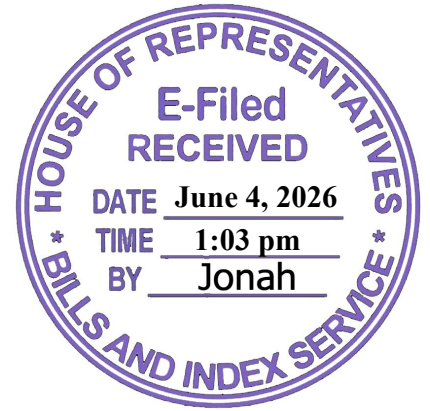


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9804



Introduced by:

HON. CHRISTOPHERSON "COCO" M. YAP

AN ACT

ESTABLISHING AT SOUTHERN LEYTE STATE UNIVERSITY – HINUNANGAN CAMPUS A HIGHLY-SPECIALIZED RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO BE KNOWN AS THE DISASTER RESILIENCE FOR ECO-EFFICIENT AGRICULTURE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (DREAM INSTITUTE), DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS, FUNCTIONS, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Southern Leyte possesses immense ecological, agricultural, and tourism-linked assets that place it in a strategic position to pursue an integrated Tourism-Environment-Agriculture (TEA) Nexus of development. As an agriculture-based province with important upland, watershed, spring, riverine, coastal, and biodiversity-rich ecosystems, Southern Leyte requires a specialized institutional mechanism capable of generating baseline scientific data, translating such knowledge into resilient production and livelihood systems, protecting biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, and supporting disaster- and climate-responsive decision-making.

Southern Leyte State University – Hinunangan Campus has already established three Board-approved research centers that respond to portions of this challenge: the Soil and Water Research Institute (SWaRI), the Smallholder Horticulture and Agroforestry Research & Extension (SHARE) Center, and the Biodiversity Conservation and Management Institute (BioCon). However, these centers presently operate with a limited personnel complement and a fragmented institutional arrangement, making it difficult to fully respond to the increasing demands of climate adaptation, environmental protection, agricultural resilience, biodiversity conservation, community-based development, and policy support in the Province of Southern Leyte.

To address this need, this bill seeks to establish a unified and highly specialized institute to be known as the Disaster Resilience for Eco-efficient Agriculture Management Institute (DREAM Institute) at Southern Leyte State University – Hinunangan Campus. The proposed DREAM Institute shall consolidate and elevate the functions of SWaRI, SHARE, and BioCon into one integrated institutional framework, with SWaRI serving as the Foundation Room, SHARE as the Production and Livelihood Room, and BioCon as the Shield and coordinating lead.

Under this framework, the Institute shall adopt the following key systems and platforms: WADE (Wilderness Areas Diversity Enhancement) as the ecological restoration framework institutionalizing the principle “One Man, One Tree Can Make a Forest” through native tree stewardship, habitat restoration, ecological buffering, and integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS); the League of Wildlife Conservancy (LWS) as the Institute’s social engine for volunteerism, stewardship, citizen science, and community mobilization; Das-ay Link Platform as the nervous system of the Institute, serving as the central data, validation, and decision-support platform for baseline data from SWaRI, government institutions, validated and verifiable IKS, and future operational outputs from DREAM LABS, DREAM FARMS, DREAM BIOSECURE, and DREAM WATERSHIELDS; ACCESS (Adaptive Climate Change Education Support Services) as the trend-based adaptive learning and support stream arising from Das-ay Link; and RADAR (Resilience Against Disaster and Agricultural Risks) as the shock-based resilience and response stream likewise arising from Das-ay Link.

The creation of the DREAM Institute through congressional legislation will provide Southern Leyte State University – Hinunangan Campus with a stronger, more coherent, and more functionally relevant platform for soil and water science, biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration, climate adaptation, risk reduction, resilient agriculture, community extension, and sustainability governance in Southern Leyte and the broader region.

In view of the foregoing, **ug sa ngalan sa SERBISYONG TINUORAY**, the undersigned respectfully requests the immediate passage of this measure.


CHRISTOPHERSON “COCO” M. YAP
Representative, Second District of Southern Leyte

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ESTABLISHING AT SOUTHERN LEYTE STATE UNIVERSITY – HINUNANGAN CAMPUS A HIGHLY-SPECIALIZED RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO BE KNOWN AS THE DISASTER RESILIENCE FOR ECO-EFFICIENT AGRICULTURE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (DREAM INSTITUTE), DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS, FUNCTIONS, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, 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 “***DREAM Institute Act of 2026.***”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote ecological integrity, climate resilience, scientific and technological advancement, biodiversity conservation, soil and water security, sustainable agricultural development, disaster preparedness, community participation, and culturally responsive innovation as foundations of national and local development.

