regents, herein referred to as the Board, which shall be chaired and co-chaired by the Chairperson of CHED and the President of PUP, respectively, with the following as members:

- (a) Chairperson of the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education of the Senate;
- (b) Chairperson of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education of the House of Representatives;
- (c) Secretary of Socioeconomic Planning;
- (d) Secretary of Science and Technology;
- (e) Secretary of Information and Communications Technology;
- (f) Secretary of Trade and Industry;
- (g) Secretary of Labor and Employment;
- (h) President of the PUP federation of faculty associations;
- (i) President of the PUP federation of student councils;
- (j) President of the PUP federation of alumni associations: *Provided*, That the alumni representative to the Board must not be a faculty or an employee of the PUP, regardless of status or rank, at the time of representation;
- (k) President of the PUP non-teaching personnel association; and
- (l) Two (2) prominent citizens from the private sector who have distinguished themselves in their professions or fields of specialization.

The Board shall appoint two (2) prominent citizens who shall be selected from a list of at least five (5) qualified persons as recommended by a search committee constituted by the President of PUP, in consultation with the Chairperson of CHED and other members of the Board, based on the guidelines, qualifications, and standards for the position set by the Board. They shall serve for a term of two (2) years from the date of appointment.

The presidents of the federations of faculty associations, student councils, alumni associations, and the president of the non-teaching personnel association of PUP shall be coterminous with their terms of office, as provided under their respective constitutions and bylaws.

**SEC. 8. *Powers and Duties of the Board.*** – In addition to its general powers of administration and the exercise of powers granted to the Board of Directors of a Corporation under Section 35 of Republic Act No. 11232, the Board of PUP shall exercise and perform the following specific powers and duties:

- (a) Define in general terms the academic thrusts and institutional goals of the National Polytechnic University and adopt broad policy guidelines to ensure effective implementation;
- (b) Preserve the integrity of the National Polytechnic University;
- (c) Approve the institution, merger or abolition of academic programs, strictly upon recommendation of the University's Academic Council through the President of PUP;
- (d) Create, organize, reorganize, merge or abolish constituent campuses, extension campuses, colleges, institutes and other academic and administrative units of the PUP: *Provided*, That any such action shall require the unanimous vote of all members of the Board.
- (e) Approve the curricula, instructional programs, and rules on student discipline drawn by the Administrative and Academic Councils as herein provided;
- (f) Approve the rules on student discipline recommended by the Academic Council through the President of the PUP, with the Board retaining the power to review and pass final judgment on student disciplinary cases;

- (g) Approve the graduation of students and grant of honors as recommended by the Academic Council through the President;
- (h) Appoint, upon the recommendation of the President of PUP, the vice presidents, deans, directors, heads of the campuses, faculty members, and other similar officials of PUP in accordance with the compensation and position classification system; draw up a position classification and compensation plan for its faculty members and administrative officials and employees; fix and adjust salaries and benefits of the faculty members and other employees in accordance with the compensation and classification system: *Provided*, That salaries and other benefits of the faculty, officials, and employees shall be equivalent to those being received by their counterparts in the private sector; to determine the hours of service of faculty and staff, and such other terms and conditions of employment as it may deem proper; grant leave of absence under such regulations as it may promulgate, any other provisions of law to the contrary notwithstanding; and remove them for cause as provided by law after due investigation and proper hearing;
- (i) Fix the tuition fees and other necessary school charges, such as matriculation, graduation, and laboratory fees, as the Board may deem proper to impose, after due consultation with the concerned sectors. The fees and charges, including government subsidies and other income generated by PUP, shall constitute its funds to be used exclusively in pursuit of its mandate as a state university, and shall be deposited in any authorized government depository bank. All interests that shall accrue therefrom shall form part of the same funds for the use of PUP.

