

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

20th Congress
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 10297



Introduced by Rep. Maria Vanessa C. Aumentado

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution declares that science and technology are essential to national development and directs the State to give priority to research and development, invention, innovation, and science and technology education. It likewise mandates the State to support the development of a reservoir of national talent consisting of scientists, engineers, researchers, innovators, and other highly skilled professionals who will contribute to the country's progress.

For decades, the Philippines has recognized that investing in science education is one of the most effective ways to strengthen national competitiveness. Yet despite the growing demand for professionals in engineering, medicine, information technology, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, environmental science, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing, access to specialized science secondary education remains limited. Many academically gifted students, particularly those living outside major urban centers, continue to face limited opportunities to pursue advanced STEM education in public institutions.

Region VII (Central Visayas) is one of the country's fastest-growing regional economies. It is home to expanding industries in electronics manufacturing, information technology and business process management, healthcare, tourism, agriculture, renewable energy, and digital innovation. Sustaining this growth requires a continuous pipeline of highly competent graduates equipped with strong foundations in science, mathematics, research, and technology.

Recognizing the need to strengthen science education in Bohol, Congress enacted Republic Act No. 10034, which converted Ubay Science High School into Ubay

National Science High School in 2010. Since then, the institution has consistently demonstrated its capacity to provide quality science education and produce graduates who excel in higher education and various STEM fields.

After more than fifteen years as a National Science High School, Ubay National Science High School has matured into an institution capable of assuming a broader regional mandate. Its strategic location in the Province of Bohol makes it well-positioned to serve deserving students not only from Bohol but also from Cebu, Negros Oriental, and Siquijor, thereby expanding equitable access to specialized science education throughout Central Visayas.

Converting Ubay National Science High School into the Regional Science High School for Region VII will elevate the institution into a center of excellence for science, mathematics, technology, engineering, and research. As a Regional Science High School, it shall be strengthened through improved laboratories, research facilities, innovation centers, digital infrastructure, faculty development, student dormitories, and expanded scholarship opportunities. It shall also foster stronger collaboration with universities, research institutions, government agencies, and industry partners to cultivate future scientists, engineers, physicians, educators, entrepreneurs, and innovators.

More importantly, this measure supports the country's long-term vision of building a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economy. Every investment made in science education today is an investment in future discoveries, stronger industries, better public services, increased productivity, and sustainable national development.

The conversion of Ubay National Science High School into the Regional Science High School for Region VII is therefore not merely an institutional upgrade. It is a strategic investment in the future of Central Visayas and the Republic of the Philippines, ensuring that the nation's brightest young minds are given every opportunity to become leaders in science, technology, innovation, and nation-building.

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



MARIA VANESSA C. AUMENTADO

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AN ACT
CONVERTING THE UBAY NATIONAL SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL IN
THE MUNICIPALITY OF UBAY, PROVINCE OF BOHOL, INTO THE
REGIONAL SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL FOR REGION VII (CENTRAL
VISAYAS), STRENGTHENING ITS CAPACITY AS A PREMIER
SCIENCE SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION, 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 "Regional Science High School for Region VII Act."

SEC. 2. Conversion. - The Ubay National Science High School, located in the Municipality of Ubay, Province of Bohol, is hereby converted into and shall henceforth be known as the Regional Science High School for Region VII (Central Visayas).

SEC. 3. Purpose. - The Regional Science High School shall;

- a. Provide advanced secondary education in science, mathematics, engineering, technology, and research;

- b. Serve academically gifted learners from all provinces and highly urbanized cities of Region VII;
- c. Promote scientific research, innovation, robotics, artificial intelligence, environmental science, biotechnology, and emerging technologies;
- d. Develop partnerships with universities, government agencies, research institutions, and industry partners; and
- e. Produce graduates equipped for higher education and careers in science, engineering, medicine, agriculture, information technology, and other STEM fields.

SEC. 4. Curriculum. - The school shall implement the enhanced science and technology-oriented curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education for Regional Science High Schools and may offer specialized STEM tracks, advanced research programs, innovation laboratories, and international academic collaborations, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.

SEC. 5. Admission. - Admission shall be based on a competitive screening process to be determined by the Department of Education, ensuring equal opportunity for qualified students from all provinces and cities within Region VII.

SEC. 6. Faculty and Personnel. - Existing teaching and non-teaching personnel shall retain their positions, tenure, salaries, and benefits.

The Department of Education may create additional plantilla positions as may be necessary to support the expanded functions of the school.

SEC. 7. Infrastructure and Facilities. - The Department of Education shall prioritize the development of the Regional Science High School by providing:

1. Modern science laboratories;
2. Engineering and robotics laboratories;
3. Artificial intelligence and computer laboratories;
4. Innovation and fabrication centers;
5. Research facilities;
6. Library and digital learning resources;
7. Student dormitories, when feasible;
8. Sports and wellness facilities; and
9. Other infrastructure necessary for quality science education.

SEC. 8. Scholarships and Student Support. - The school may establish scholarship, financial assistance, research grants, and student exchange programs in partnership with government agencies, local government units, higher education institutions, private organizations, and international partners.

SEC. 9. Transfer of Assets and Liabilities. - All assets, records, equipment, facilities, appropriations, obligations, and personnel of the Ubay National Science High School are hereby transferred to and absorbed by the Regional Science High School for Region VII.

SEC. 10. Appropriations. - The Secretary of Education shall immediately include in the Department's program the operationalization of the Regional Science High School for Region VII, the initial funding of which shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Ubay National Science High School.

Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued operation, maintenance, faculty development, research activities, and capital outlay shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Education shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for its implementation.

SEC. 12. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 13. Repealing Clause. - All laws, executive orders, rules, regulations, and issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 14. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.