Towards this end, the State shall support the establishment of specialized institutions that integrate research, extension, education, invocation, data systems, and community-based action to address the interconnected challenges of environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, agricultural vulnerability, climate change, and disaster risk.

SECTION 3. Creation of the DREAM Institute. — There is hereby established at Southern Leyte State University – Hinunangan Campus a highly-specialized research institute to be known as the Disaster Resilience in Eco-efficient Agriculture Management Institute (DREAM Institute), hereinafter referred to as the Institute.

The Institute shall serve as a premier and integrated center for research, innovation, extension, training, policy support, data systems development, and field-based action on biodiversity conservation, soil and water systems, ecological restoration, climate adaptation, disaster resilience, sustainable agriculture, and related development concerns within the Province of Southern Leyte and such other areas as may be appropriate.

SECTION 4. Mandate. —

- (a) To generate, integrate, and apply scientific, technical, local, and validated Indigenous Knowledge Systems toward resilient and eco-efficient development;
- (b) To strengthen soil and water science, biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration, watershed and spring protection, climate adaptation, and disaster risk resilience;
- (c) To support sustainable and enterprise-oriented agriculture development consistent with the Tourism-Environment-Agriculture (TEA) Nexus and the *Negosyohanong Panguma* development context;
- (d) To provide extension, training, field demonstration, policy support, and knowledge services to local government units, communities, schools, people’s organizations, farmers, fisherfolk, partner agencies, and other stakeholders; and
- (e) To function as a specialized institutional platform linking research, restoration, production, sustainability, and decision intelligence for public benefit.

SECTION 5. Institutional Framework of the DREAM Institute. —

- (a) SWaRI — the Soil and Water Research Institute, which shall serve as the baseline creator and Foundation Room;

- (b) SHARE — the Smallholder Horticultural and Agroforestry Research & Extension Center, which shall serve as the action driver and Production and Livelihood Room; and
- (c) BioCon — the Biodiversity Conservation and Management Institute, which shall serve as the Shield, Protection and Sustainability Room, and the lead coordinating unit of the Institute.

The Technical Trinity shall constitute the core operational structure of the Institute.

SECTION 6. Functions of SWaRI. —

- (a) Generate baseline data on soil health, land capability, hydrology, water quality, watershed systems, spring systems, and related environmental conditions;
- (b) Conduct soil, water, and environmental diagnostics, assessment, and monitoring;
- (c) Support research on climate, land, water and watershed resilience;
- (d) Provide scientific inputs for restoration, planning, climate adaptation, and disaster resilience; and
- (e) Perform such other related functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposed of this Act.

SECTION 7. Functions of SHARE. —

- (a) Translate research and technical findings into sustainable agricultural production, agroforestry, horticulture, propagation, and livelihood systems;
- (b) Promote climate-responsive, smallholder-oriented, and enterprise-linked production models;
- (c) Develop and maintain demonstration farms, nurseries, field-based propagation systems, and extension support mechanisms;
- (d) Strengthen agricultural innovation and value-chain development under a *Negosyohanong Panguma* framework; and

- (e) Perform such other related functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 8. Functions of BioCon. —

- (a) Lead biodiversity inventory and monitoring of flora, fauna, aquatic ecosystems, wetlands, caves, springs, watersheds, and related ecological systems;
- (b) Coordinate habitat and watershed conservation, ecological buffering, living collections, seed and seedling conservation, and biodiversity-supportive filed laboratories;
- (c) Oversee and coordinate ecological restoration and sustainability measures under the Institute;
- (d) Integrate biodiversity protection and ecosystem-based resilience principles across the Institute's programs and operations; and
- (e) Coordinate the implementation of WADE, ACCESS, and RADAR under this Act.

SECTION 9. WADE Framework. —

- (a) Guide the rehabilitation, restoration, enhancement, and protection of degraded and vulnerable ecosystems, including forests, watersheds, wetlands, riparian areas, springs, caves, and biodiversity corridors;
- (b) Institutionalize the principle "One Man, One Tree Can Make a Forest" through science-based and long-term native tree stewardship, assisted natural regeneration, habitat enhancement, and ecological buffering;
- (c) Prioritize indigenous and site-appropriate native species, survival monitoring, maintenance, and ecological functionality over one-time planting activities; and
- (d) Integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), local ecological memory, and community-based stewardship practices in restoration planning, species selection, monitoring, and long-term management.

SECTION 10. Integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. — The DREAM Institute shall adopt a science-based and culturally responsive approach in the conduct of its functions. To this end, the Institute shall recognize, document, validate, and where appropriate integrate verifiable Indigenous Knowledgeable Systems (IKS), local ecological knowledge, and traditional stewardship practices relevant to soil and water systems, biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration, production resilience, and disaster adaptation.

Validation protocols for IKS shall be developed to ensure scientific integrity, cultural sensitivity, and community consent.

