

S E N A T E

~~'18~~ SEP 17 P 6 :30

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 457

RECEIVED

Submitted jointly by the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture, Health and Demography, Ways and Means and Finance on SEP 17 2018

Re: House Bill No. 3222

Recommending its approval with amendments, taking into consideration Senate Bill No. 1706

Sponsor: Senator Escudero

MR. PRESIDENT:

The Committees on Education, Arts and Culture, Health and Demography, Ways and Means and Finance to which were referred House Bill No. 3222, introduced by Rep. Cayetano, P., *et. al.*, entitled:

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

taking into consideration Senate Bill No. 1706, introduced by Sen. Angara, De Lima and Villar entitled:

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

have considered the same and have the honor to report it back to the Senate with the recommendation that it be approved with the following amendments:

1. ON PAGE 2, LINE 11, SECTION 4, PARAGRAPH A, AFTER THE WORD "TEACHERS", INSERT THE PHRASE "AND HEALTH PERSONNEL".

THE PARAGRAPH SHALL NOW READ AS FOLLOWS:

"SEC. 4. xxx

(A) TO CONDUCT A SIMPLE VISION SCREENING TEST ON KINDERGARTEN PUPILS THROUGH TRAINED TEACHERS **AND HEALTH PERSONNEL** AND IDENTIFY PUPILS WITH POSSIBLE VISUAL PROBLEMS.

xxx."

2. ON PAGE 4, BETWEEN LINES 5 AND 6, INSERT A NEW SECTION WHICH SHALL READ AS FOLLOWS:

"SECTION 9. VISION SCREENING RESULTS DATABASE SHARING. THE VISION SCREENING DATABASE CONTAINING THE RESULTS OF THE SCREENING PER CHILD AND VISUAL CONDITIONS DIAGNOSED BY THE EYE CARE PRACTITIONER AND OTHER DATA GATHERED SHALL BE SHARED BY AND AMONG DEPED, DOH AND PERI AND OTHER CONCERNED AGENCIES OF GOVERNMENT."

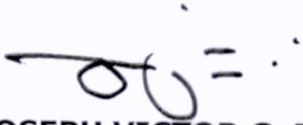
3. RENUMBER THE SUCCEEDING SECTIONS ACCORDINGLY.
4. ON PAGE 4, SECTION 11 (APPROPRIATIONS), DELETE LINES 23 TO 26 FROM "THE AMOUNT NECESSARY" ON LINE 23 TO "GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT" ON LINE 26. IN LIEU THEREOF, INSERT THE FOLLOWING:

"THE AMOUNT OF TEN (10) MILLION PESOS SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET OF THE PHILIPPINE EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES MANILA TO COVER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT FOR PUBLIC KINDERGARTEN PUPILS."

THE SECTION SHALL NOW READ AS FOLLOWS:

"SECTION 11. APPROPRIATIONS. THE AMOUNT OF TEN (10) MILLION PESOS SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET OF THE PHILIPPINE EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES MANILA TO COVER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT FOR PUBLIC KINDERGARTEN PUPILS. HOWEVER, FOR KINDERGARTEN PUPILS ENROLLED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS, THE FUNDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE SCHOOL'S VISION SCREENING PROGRAM SHALL BE ASSUMED BY THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS CONCERNED."

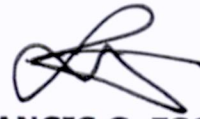
Respectfully submitted:



SEN. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO

Chairperson

Committee on Health and Demography
Vice Chairperson, Committees on Education,
Arts and Culture; Ways and Means; and
Finance



SEN. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

Chairperson

Committee on Education, Arts
and Culture
Member, Committees on Health
and Demography; Ways and Means;
and Finance



SEN. LOREN B. LEGARDA

Chairperson

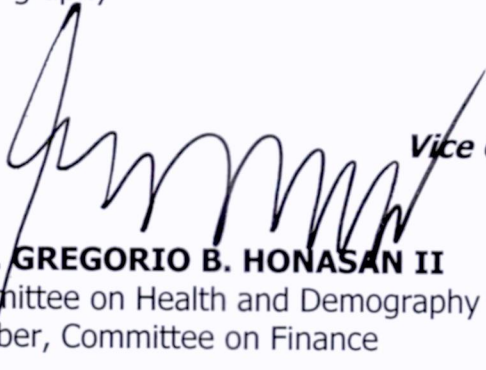
Committee on Finance
Vice Chairperson, Committee on
Ways and Means
Member, Committee on Education,
Arts and Culture; Health and
Demography



