

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

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9807



Introduced by Representative Timothy Joseph Cayton

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Oral health is a fundamental component of overall well-being. Poor oral hygiene has been clinically linked to cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke, respiratory infections, and other systemic conditions.¹ Despite this, the Philippines continues to record alarming rates of oral disease. The 2018 National Survey on Oral Health reported that 72% of Filipinos suffer from dental caries and 50% from gum disease.² An earlier 2011 National Monitoring and Evaluation Dental Survey (NMEDS) placed the prevalence of dental caries at 87.4% and periodontal disease at 48.3% across all age groups.³

A critical driver of this public health failure is the severe shortage of dentists in government service. As of December 2022, only 1,943 dentists are employed in the public sector nationwide, a ratio of approximately 1:57,423, far exceeding the Department of Health's recommended standard of 1:50,000 and the World Health Organization benchmark of 1:7,500.⁴ The shortage is most acute in rural and underserved areas where public health institutions are the only accessible source of dental care for millions of low-income Filipinos.

The primary structural cause of this shortage is the compensation gap between public and private dental practice. Under the Salary Standardization Law of 2019 (Republic Act No. 11466), entry-level government dentists are classified at Salary Grade (SG) 13, corresponding to a monthly salary of approximately PHP 31,320 as of 2023.⁵ This figure is substantially lower than the potential earnings in private practice and fails to reflect the years of academic and clinical training required to obtain a license to practice dentistry. The resulting disparity discourages qualified dental graduates from entering

¹ World Health Organization, Oral Health, Key Facts (Mar. 2023).

² Department of Health, 2018 National Survey on Oral Health.

³ Department of Health, 2011 National Monitoring and Evaluation Dental Survey (NMEDS).

⁴ National Database of Selected Human Resources for Health, December 2022 data; See also Dentist-to-population ratio computed based on 2022 PSA population estimates.

⁵ Republic Act No. 11466, Salary Standardization Law of 2019.

public service and drives experienced dentists toward private practice or overseas employment.

The Constitution is unequivocal on the State's obligation. Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people.⁶ Article XIII, Section 11 further requires the adoption of an integrated approach to health development ensuring that essential services are available to all at affordable cost.⁷ Republic Act No. 7305, or the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers, reinforces this mandate by declaring it State policy to promote the social and economic well-being of health workers, improve their working conditions, and encourage qualified professionals to remain in government service.⁸

This bill upgrades the salary grades of public dentists from Dentist I through Dentist VII, raising the entry-level position from SG 13 to SG 17, with corresponding adjustments for all senior positions up to SG 30 for Dentist VII. The measure covers all dentists regardless of employment status across national government agencies, local government units, government-owned and controlled corporations, and state universities and colleges. Part-time and casual dentists under the Human Resources for Health program are expressly covered and shall be compensated proportionately.

Critically, this bill goes beyond compensation reform. It is the only measure among those currently pending in this Congress that requires the Department of Health to submit an annual report to Congress on the number of public dentists by position and region, prevailing dentist-to-population ratios, and unfilled authorized positions. This reporting mechanism ensures that the salary upgrade is not merely a fiscal adjustment but a policy instrument subject to legislative oversight and evidence-based evaluation. Without it, Congress has no structured means to assess whether the reform achieves its stated objective of improving dental workforce distribution and public access to oral healthcare.

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


ATTY. TIMOTHY JOSEPH E. CAYTON, PhD.
Representative
Lone District of Nueva Vizcaya

⁶ Phil. Const. art. II, § 15 (1987).

⁷ Phil. Const. art. XIII, § 11 (1987).

⁸ Republic Act No. 7305, § 2, Magna Carta of Public Health Workers (Mar. 26, 1992).

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

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9807

Introduced by Representative Timothy Joseph Cayton

**AN ACT UPGRADING THE SALARY GRADES OF DENTISTS EMPLOYED IN
THE PUBLIC SECTOR, PROVIDING FOR A NON-DIMINUTION OF BENEFITS
CLAUSE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as the "Public Dentist Salary Upgrade Act of 2026."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. Article XIII, Section 11 further requires the adoption of an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development that makes essential health services available to all the people at affordable cost.

Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7305, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers, declares it a State policy to promote and improve the social and economic well-being of health workers, their living and working conditions, and terms of employment; to develop their skills and capabilities so that they may be more responsive and better equipped to deliver government health programs and projects; and to encourage those with proper qualifications and excellent abilities to join and remain in government service.

Pursuant to these, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize the indispensable role of dentists employed in the public sector in maintaining and promoting the oral health of the Filipino people. The State shall ensure that the

compensation received by public dentists is commensurate with the demands of their service, and that their social and economic well-being, living and working conditions, and terms of employment are continuously promoted and improved.

SECTION 3. Coverage. This Act shall cover all dentists, regardless of their status of employment, in all public health institutions, whether nationally or locally funded, as well as those assigned in or working for national government agencies (NGAs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), and local government units (LGUs).

SECTION 4. Upgraded Salary Grades. Upon the effectivity of this Act, the salary grades for dentist positions in all government agencies and instrumentalities shall be upgraded as follows:

Position Title	Current Salary Grade	Upgraded Salary Grade
Dentist I	13	17
Dentist II	16	20
Dentist III	19	23
Dentist IV	22	25
Dentist V	24	27
Dentist VI	26	29
Dentist VII	28	30

Provided, That public dentists employed on a part-time or casual basis under the Human Resources for Health program and other similar programs and projects of the government shall receive remuneration in accordance with the upgraded salary grade schedule and shall be paid proportionate to the actual service they have rendered;

Provided, further, That government agencies and instrumentalities not covered under Republic Act No. 11466, otherwise known as the Salary Standardization Law of 2019, shall continue to receive their current remuneration so long as the salaries they receive correspond to or are higher than the salary schedule provided under this Act;

Provided, finally, That the upgraded salaries of public dentists employed by LGUs shall correspond to the income classification of the LGU concerned and shall not exceed the applicable percentage of the salary schedule as provided in Section 10(a) of Republic Act No. 11466.

SECTION 5. Non-Diminution of Benefits. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to reduce any existing allowances, benefits, and privileges currently enjoyed by public dentists under existing laws, decrees, and executive orders. Any existing benefits and privileges shall be deemed maintained and shall continue in full force and effect.

SECTION 6. Appropriations. The amounts necessary to effectively implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act in the respective annual appropriations of the national government agencies concerned. For dentists employed in LGUs, the necessary amounts shall be included in the respective annual appropriations ordinances of the LGUs. For dentists employed in GOCCs, the necessary amounts shall be charged against the respective annual corporate operating budgets of the GOCCs concerned.

SECTION 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations. Within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), in coordination with the Department of Health (DOH), the Civil Service Commission (CSC), and after consultation with the Philippine Dental Association (PDA), shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 8. Reporting Requirement. The Department of Health shall submit an annual report to Congress on: (a) the number of dentists employed in the public sector by position level and by region; (b) the prevailing dentist-to-population ratio per region; and (c) the number of authorized positions for dentists in government that remain unfilled. The first report shall be submitted within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 9. 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 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, rules, regulations, decrees, and other issuances or parts thereof that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, revoked, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,