

(AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE)

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 3222

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BY REPRESENTATIVE CAYETANO, VARGAS, SUANSING (E.), DURANO, ESCUDERO, NOGRALES (K.A.), CUA, ACOPI, BAGATSING, BORDADO, CHAVEZ, DEL MAR, GO (M.), LABADLABAD, TAN (A.), SAGARBARRIA, SALCEDA, DIMAPORO (M.K.), LOBREGAT, BATAOIL, DEFENSOR, ABAYA, ARCILLAS, ALONTE, TUPAS, DELOSO-MONTALLA, SAVELLANO, CAMINERO, ROQUE (R.), AMATONG, GONZALEZ, ACOSTA, TAMBUNTING, VILLARICA, DALIPE, SY-ALVARADO, NAVA AND PRIMICIAS-AGABAS

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AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL VISION SCREENING PROGRAM FOR KINDERGARTEN PUPILS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1           SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the  
2 “National Vision Screening Act.”

3           SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – Pursuant to Article II,  
4 Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, it is hereby declared  
5 the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of  
6 the people and instill health consciousness among them. In line  
7 with this policy, the State shall endeavor to promote every Filipino’s  
8 full potential through good vision by creating ways and means to  
9 address vision problems, including blindness, among children.

1           Towards this end, the State shall institute a program that will  
2 help screen the school children for visual problems.

3           SEC. 3. *Establishment of a National Vision Screening*  
4 *Program.* – A National Vision Screening Program (NVSP) is  
5 hereby established under the Department of Education (DepED)  
6 which is primarily intended to screen the eye vision of kindergarten  
7 pupils.

8           SEC. 4. *Program Objectives.* – The objectives of the NVSP  
9 are:

10           (a) To conduct a simple vision screening test on kindergarten  
11 pupils through trained teachers AND HEALTH PERSONNEL and  
12 identify pupils with possible visual problems;

13           (b) To identify early childhood visual problems;

14           (c) To provide immediate attention to visually impaired  
15 kindergarten pupils and create a referral system so that they may  
16 be checked and treated by eye care practitioners;

17           (d) To develop a vision screening results database for all  
18 kindergarten pupils; and

19           (e) To conduct continuing research on the state of visual  
20 impairment among kindergarten pupils.

21           SEC. 5. *Program Implementation.* – The DepED shall lead  
22 the implementation of the NVSP, in coordination with the  
23 Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Eye Research  
24 Institute (PERI), which is under the National Institutes of Health  
25 of the University of the Philippines (UP).

26           In the implementation of the NVSP, the DepED shall:

1 (a) In coordination with the DOH and the PERI, administer  
2 the vision screening program to all public kindergarten pupils using  
3 a Vision Screening Kit which includes charts with symbols or  
4 numbers, occluders, and transparent response key: *Provided*, That  
5 the DOH and PERI may recommend to adopt new modes or  
6 methods of vision screening based on the latest trends and  
7 developments;

8 (b) In coordination with the DOH and PERI, train and certify  
9 teachers in conducting the vision screening program;

10 (c) In consultation with the DOH and PERI, develop a system  
11 of referral and corrective measures for kindergarten pupils who are  
12 suspected or diagnosed to have possible eye ailments;

13 (d) Create a vision screening database containing the results  
14 of the screening per child and visual conditions diagnosed by the eye  
15 care practitioners; and

16 (e) Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NVSP.

17 The private schools shall be encouraged to adopt their own  
18 system of vision screening for kindergarten pupils enrolled in their  
19 respective schools, subject to standards under the NVSP.

20 SEC. 6. *PhilHealth's Benefit Package*. – The Philippine  
21 Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) shall develop a benefit  
22 package for the consultation and treatment of eye diseases of  
23 children.

24 SEC. 7. *Vision Screening Training*. – The PERI shall be  
25 mainly responsible for training of Vision Screening Trainers for  
26 purposes of quality assurance. It shall likewise recommend the  
27 appropriate Vision Screening material to be used.

1           SEC. 8. *Research.* – The DOH and PERI shall conduct  
2 research and provide evidence-based recommendations to the  
3 DepED on matters pertaining to the NVSP. Furthermore, the PERI  
4 shall perform continuing research on childhood related eye vision  
5 ailments.

6           SEC 9. *VISION SCREENING RESULTS DATABASE*  
7 *SHARING.* – THE VISION SCREENING DATABASE  
8 CONTAINING THE RESULTS OF THE SCREENING PER CHILD  
9 AND VISUAL CONDITIONS DIAGNOSED BY THE EYE CARE  
10 PRACTITIONER AND OTHER DATA GATHERED BY THE PERI  
11 SHALL BE SHARED WITH PERI AND DOH FOR WHATEVER  
12 PURPOSE IT MAY SERVE TO THE DEPARTMENTS.

13           SEC. [9]10. *The Vision Screening Continuing Research Fund.* –  
14 There is hereby created a Vision Screening Continuing Research  
15 (VSCR) Fund to be sourced from any donation or bequest made to  
16 the DepED or DOH in favor of the NVSP which shall be subject to  
17 existing budgeting, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.  
18 The VSCR Fund shall be used to fund the PERI for its continuing  
19 research program in connection with childhood related eye vision  
20 ailments.

21           SEC. [10]11. *Tax Exemption.* – All grants, bequests,  
22 endowments, donations and contributions made to the DepED,  
23 DOH, or PERI for the NVSP and for the VSCR Fund to be used  
24 actually, directly and exclusively by the DepED, DOH, or PERI for  
25 the NVSP and for the VSCR Fund shall be exempt from donor's tax  
26 and the same shall be allowed as allowable deduction from the gross  
27 income of the donor for purposes of computing the taxable income of

1 the donor in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal  
2 Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

3 SEC. [11]12. *Appropriations.* – [The amount necessary to  
4 cover the implementation of this Act for public kindergarten pupils  
5 shall be included in the budgets of the DepED and DOH in the  
6 annual General Appropriations Act.] THE AMOUNT OF TEN (10)  
7 MILLION PESOS SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET OF  
8 THE PHILIPPINE EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF THE  
9 UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES – MANILA TO COVER THE  
10 IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT FOR PUBLIC  
11 KINDERGARTEN PUPILS. However, for kindergarten pupils  
12 enrolled in private schools, the funding for the implementation of  
13 their respective school's vision screening program shall be assumed  
14 by the private schools concerned.

15 SEC. [12]13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within  
16 ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the DepED, in  
17 consultation with the DOH, PERI and other participating  
18 government agencies, shall formulate the implementing rules and  
19 regulations of this Act.

20 SEC. [13]14. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act  
21 is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so  
22 declared shall remain in force and effect.

23 SEC. [14]15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders,  
24 rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions  
25 of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

- 1           SEC. [15]16. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen  
2 (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a  
3 newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

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