SEN. SONNY M. ANGARA

Chairperson

Committee on Ways and Means
Vice Chairperson, Committees on
Education, Arts and Culture;
and Finance
Member, Committee on Health and
Demography



Vice Chairpersons:

SEN. GREGORIO B. HONASAN II

Committee on Health and Demography
Member, Committee on Finance

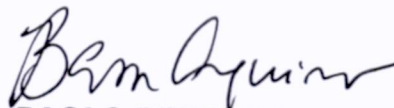
SEN. JOEL VILLANUEVA

Committees on Education, Arts
and Culture; and Ways and Means
Member, Committees on Health and
Demography; and Finance



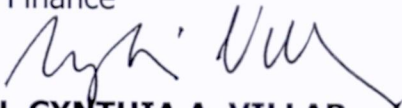
SEN. RISA HONTIVEROS

Committee on Health and Demography
Member, Committees on Education, Arts
and Culture; Ways and Means;
and Finance



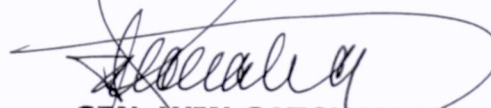
SEN. PAOLO BENIGNO AQUINO IV

Committees on Education, Arts
and Culture; Ways and Means;
and Finance



SEN. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

Committee on Finance
Member, Committee on Education,
Arts and Culture



SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN

Committee on Education, Arts
and Culture
Member, Committee on Ways and
Means; and Finance

SEN. PANFILO M. LACSON

Committee on Finance
Member, Committee on Ways and Means



SEN. MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY

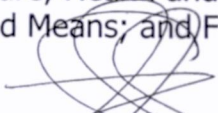
Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Health and Demography; Ways and Means; and Finance

Members:



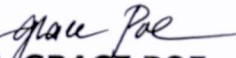
SEN. RICHARD J. GORDON

Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Health and Demography; Ways and Means; and Finance



SEN. EMMANUEL "MANNY" D. PACQUIAO

Committee on Education, Arts and Culture



SEN. GRACE POE

Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Ways and Means; and Finance



SEN. ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV

Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Health and Demography; Ways and Means; and Finance

SEN. FRANCIS "KIKO" PANGILINAN

Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Ways and Means; and Finance

SEN. LEILA M. DE LIMA

Committee on Health and Demography

SEN. AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III

Committees on Ways and Means; And Finance

Ex-Officio Members:



SEN. FRANKLIN M. DRILON

Senate Minority Floor Leader



SEN. JUAN MIGUEL "MIGZ" ZUBIRI

Senate Majority Floor Leader

SEN. RALPH G. RECTO

Senate President Pro-Tempore

HON. VICENTE C. SOTTO III

Senate President



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 3222

BY REPRESENTATIVE CAYETANO, VARGAS, SUANSING (E.), DURANO, ESCUDERO, NOGRALES (K.A.), CUA, ACOP, 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

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 identify pupils with possible
12 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. *The Vision Screening Continuing Research Fund.* –
7 There is hereby created a Vision Screening Continuing Research
8 (VSCR) Fund to be sourced from any donation or bequest made to
9 the DepED or DOH in favor of the NVSP which shall be subject to
10 existing budgeting, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.
11 The VSCR Fund shall be used to fund the PERI for its continuing
12 research program in connection with childhood related eye vision
13 ailments.

14 SEC. 10. *Tax Exemption.* – All grants, bequests, endowments,
15 donations and contributions made to the DepED, DOH, or PERI for
16 the NVSP and for the VSCR Fund to be used actually, directly and
17 exclusively by the DepED, DOH, or PERI for the NVSP and for the
18 VSCR Fund shall be exempt from donor's tax and the same shall be
19 allowed as allowable deduction from the gross income of the donor
20 for purposes of computing the taxable income of the donor in
21 accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue
22 Code of 1997, as amended.

23 SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to cover
24 the implementation of this Act for public kindergarten pupils shall
25 be included in the budgets of the DepED and DOH in the annual
26 General Appropriations Act. However, for kindergarten pupils
27 enrolled in private schools, the funding for the implementation of

1 their respective school's vision screening program shall be assumed
2 by the private schools concerned.

3 SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within
4 ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the DepED, in
5 consultation with the DOH, PERI and other participating
6 government agencies, shall formulate the implementing rules and
7 regulations of this Act.

8 SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is
9 held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared
10 shall remain in force and effect.