The fees and charges collected by PUP, including government subsidies and proceeds from other income sources, as well as interests that would accrue therefrom, shall be retained by PUP and disbursed at the discretion of the Board for the professional growth and development, health, welfare, and other benefits of the students, faculty members, and personnel; for the acquisition, construction, maintenance, and repair of urgently needed instructional and auxiliary facilities, equipment, buildings, and other infrastructure; and for expenses necessary for the attainment of its purposes under its approved program of expenditures: *Provided*, That all fiduciary fees shall be disbursed for the specific purposes for which they were collected.

Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Board may authorize, for such reasonable and legal purposes necessary and urgent for the attainment of the objectives of the PUP, the use of:

- (1) Any unexpended balance whose fiduciary character has been ipso facto removed pursuant to the grant of subsidy under Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the "*Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act*"; and/or
- (2) Any appropriation for any project under the duly approved program of expenditures that PUP, for reasons beyond its control, would not be able to pursue: *Provided*, That funds collected from students for specific purposes shall not be realigned or reprogrammed to other expenditures;
- (j) Adopt and implement a socialized scheme of tuition and other school fees for greater access of poor but deserving students in accordance with Republic Act No. 10931;
- (k) Establish professorial chairs and provide fellowships, scholarships and grants, including athletic grants and to award the same to faculty, staff and students having special evidence of merit, especially those who are poor and deserving individuals;
- (l) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, authorize its faculty and staff to travel abroad to study, deliver papers, attend conferences and disseminate research: *Provided*, That the fellowship, scholarship or grant is authorized by the Board: *Provided, further*, That research and other activities funded by the National Polytechnic University shall likewise undertake research in fields or topics that have promising commercial applications, and that the faculty and staff involved in said research be allowed to participate in its financial or economic benefits;
- (m) Receive and appropriate sums as may be provided by law for the support of PUP, and all other sums in the manner it may, in its discretion, determine to carry out the purposes and functions of PUP;
- (n) Set the policies on admission and graduation of students;
- (o) Award honorary degrees to persons, in recognition of their outstanding contributions in the fields of education, public service, arts, science and technology, sports and human kinetics, or any field of specialization within the academic competency of PUP, and authorize the awarding of certificates of

completion of non-degree and non-traditional courses: *Provided*, That such degrees shall not be conferred in consideration of any payment, gift or other valuable consideration;

- (p) Establish research and extension centers to promote the development of PUP;
- (q) Develop academic arrangements for institutional capability building with appropriate institutions and agencies, whether public, private, local, or foreign, and appoint experts or specialists as consultants, part-time, visiting, or exchange professors, scholars, or researchers, as the case may be;
- (r) Adopt modern and innovative modes of knowledge transfer for the promotion of greater access to education such as the use of information technology, dual training system, open distance learning, and community laboratory;
- (s) Collaborate with the governing bodies of other state universities and colleges within the Philippines in restructuring PUP to make it more efficient, relevant, productive, and competitive, in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM);
- (t) Absorb non-chartered tertiary institutions within the Philippines as branches, extension, or external centers, in coordination with CHED and in consultation with the DBM, and offer therein programs or courses to carry out the constitutional mandate of providing students with equal access to educational opportunities: *Provided*, That any such action shall require the unanimous vote of all members of the Board.
- (u) Authorize an external management audit of PUP, to be financed by CHED, subject to the rules and regulations of the Commission on Audit (COA), and institute reforms, including academic and structural changes, on the basis of the audit results and recommendations;
- (v) Develop consortia and other economic forms of linkages with local government units (LGUs) as well as public, private, local, or foreign institutions and agencies for the furtherance of the purposes and objectives of PUP;
- (w) Import books or publications, instruments, equipment and apparatuses for economic, technical-vocational, scientific, medical, philosophical, historical, legal, or cultural purposes;