SECTION 11. League of Wildlife Conservancy. — The League of Wildlife Conservancy (LWS) is hereby recognized as the social engine of the DREAM Institute.

The LWS shall serve as the Institute's organized stewardship, volunteer, advocacy, and participatory action mechanism and shall:

- (a) Mobilize students, faculty, local communities, youth groups, partner institutions, and environmental advocates;
- (b) Support biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration, habitat stewardship, and environmental awareness programs;
- (c) Participate in citizen science, monitoring, field education, and restoration support activities; and
- (d) Promote shared responsibility and social ownership of the Institute's ecological and resilience goals.

SECTION 12. Das-ay Link Platform. — The Institute shall establish and maintain the Das-ay Link Platform as its central data, validation, knowledge integration, and decision-support platform, hereinafter referred to as the Platform.

The Platform shall serve as the nervous system of the Institute and shall:

- (a) Receive, store, organize, process, and update baseline data generated by SWaRI;

- (b) Integrate relevant data from government institutions, partner agencies, validated Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and local ecological observations subject to proper verification;
- (c) Serve as the institutional database, monitoring backbone, and knowledge repository of the Institute;
- (d) Be enhanced over time through the outputs and datasets generated by DREAM LABS, DREAM FARMS, DREAM BIOSECURE, and DREAM WATERSHIELDS;
- (e) Generate analytical outputs to support adaptation, resilience, restoration, extension, planning, and policy decisions; and
- (f) Perform such other related functions as may be necessary to support the operation of the Institute.

SECTION 13. Operational Platforms Under Das-ay Link. — To progressively strengthen the Institute’s data, field, and applied operational capacities, the following platforms may be established and developed under the DREAM Institute:

- (a) DREAM LABS, for laboratory, diagnostics, experimentation, tissue culture, validation, and related scientific work;
- (b) DREAM FARMS, for adaptive agriculture, agroforestry, demonstration, smallholder innovation, and livelihood-linked field application;
- (c) DREAM BIOSECURE, for environmental, agricultural, ecological, and biosecurity observation, monitoring, and response support; and
- (d) DREAM WATERSHIELDS, for watershed, spring, riparian, wetland, hydrological, and ecological buffering initiatives.

The outputs of these platforms shall be integrated into Das-ay Link as they become available.

SECTION 14. ACCESS AND RADAR. — The analytical and decision-support outputs of Das-ay Link shall include the following streams:

- (a) ACCESS (Adaptive Climate Change Education Support Services), which shall serve as the Institute’s trend-based adaptive learning, education, and support

stream, focusing on long-term changes, patterns, emerging needs, and evidence-based learning for climate adaptation and sustainability; and

- (b) RADAR (Resilience Against Disaster and Agricultural Risks), which shall serve as the Institute's shock-based resilience, preparedness, and response stream, focusing on disturbances, risks, vulnerabilities, hazard signals, and timely decision support for disaster and agricultural resilience.

ACCESS and RADAR shall be used to guide institute operations, extension activities, restoration planning, stakeholder engagement, and policy support.

SECTION 15. Powers and Functions of the DREAM Institute. —

- (a) Formulate and implement research, extension, training, restoration, data. And innovation programs aligned with its mandate;
- (b) Undertake scientific studies, field assessments, laboratory analyses, monitoring, and evaluations;
- (c) Develop and maintain databases, field laboratories, demonstration areas, living collections, nurseries, and related facilities;
- (d) Provide technical assistance, advisory services, capacity building, and policy support to public and private stakeholders;
- (e) Enter into partnerships, linkages, memoranda of agreement, and collaborative undertakings with government agencies, local government units, state universities and colleges, civil society organizations, people's organizations, Indigenous Peoples, private entities, and international institutions, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations;
- (f) Receive grants, donations, endowments, bequests, and other lawful assistance from local and foreign sources, subject to applicable laws, auditing, accounting, and government regulations;
- (g) Produce and disseminate publications, policy papers, extension materials, and knowledge products;
- (h) Establish systems for monitoring, validation, and quality assurance of data, research outputs, and field operations; and

- (i) Exercise such other powers as may be necessary and incidental to effectively carry out the objectives of this Act.

SECTION 16. Organizational Structure. — The DREAM Institute shall be headed by an Executive Director, who shall be appointed in accordance with existing laws, rules, and university policies, and shall be supported by such deputy directors, division heads, technical personnel, administrative staff, and other employees as may be necessary for the effective operation of the Institute.

The organizational structure of the Institute shall include, but not limited to:

- (a) An Executive and Shared Services Office;
- (b) SWaRI as the Foundation Room;
- (c) SHARE as the Production and Livelihood Room;
- (d) BioCon as the Shield and lead coordinating unit; and
- (e) An Extension, TEA Nexus, and Community Interface unit.

