

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE PHILIPPINES**  
First Regular Session



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

'19 AUG 27 P 4 :44

**SENATE**  
**S.B. NO. 965**

RECEIVED BY \_\_\_\_\_

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Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR THE IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, AND**  
**EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides:

“The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.”

Article II, Section 24 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides:

“The State recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation-building.”

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurobehavioral condition that includes impairments in social interaction and developmental language and communication skills combined with rigid and repetitive behaviors. It ranges in severity from a handicap that limits a normal life to an overwhelming disability that requires institutional care.

The symptoms of ASD among children typically appear during the first three years of their lives. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (DSM-5), a guide created by the American Psychiatric Association used to diagnose people with ASD as having difficulty with communication and

interaction with other people, they demonstrate restricted interests and repetitive behavior, and show symptoms that hurt a person's ability to function properly in school, work, and other areas of life. The different types and severities of ASD include Autistic disorder, Asperger's syndrome, and Pervasive development disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS).

The proposed bill seeks to provide for the identification, assessment, and education of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in pursuance of helping them handle and cope with its detrimental effects.

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



MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY  
Senator

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*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 “Autism Spectrum  
2 Disorder Management Act.”

3

4           Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and  
5 promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among  
6 them.

7           It is also the policy of the State to promote and protect the physical,  
8 moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being of the youth recognizing their  
9 vital role in nation-building.

10

11           Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the terms below  
12 shall mean as follows:

13           (a) “Autism spectrum disorder” is a complex developmental  
14 disability that includes Autism, Asperger Syndrome,  
15 Pervasive Development Disorder, NOS, Rett Syndrome, and  
16 Child Disintegrative Disorder, as diagnosed by a licensed  
17 physician;

- 1 (b) "Differently-abled children" are those under the age of  
2 eighteen years who have not completed an approved high  
3 school program and who, because of mental, physical,  
4 emotional or learning problems, including but not limited to  
5 autism spectrum disorder as defined in this section, require  
6 special educational services;
- 7 (c) "Gifted children" are those under the age of eighteen years  
8 who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and  
9 learning potential as determined by competent professional  
10 evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth  
11 and stimulation could best be served by an academic  
12 environment beyond that offered through a standard grade-  
13 level curriculum;
- 14 (d) "Special education services" are programs designed to meet  
15 the educational needs of differently-abled which include,  
16 but are not limited to, the provision of diagnostic and  
17 evaluation service, student and parent counseling, itinerant,  
18 homebound and referral assistance, organized instructional  
19 and therapeutic programs, transportation, and corrective  
20 and supporting services.

21

22 *Sec. 4. Special Needs Identification and Education Program.* – The Special  
23 Needs Identification and Education Program shall involve the special needs  
24 identification and education training for selected public school teachers.

25

26 *Sec. 5. Autism Ombudsman.* – The Secretary of Education shall appoint an  
27 autism ombudsman to develop best practice guidelines for the educational  
28 assessment and interventions for differently-abled children from three years of  
29 age. Regional professional development centers must have an autism specialist  
30 available. Early childhood education centers shall be established, subject to

1 appropriations, giving priority to regions where there are limited or nonexistent  
2 resource and a significant need.

3

4       *Sec. 6. Review of Special Needs Education Services.* – The Secretary of  
5 Education shall appoint such regional and city advisory committees as he deems  
6 necessary to review special education services to differently-abled children,  
7 including children with autism spectrum disorder as defined in this Act and to  
8 consider any problems with respect to the provision of educational services to  
9 differently-abled children and to give advice thereon. Such committees shall  
10 include persons broadly representative of community organizations interested in  
11 the differently-abled, professions related to the educational needs of the  
12 differently abled, and the general public. The members of such committees shall  
13 serve at the discretion of the Secretary of Education.

14

15       *Sec. 7. Autism Spectrum Disorder Research and Report.* – The Department  
16 of Health and the Department of Education shall jointly prepare and submit to  
17 Congress for its review and consideration of a 10-year strategic plan within one  
18 (1) year after the effectivity of this Act to address the growing number of  
19 persons who need services for autism spectrum disorder.

20       The study shall –

- 21       (a) determine the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder  
22             among students;
- 23       (b) evaluate the extent to which students with autism spectrum  
24             disorder are more likely to miss school, have delayed rates  
25             of development, or have reduced cognitive skills; and
- 26       (c) report on current national and local programs to educate  
27             the youth about the treatment of autism spectrum disorder,  
28             as well as evaluate the value of such programs.

29

1           Sec. 8. *Funding.* – The amount of FIFTY MILLION PESOS  
2 (P50,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the programs established under this  
3 Act. This shall be included in the annual budget of the Department of Education.  
4

5           Sec. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid  
6 or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise  
7 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.  
8

9           Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
10 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation  
11 contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed,  
12 modified, or amended accordingly.  
13

14           Sec. 11. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days  
15 after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,