- (x) Enter into joint ventures with businesses and industries, in consultation with the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev), for the profitable development and management of economic assets, the proceeds of which shall be used for the development and strengthening of PUP in accordance with law;
- (y) Receive in trust all legacies, gifts, and donations of real and personal properties of all kinds and administer and dispose of the same, when necessary, for the benefit of PUP and subject to the limitations, directions, and instructions of the donor, if any;
- (z) Extend the term of the PUP President beyond the age of retirement, but not beyond seventy (70) years of age, based on the guidelines, qualifications, and standards set by the Board: *Provided*, That such extension shall be subject to the term limits provided in Section 10 of this Act: *Provided, further*, That the President's performance has been rated by the Board as outstanding and the search committee has unanimously recommended such extension;
- (aa) Delegate any of its powers and duties to the President and other university officials as it may deem appropriate, to efficiently and effectively administer the affairs of PUP;
- (bb) Establish policy guidelines and procedures for participative and transparent decisionmaking within PUP;
- (cc) Where most advantageous to PUP, outsource the management of non-academic services such as health, food, building or grounds or property maintenance, and such other similar activities: *Provided*, That the services to be outsourced are those which the University, by reason of exigency and lack of specialized expertise cannot reasonably perform itself: *Provided, further*, That such outsourcing shall at all times be undertaken in a manner that best serves the interests of the National Polytechnic University and its stakeholders: *Provided, finally*, That PUP shall continuously undertake measures to develop and strengthen its institutional capacity to eventually perform such services directly whenever practicable and advantageous to the University.
- (dd) Authorize the construction or repair of its buildings, machinery, equipment, and other facilities, and the purchase and acquisition of real and personal property, including necessary supplies, materials, and equipment; and

- (ee) Prescribe rules for its own government and discipline of the faculty and other personnel and to enact for the governance of the National Polytechnic University such general policies, rules and regulations, not contrary to law, as are consistent with its purposes; and
- (ff) Promulgate rules and regulations, as may be necessary, to carry out the purposes and functions of PUP.

**SEC. 9. *Meetings of the Board.*** – The Board shall regularly convene once every three (3) months. The Chairperson of the Board or the President of PUP may, however, call a special meeting whenever necessary: *Provided*, That members are notified in writing at least three (3) days prior to the conduct of said meeting.

A quorum of the Board shall consist of a majority of all its members holding office at the time of the meeting: *Provided*, That the Chairperson of the Board or the President of PUP is among those present in the meeting.

In case the Chairperson of CHED cannot attend a meeting of the Board, a CHED Commissioner duly designated by the Chairperson of CHED as representative to the meeting shall have all the rights and responsibilities of a regular member: *Provided*, That during the meeting, the President of the PUP, as Co-Chairperson, shall be the presiding officer.

All ex-officio members of the Board may designate their respective representatives who shall have the same rights and responsibilities as regular members of the Board: *Provided*, That all members of the Board may exercise their right to vote through remote communication and in absentia, as provided for in Section 49 of Republic Act No. 11232.

In case of vacancy in the Board, except for the President of the PUP, such vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as provided for the predecessor, and such appointee shall hold office for the unexpired portion of the term. In case of a sectoral regent, membership in the Board ceases upon suspension, separation, or recall.

The members of the Board shall not receive any salary, but shall be entitled to reimbursements for actual and necessary expenses incurred, for their attendance to the meetings of the Board or in connection with other official business authorized by a resolution of the Board, subject to existing laws and regulations.

**SEC. 10. *The University President.*** – The President of PUP shall be its chief academic officer, head of the university faculty, and chief executive officer. As such, the President shall exercise the powers specifically provided for in this Act, those determined by the Board, those which pertain to the Office of the President, and those which are related or necessary to its functions.

The PUP President shall be appointed by the Board subject to its guidelines, qualifications, and standards, and based on the recommendation of a search committee duly constituted for the purpose of selecting the President.

The President shall render full-time service and have a term of four (4) years and may be reappointed to another term: *Provided*, That in order to ensure the attainment of its distinctive and purposeful mandate as such, as declared and provided in this Act, the incumbent President of the PUP shall serve a new term as the first president of the PUP as the National Polytechnic University and shall not be eligible for reappointment.

Within six (6) months before the expiration of the term of office of the PUP President, the Board shall constitute the Search Committee for the Presidency, and shall ensure the appointment or reappointment of a President on or before the expiration of the term.

The Board shall determine the compensation of the PUP President 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.