SECTION 17. Initial Staffing Pattern. — For the initial operationalization of the Institute, the following staffing pattern is hereby authorized, subject to applicable civil service, budgeting, qualification, and compensation laws, rules, and regulations:

Authorized Initial Staffing Pattern

Office/Unit	Authorized Positions	No.
Executive and Shared Services Office	Executive Director, Deputy Director for Research, Laboratories and Innovation; Deputy Director for Extension, Partnerships and Knowledge Services; Planning, Policy and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Finance and Administrative Officer; Procurement/Supply/Property Officer; GIS, Remote Sensing and Data Systems Specialist	7
SWaRI – Foundation Room	Chemist; Soil Scientist; Environmental Science Specialist; Administrative Staff;	8

	Hydrologist/Watershed Specialist; Laboratory QA/QC and Instrumentation Officer; Soil and Water Laboratory Technician; Climate and Disaster Risk Analyst	
SHARE – Production and Livelihood Room	Veterinarian; Plant Breeding/Tissue Culture Specialist; Agroforestry Specialist; Administrative Staff; Horticulturist/Crop Systems Specialist; Agribusiness/Value Chain Specialist; Nursery and Seed Systems Specialist; Tissue Culture Laboratory Technician	8
BioCon – Shield and Coordinating Lead	Biologist; Marine Biologist; Administrative Staff; Restoration Ecologist/Forester; Wildlife Conservation Specialist; Inland Aquatic/Wetland/Cave Systems Specialist	6
Extension, TEA Nexus, and Community Interface Unit	Extension Specialist; Extension Associate; Development Communication and Knowledge Translation Specialist; Community Organizing/ Ecotourism and Partnerships Specialist	4
Total		33

SECTION 18. Personnel Absorption and Transition. — Qualified existing personnel, staff, and workers from the current research centers and extension units of Southern Leyte State University – Hinunangan Campus may be absorbed, reclassified, redesignated, or integrated into the DREAM Institute, subject to qualification standards, staffing needs, and applicable civil service and budgeting laws, rules, and regulations.

No incumbent personnel shall be removed solely by reason of the reorganization under this Act, except for lawful cause and due process.

SECTION 19. Extension, Training, and Community Engagement. — The Institute shall actively develop and implement extension, training, technical assistance, and community engagement programs in support of farmers, fisherfolk, youth, women, local government units, people’s organizations, Indigenous cultural communities, tourism stakeholders, academic institutions, and other sectors relevant to the TEA Nexus and the Institute’s mandate.

SECTION 20. Research, Data, and Knowledge Governance. — The Institute shall develop and maintain appropriate policies and protocols on data governance, validation, ethical use, knowledge management, research quality assurance, environmental and cultural safeguards, intellectual property where applicable, and access or sharing of information consistent with existing laws and regulations.

Special protocols shall be established for the documentation and use of Indigenous Knowledge Systems to ensure respect for customary rights, community participation, informed consent, and cultural integrity.

SECTION 21. Coordination with National and Local Government Agencies. — The Institute shall coordinate with the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Science and Technology, Climate Change Commission, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, Department of Tourism, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, local government units, and other relevant agencies and institutions in the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 22. Appropriations. — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of Southern Leyte State University to the extent available. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The initial annual operating requirement of the Institute shall include appropriate Personnel Services, Capital Outlay, and a realistic Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) level sufficient to support laboratory operations, field monitoring, restoration work, extension activities, data systems, training, stakeholder engagement, and other functions of the Institute.

SECTION 23. Initial MOOE Planning Requirement. — For planning and budget preparation purposes, the Institute shall develop an initial annual MOOE program adequate for its operational needs, including but not limited to:

- (a) Laboratory reagents, chemicals, supplies, field kits, and protective equipment;
- (b) Field research, biodiversity monitoring, watershed and restoration operations;
- (c) Travel, transport, fuel, and field logistics;
- (d) Nursery, seed bank, restoration, ecological buffering, and demonstration operations;
- (e) Training, extension, consultations, stakeholder engagement, and information services;
- (f) Utilities, communications, internet, database systems, software, and digital services;
- (g) Repairs and maintenance of laboratories, field equipment, nursery facilities, and support infrastructure;
- (h) Publications, documentation, knowledge products, and policy outputs; and
- (i) Contract of service, job order, or temporary technical support, subject to applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 24. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within one hundred twenty (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Board of Regents of Southern Leyte State University, in coordination with the appropriate government agencies, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 25. Congressional Oversight and Reporting. — The DREAM Institute shall submit an annual report to the Board of Regents of Southern Leyte State University and furnish copies to the appropriate committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate, containing its programs, accomplishments, staffing, budget utilization, partnerships, and recommendations for policy support.

SECTION 26. Separability Clause. — If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 27. Repealing Clause. — All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, memorandum circulars, and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 28. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,