11 SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules
12 and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of
13 this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,

O



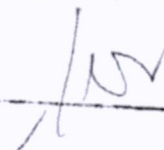
Senate
Office of the Secretary

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

'18 FEB 26 P4:34

SENATE

S.B. No. 1706

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The vision of young children, particularly those at a preschool age, plays a crucial role in their development, as their sight is a primary guide to most of their learning experiences. It is clear that good and healthy visual skills are fundamental to bolster a child's literacy. According to the American Public Health Association, about 10% of all preschoolers have eye or vision problems, but children at this age cannot identify these disorders.

In the Philippines, four (4) students in a class of 40 have a vision problem according to the Philippine Eye Research Institute (PERI); three of them may have error of refraction and one may have amblyopia or lazy eye. Amblyopia has a prevalence of 2 to 5% in children, making it one of the causes of visual impairment and preventable blindness. While the disorder is common among children, it can cause permanent visual impairment if left untreated. With the full implementation of the K-to-12 program, preschool entry for public school system now starts earlier at the age of 5 or 6. Vision screening done at this age would allow early detection of amblyopia, if not treated, will lead to education, occupational and safety restrictions later in life.

Therefore, it is only proper to establish an early diagnostic initiative for young children. This Bill institutionalizes a nationwide screening program conducted by the DepEd for kindergarten pupils. According to the Harvard Medical School, the causes of lazy eye must be identified and treated as early as possible during childhood. A holistic approach must be undertaken for the benefit of every child's cognitive development to ensure their success in education.

This Act advances a health policy grounded on early preventive intervention that is more efficient than remediation at a later age. Hence, the approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

SONNY ANGARA

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



'18 FEB 26 P4:34

SENATE
S.B. No. 1706

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

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 "National Vision
2 Screening Act."

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

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

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

- 1 **SEC. 4. Program Objectives.** – The objectives of the NVSP are:
2 a) To conduct simple vision screening tests on kindergarten pupils
3 through trained teachers and identify pupils with possible visual
4 problems;
5 b) To identify early childhood visual problems;
6 c) To provide immediate attention to visually impaired kindergarten pupils
7 and create a referral system so that they may be checked and treated
8 by eye care practitioners;
9 d) To develop a vision screening results database for all kindergarten
10 pupils; and
11 e) To conduct continuing research on the state of visual impairment
12 among kindergarten pupils.

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

- 17 In the implementation of the NVSP, the DepED shall:
18 a) In coordination with the DOH and the PERI, administer the vision
19 screening program to all public kindergarten pupils using a Vision
20 Screening Kit which includes charts with symbols or numbers, occluders,
21 and transparent response key: *Provided,* That the DOH and PERI may
22 recommend to adopt new modes or methods of vision screening based on
23 the latest trends and developments;
24 b) In coordination with the DOH and PERI, train and certify teachers in
25 conducting the vision screening program;
26 c) In consultation with the DOH and PERI, develop a system of referral and
27 corrective measures for kindergarten pupils who are suspected or
28 diagnosed to have possible eye ailments;
29 d) Create a vision screening database containing the results of the screening
30 per child and visual conditions diagnosed by the eye care practitioners;
31 and

1 e) Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NVSP.

2 **SEC. 6. *PhilHealth Benefit Package.*** – The Philippine Health Insurance
3 Corporation (PhilHealth) shall develop a benefit package for the consultation and
4 treatment of eye diseases of children.

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

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

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

18 **SEC. 10. *Tax Exemption.*** – All grants, bequests, endowments, donations and
19 contributions made to the DepED, DOH, or PERI for the NVSP and for the VSCR
20 Fund to be used actually, directly and exclusively by the DepED, DOH, or PERI for
21 the NVSP and for the VSCR Fund shall be exempt from donor's tax and the same
22 shall be allowed as allowable deduction from the gross income of the donor for
23 purposes of computing the taxable income of the donor in accordance with the
24 provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

1 **SEC. 11. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary to cover the
2 implementation of this Act for public kindergarten pupils shall be included in the
3 budgets of the DepED and DOH in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).
4 However, for kindergarten pupils enrolled in private schools, the funding for the
5 implementation of their respective school's vision screening program shall be
6 assumed by the private schools concerned.

7 **SEC. 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within ninety (90) days
8 from the approval of this Act, the DepED, in consultation with the DOH, PERI and
9 other participating government agencies, shall formulate the implementing rules and
10 regulations of this Act.

11 **SEC. 13. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
12 unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

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

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

Approved,