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

The PUP President shall be assisted by the following officials: Executive Vice President, the Vice President for Administration, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Vice President for Research and Extension, the Vice President for Planning and Development, the Vice President for Finance, the Vice President for External Affairs, the Secretary of the University, and such other academic and administrative officials whose positions and functions are deemed necessary to assist in the effective and efficient administration of the PUP as may be determined by the Board. They shall all be appointed by the Board upon the recommendation of the President of PUP.

**SEC. 11.** *The University Secretary.* – The Board shall appoint a Secretary who shall serve as such for both the Board and PUP and keep all records and proceedings of meetings of the Board. The Secretary of PUP shall serve upon each member of the Board the appropriate notice of board meetings.

**SEC. 12.** *The University Treasurer.* – The Treasurer of the Philippines shall be the ex-officio Treasurer of PUP.

**SEC. 13.** *The Administrative Council.* – There shall be an Administrative Council consisting of the President of PUP as Chairperson, and the vice presidents, deans, directors, and other officials of equal rank, as members. The Administrative Council shall review and recommend to the Board the policies that shall govern the administration, management, and development planning of the PUP.

**SEC. 14.** *The Academic Council.* – There shall be an Academic Council, which shall formulate academic policies. It shall be composed of the PUP President, who shall act as Chairperson, and all academic staff with the rank of at least an assistant professor, as members. The Academic Council shall have the power to review and recommend the curricular offerings and rules on student discipline, subject to the approval of the Board. It shall fix the requirements for the admission of students, as well as for their graduation and conferment of degrees, subject to the review and approval of the Board through the PUP President.

It shall exercise disciplinary power over the students of PUP and shall formulate rules and regulations on student discipline, subject to the approval of the Board.

**SEC. 15.** *Heads of University Campuses.* – The constituent campuses of PUP shall each be headed by a Campus Director who shall serve as head or administrator of each of the campuses and render full-time service for a term of two (2) years and may be reappointed to another term. The Campus Director shall be appointed or designated by the Board, upon the recommendation of the Search Committee and the PUP President, subject to the guidelines, qualifications and standards set by the Board: *Provided*, That upon the effectivity of this Act, the incumbent Campus Directors of the existing campuses of PUP shall continue to serve as such.

**SEC. 16.** *The Faculty.* – The teaching staff of each college shall constitute its faculty. The College Faculty shall be presided over by a Dean. The Dean shall be appointed by the Board, subject to the guidelines, qualifications and standards set by the Board, and

upon the recommendation of the President of PUP, following a process of consultation with the constituents of the college concerned.

The powers and duties of the Dean of the College, in addition to those specifically provided 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 PUP President.

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, upon the recommendation of the PUP President, designate an Officer-in-Charge of the College, pending the appointment of a new Dean.

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 PUP: *Provided*, That said appointment shall be subject to the guidelines, qualifications and standards set by the Board.

**SEC. 17. *Faculty Sabbatical Leave.*** – The PUP may grant sabbatical leave to deserving and qualified faculty for purposes of research or community engagement ranging from three (3) months to one (1) year, subject to the recommendation of the PUP President and upon approval of the Board.

Faculty on long-term sabbatical leave shall be temporarily relieved from their teaching duties to conduct research, write, and engage in scholarly or professional activity and required to submit a research output published in a reputable journal.

**SEC. 18. *Student Affairs and Democratic Representation.*** – There shall be established in the PUP a democratic system of student representation composed of duly constituted student councils in every college, institute, campus, and constituent unit of the National Polytechnic University, as well as a federation or general assembly of student councils representing the entire University System.

The student councils shall be composed of students elected by their respective constituencies in accordance with their constitutions, bylaws, and democratic procedures. Each officer or representative shall serve for a term of one (1) year, without prejudice to reelection in accordance with the rules of the student council concerned.

The student councils shall serve as the primary representative bodies advancing and defending the rights, welfare, democratic interests, and aspirations of the students.

They shall enjoy autonomy in the formulation of their internal policies, programs, and activities, consistent with this Act and other applicable laws and regulations.

