



SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION )

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SENATE

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SENATE BILL NO. 1403

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO

AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING A CENTER FOR AUTISM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Autism or autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disability that causes difficulty in social skills, such as communicating and interacting with others and manifests repetitive behaviors as well as limited interests or activities.

Studies show that the common risk factors of developing autism are genetics and environmental influences. People with this disability have different ways of learning, paying attention, or reacting to things. Signs and symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) usually occur in the first 2 years of life and more common among boys than girls (1:42 boys) (1:189 girls)<sup>1</sup>

Currently, there is no cure for autism, but early interventions can be made to help the children who are affected by this disorder in coping up with fundamental skills that are needed in the child's learning process.

In this regard, that the proposed measure seeks for the creation of a Center for Autism, which shall provide integrated & comprehensive rehabilitation services and spearhead advocacy programs that will address to the demands and needs of those ASD individuals.

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

JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>





23 **d) Disabled Worker** - means a worker whose earning capacity is  
24 impaired by mental, physical, or sensory deficiency or injury;

25 **e) Handicap** - refers to a disadvantage for given individual, resulting  
26 from an impairment or disability that limits or prevents the function of  
27 activity, that is considered normal given the age and sex of the  
28 individual;

29 **f) Impairment** - is any loss, diminution or aberration of psychological,  
30 physiological, or anatomical structure or function;

31 **g) Indigent patient** - a disabled person whose level of income falls  
32 below the poverty threshold;

33 **h) Rehabilitation** - an integrated approach to physical, psychological,  
34 cultural, spiritual, educational, or vocational, measures that create  
35 conditions for individual to attain the highest possible level of  
36 functional ability; and,

37 **i) Special Education (SPED)** - that type of education specifically  
38 designed for learners with special needs who cannot profit maximally  
39 from regular education such that they require trained personnel,  
40 modifications in the curricula, teaching methods, instructional materials  
41 and adaptations in facilities equipment.

42  
43 **SEC. 3. Creation of a Center for Autism.** - There is hereby created a Center  
44 for Autism which shall be tasked to perform the following functions:

- 45  
46 1) Formulate and implement an integrated and comprehensive master  
47 2) Create a diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitation clinic;  
48 3) Provide vocational training programs for autistic adults;  
49 4) Provide free diagnosis and rehabilitation services to indigent autistic;  
50 5) Provide continuing training programs for teachers, therapists,  
51 medical;  
52 6) Provide other services such as counseling, orientation and referral;  
53 7) Increase public awareness and concern on autism by spearheading  
54 advocacy programs.  
55

56 **SEC. 4. Governing Board, Composition, Term, Functions.** - There is hereby  
57 created a National Autism Board referred as to the Board, which shall be  
58 under the Office of the President. The Board shall govern the Center for  
59 Autism and shall be composed of the following:

- 60  
61 1) One (1) representative from the Department of Health, who shall sit  
62 as Chairperson;  
63 2) One (1) representative from the Department of Education who shall  
64 sit as the Vice-Chairperson;

- 65 3) One (1) representative from the Department of Social Welfare and  
66 Development as Member;  
67 4) Two (2) representatives from the National Council for the Welfare of  
68 Disabled Persons as Members;  
69 5) Two (2) representatives from the Autism Society of the Philippines as  
70 Members; 6) Two (2) representatives from the Parents of Children and  
71 Adults with Autism as Members.  
72

73 **SEC. 5. Secretariat** - The Board shall have a Secretariat under an Executive  
74 Officer who shall be appointed by the President. The Executive Officer shall  
75 manage the day-to-day operations of the Board and shall be assisted by a  
76 Deputy Executive Officer who shall likewise be appointed by the President.  
77

78 The Executive Officer shall have the following powers and functions:  
79

- 80 1) Execute, administer and implement the policies and measures  
81 approved by the Board;  
82 2) Direct and supervise the affairs and operations of the Board;  
83 3) Submit within thirty (30) days after the close of every calendar year  
84 an annual report to the Board and such other reports it may require;  
85 4) Submit an annual budget and such supplementary budgets as may be  
86 necessary to the Board for its consideration and approval;  
87 5) Represent the Board in all transactions with other offices, agencies,  
88 instrumentalities of government and with all persons and other entities,  
89 public or private, domestic or foreign; and,  
90 6) Appoint, subject to confirmation of the Board, and discipline in  
91 accordance with Civil Service laws, rules and regulations, the officers  
92 and personnel below the level of Deputy Executive Officer.  
93

94 The Deputy Executive Officer shall perform the following functions:  
95

- 96 1) Assist the Executive Officer in the discharge of his powers and  
97 functions;  
98 2) Act as the Executive Officer during the Executive Officer's absence;  
99 and,  
100 3) Discharge such other powers and functions as may be required by  
101 the Executive Officer and the Board  
102

103 **SEC. 6. Appropriations.** - For the initial operating expenses of the Center, the  
104 amount of Five Million Pesos (5,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated from the  
105 available funds of the Office of the President. Thereafter, it shall submit to the  
106 Department of Budget and Management, its proposed budget for inclusion in  
107 the General Appropriations Act.



108 **SEC. 7. Transitory Provisions.** - Within the period of one hundred and eighty  
109 (180) days after the approval of this Act, the Board constituted shall start its  
110 operation. All other government offices having functions similar to the Board  
111 shall then cease to perform such functions. Henceforth, these functions shall  
112 be deemed transferred to the Board.

113

114 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - The Board in consultation  
115 with appropriate agencies from the private and government sectors shall  
116 issue guidelines and prescribe rules and regulations within one hundred (120)  
117 days after the effectivity of this Act which shall be published in two (2)  
118 newspapers of general circulation. A copy of such guidelines, rules and  
119 regulations shall be furnished the Congress of the Philippines.

120

121 **SEC. 9. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations  
122 and other issuances, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this  
123 Act, are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

124

125 **SEC. 10. Separability Clause.** - Should any provision of this Act, be declared  
126 invalid or unconstitutional, no other provisions hereof be affected thereby.

127

128 **SEC. 11. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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131 *Approved,*