The University shall likewise recognize the right of students to organize associations, alliances, unions, publications, and other similar formations in pursuit of academic freedom, student rights, and democratic participation in university governance.

Subject to due and comprehensive consultation with the students concerned, there shall be established and maintained independent student publications in every constituent campus, college, or institute, to be funded by student publication fees. Editorial and fiscal autonomy, including the selection of editors, staff, and editorial policies, shall at all times be guaranteed and protected.

**SEC. 19. *Academic Freedom.*** – The National Polytechnic University shall enjoy academic freedom pursuant to Article XIV, Section 5(5) of the Constitution.

**SEC. 20. *Institutional Autonomy as the National Polytechnic University.*** – As the National Polytechnic University, the PUP shall enjoy institutional autonomy and fiscal autonomy. It shall be treated in a manner consistent with its institutional requirements by the service-wide agencies in the exercise of their respective jurisdiction. Taking into account national goals and priorities, it shall exclusively determine its teaching, research and extensions thrust, plans, policies, programs and standards, consistent with the policies standards and guidelines promulgated by the Commission on Higher Education. On the basis of such determination, the National Polytechnic University shall recommend its annual budget to the President of the Republic of the Philippines and Congress. Appropriations for the University shall not be reduced by the legislature below the amount appropriated for the previous year and after approval shall be automatically and regularly released.

**SEC. 21. *PUP Center for Artificial Intelligence, Computational Thinking, and Key Emerging Technologies.*** – Pursuant to the national policy of advancing research and development, technology, and innovation, the PUP Center for Artificial Intelligence, Computational Thinking, And Key Emerging Technologies, hereinafter referred to as the Center, is hereby established.

The Center shall have:

- (a) Suitable physical facilities for study and laboratory research of graduate and post graduate level in artificial intelligence, computational thinking, and key

emerging technologies, including accessory facilities for related activities such as lectures, dissemination of information, communication, analytical and consultative service, instrumentation, and collaboration with other scientific organizations; and

- (b) A regular staff of scientists, technicians, academicians, and administrative personnel, to be augmented, as circumstances require, by guest researchers, special lecturers, and visiting technicians.

The Center shall perform the following functions:

- (a) Undertake fundamental studies and research in artificial intelligence, computational thinking, and key emerging technologies, and disseminate the findings of such studies;
- (b) Collaborate with institutions and schools, both public and private, in the development and implementation of academic programs, research projects, and training initiatives related to artificial intelligence, futures thinking, and key emerging technologies;
- (c) Provide assistance, upon request and when feasible, to other public and private institutions; and
- (d) Collaborate, upon request and when feasible, with other schools, organizations or individuals in the furtherance of scientific knowledge and research.

**SEC. 22. *Scholarship Programs and Admission.*** – Consistent with and in addition to the benefits and programs provided under Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the “*Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act*,” the PUP shall provide scholarship programs, subsidies, grants, and other affirmative action programs to assist poor but deserving students who qualify for admission to PUP.

No student shall be denied admission to PUP by reason of sex, gender, religion, cultural community affiliation, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, disability, or any other form of discrimination prohibited by law.

**SEC. 23. *Loan or Transfer of Supplies, Apparatuses, or Equipment, or Detail of Personnel.*** – Heads of national government agencies and instrumentalities may, upon the request of the Board through the President of PUP, loan or transfer supplies, apparatuses, or

equipment, or detail personnel to the PUP: *Provided*, That such loan, transfer or detail shall not be detrimental to public service.

The personnel to be detailed to PUP shall perform such duties as may be deemed required by the PUP President and the time spent for such duties shall be counted as part of the detailed personnel's regular service.

**SEC. 24. *Assets, Liabilities, and Personnel.*** – All assets, both real and personal, personnel and records of PUP, as well as its liabilities or obligations, shall remain under the name of PUP: *Provided*, That the positions, rights, and security of tenure of faculty members and personnel therein employed under existing laws shall be respected: *Provided, further*, That the incumbents occupying the positions shall remain in the same status until otherwise provided by the Board: *Provided, finally*, That PUP shall also accordingly upgrade or increase its human resource component as may be deemed appropriate by the Board.

All parcels of land belonging to the government occupied by PUP and all its campuses are hereby declared as property of PUP and shall be titled under its name: *Provided*, That in case the PUP ceases to exist, or is abolished or should the aforementioned parcels of land are no longer needed by PUP, the same shall revert to the local government units concerned or to the Republic of the Philippines, as the case may be.

**SEC. 25. *Land Grants and Other Real Properties of the University.*** – The State shall support the PUP as the National Polytechnic University in the form of lump sum amount, through general appropriations and other financial benefits, and in kind, through land grants and donations and use of other real properties. To carry out the intent of these grants, income derived from the development of all land grants and real properties shall be used to further the ends of the National Polytechnic University, as may be decided by the Board;

Such parcels of land ceded by law, decree or presidential issuance to the Polytechnic University of the Philippines are hereby declared to be reserved for the purposes intended. The absolute ownership of the National Polytechnic University over these landholdings, including those covered by original and transfer certificates of title in the name of the PUP and their future derivatives, is hereby confirmed. Where the issuance of proper certificates of title is yet pending for these landholdings, the appropriate government office shall expedite the issuance thereof within six months from the date of effectivity of this Act: *Provided*, That all registration requirements necessary for the issuance of the said titles have been submitted and complied with.

The Board may plan, design, approve and/or cause the implementation of land leases: *Provided*, That such mechanisms and arrangements shall sustain and protect the environment in accordance with law, and be exclusive of the academic core zone of the campuses of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines: *Provided, further*, That such mechanisms and arrangements shall not conflict with the academic mission of the National Polytechnic University.

The Board may likewise allow the use of the income coming from real properties of the National Polytechnic University as security for transactions to generate additional revenues when needed for educational purposes.

Moreover, the Board may approve the implementation of joint ventures: *Provided*, That in the event real properties of the National Polytechnic University are involved, only the income derived by the University from the use of the real properties shall be the subject of its participation or obligation in the joint ventures: *Provided, further*, That no joint venture shall result in the alienation of the real properties of the National Polytechnic University.

Any plan to generate revenues and other sources from land grants and other real properties entrusted to the National Polytechnic University shall be consistent with the academic mission and orientation of the University as well as protect it from undue influence and control of commercial interests: *Provided*, That such programs, projects or mechanisms shall be approved by the Board subject to a transparent and democratic process of consultation with the constituents of the University: *Provided, further*, That funds generated from such programs, projects or mechanisms shall not be meant to replace, in part or in whole, the annual appropriations provided by the national government to the University.

**SEC. 26. *Safeguards on Assets Disposition.*** – The preservation of the value of the assets of the National Polytechnic University shall be of primordial consideration, such that the sale of any existing real property of the University shall be prohibited: *Provided*, That the Board may alienate real property donated after the effectivity of this Act if the terms of the donation specifically allow it. Notwithstanding the provision of this Act or any other law to the contrary, the lease of more than five (5) years of the assets of the University and any transactions referred to in Section shall be subject to the following conditions and procedures:

- (a) The transactions shall be discussed with the members of the Board in any of its formally convened regular or special meeting, at least one (1) month before a decision is to be made;
- (b) The transactions shall be based on a multi-year comprehensive development plan, crafted and developed by qualified urban planning professionals having at least five (5) years' experience, with prior consultations with and concurrence of third-party experts and duly approved by a three fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority vote of all the members of the Board;
- (c) The transactions shall be subject to competitive and public bidding as provided under Republic Act No 12009, otherwise known as the "*New Government Procurement Act*"; and
- (d) If the contract or transaction involves an amount more than Fifty million pesos (₱50,000,000.00). It shall be approved by three fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of all the members of the Board: *Provided*, That the splitting of contracts, which is by breaking up a contract into smaller quantities or amounts or dividing contract implementation into artificial or arbitrary phases or subcontracts for the purposes of circumventing this provision, shall not be allowed.

**SEC. 27. Duty and Tax Exemptions.** – Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary:

- (a) The importation by PUP of books, publications, instruments, equipment, apparatuses, supplies, materials, and scientific or educational computer hardware and software intended for economic, technical-vocational, scientific, medical, philosophical, historical, legal, cultural, educational, or research purposes shall, upon certification by the Board and in accordance with Republic Act No. 10863, otherwise known as the "*Customs Modernization and Tariff Act*," be exempt from customs duties and other import restrictions;
- (b) All revenues, assets, and income of the PUP used actually, directly, and exclusively for educational purposes or in support thereof shall be exempt from all taxes, duties, fees, and charges imposed by the national government or any local government unit;
- (c) All gifts, grants, endowments, contributions, and donations of real or personal property in favor of PUP shall be exempt from donor's tax and shall be considered allowable deductions from the gross income of the donor in

accordance with the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended: *Provided*, That the allowable deduction shall be equivalent to one hundred fifty percent (150%) of the value of the donation. Donations in kind shall be valued based on acquisition cost, taking into consideration depreciation in the case of used property;

- (d) All transactions of PUP subject to value-added tax (VAT) shall be subject to a zero percent (0%) VAT rate; and
- (e) All academic awards, grants, scholarships, fellowships, and similar forms of academic recognition or assistance extended by PUP shall be exempt from taxes.

**SEC. 28. *Development Plan and Organizational Structure.*** —Within one hundred twenty (120) days after the effectivity of this Act, PUP shall accomplish the following:

- (a) Submit a five (5) year development plan, including its corresponding program budget to the CHED and DBM;
- (b) Set up its organization, as well as its academic structure, and designate the key officials and administrative personnel of PUP; and
- (c) Secure additional plantilla positions, including technical, support to technical, and key administrative positions for the existing constituent campuses and extension campuses, and augmentations of personnel services allocation from the DBM, in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the administration and management of PUP, towards the attainment of its mandate as the National Polytechnic University.

**SEC. 29. *Reportorial Requirements.*** – On or before the fifteenth (15th) day of the second (2nd) month after the opening of regular classes each year, the Board shall file a detailed report on the progress, condition, and needs of PUP with the Office of the President of the Philippines and both Houses of Congress.

**SEC. 30. *Suppletory Application.*** – The provisions of Republic Act No. 8292, otherwise known as the “*Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997*,” shall have suppletory application to this Act insofar as they are not inconsistent with the provisions, purposes, institutional autonomy, and distinctive mandate of the National Polytechnic University under this Charter.

**SEC. 31. *Rules of Construction.*** - No statutory or other issuances shall diminish the powers, rights, privileges and benefits accorded to the PUP under this Act, or those enjoyed at present by virtue of other issuances not otherwise modified or repealed under this Act, unless subsequent legislation expressly provides for their repeal, amendment or modification. Any case of doubt in the interpretation of any of the provisions of this Charter shall be resolved in favor of the academic freedom and fiscal autonomy of the National Polytechnic University.

**SEC. 31. *Appropriations.*** - In addition to the amount already appropriated to PUP for the current fiscal year, there is hereby appropriated an initial sum of Nine billion pesos (₱9,000,000,000.00) from any amount available in the Treasury of the Philippines for the purposes of carrying out the initial implementation of this Act. Thereafter, the amount necessary to strengthen PUP and its capacity as the National Polytechnic University shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Further, an additional sum of One hundred million pesos (₱100,000,000.00) shall be appropriated separate and above the said initial funding for each fiscal year for the first five (5) years of the implementation of this Act, which shall likewise be included in the annual GAA.

**SEC. 32. *Repealing Clause.*** — Presidential Decree No. 1341, entitled “*Converting the Philippine College of Commerce into a Polytechnic University, Defining its Objectives, Organizational Structure and Functions, and Expanding Its Curricular Offerings*” is hereby repealed. All other laws, decrees, executive orders, implementing rules and regulations, issuances, or any part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are deemed repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

**SEC. 33. *Separability Clause.*** — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

**SEC. 34. *Effectivity.*** — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication, in English and Filipino, in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*