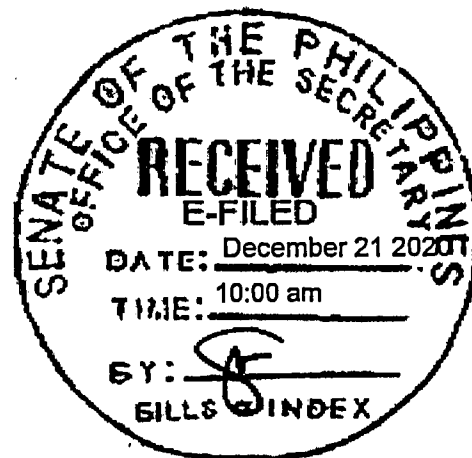


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*Second Regular Session* )



SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1963

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Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING CAMPUSES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN PHILIPPINES**  
**(UEP) IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ALLEN, VICTORIA, AND LAZARES,**  
**PROVINCE OF NORTHERN SAMAR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS**  
**THEREFOR**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights proclaims in Article 26, that "everyone has the right to education."

The full enjoyment of the right to education is "fundamental to achieving sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015). Education enables an individual to reach his highest potential and, in many cases, helps families from getting out of poverty.

The Philippines has, in fact, enshrined education in the Constitution, in Article XIV, Section 1, which mandates that, "*The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.*"

Moreover, the State must tailor the educational system to the needs of the citizenry. This task is made more complex by the new normal, which is still evolving as the world copes with COVID-19. Otherwise stated, the process of learning and capacity-building should produce skills that will be matched with employment and economic opportunities even while considering future health and environmental

challenges. In the same vein, employment and economic opportunities should be based on the needs, assets, and resources of any region and locality.

For example, the Report on Regional Economic Developments in the Philippines (2016)<sup>1</sup> has highlighted some of the challenges in Region 8:

- Need to build up socio-economic resiliency against the impact of natural and man-made disasters.
- Need to optimize the use of land and water resources by developing key production areas for economies of scale, including idle lands for possible forage/feedstuff development, and increase investments in irrigation development, especially in the Samar Island provinces.
- Inadequate and poor infrastructure support facilities and utilities in Eastern Visayas may affect investors' interest in the region.
- Low adoption and application of technology in the region to advance the productive sectors such as agri-fisheries, forestry, food processing, and MSMEs sectors.
- Need to modernize the policy and regulatory frameworks in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) sector to address major barriers and perennial issues that continue to affect the development of ICT in Eastern Visayas.
- Need to address the issue on jobs and skills mismatch through human resource development and creating a competitive and industry-responsive labor supply.

Thus, firstly, there should be more efforts in establishing schools and learning centers, which will lead to rigorous training of students whose skills and competencies are better matched to what the local and national economies require, cognizant of the new normal. Secondly, such schools and learning centers should be accessible to all especially in municipalities that do not yet host large commercial and industrial centers.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Economic Research Regional Monetary Affairs Sub-Sector, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (2016).

Indeed, the new normal necessitates transformation and innovation in how we all live including how we should structure the education sector. For instance, while the tourism sector has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 (and may likely be so impacted again in the future), tourism can and must evolve. The future sees more domestic and road travels, more solitary and couple travels (rather than in groups), and potentially longer stays (because of work-at-home arrangements). Moreover, the new normal sees more focus on digital technologies, scientific research, medical and public health systems, food security and agriculture, and environmental innovation (in the light of climate change).

To continue the pursuit of greater accessibility for the poorest segment of the population as well as support regional development, the Philippine government sees the need to build more schools and learning centers in the province, in consideration of the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF).<sup>2</sup>

To achieve the objective, this bill seeks to establish satellite campuses of the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP) in the municipalities of Allen, San Isidro, and Lavezares. UEP is located in Catarman, the capital of Northern Samar, with an estimated population of 94,037 (PSA, 2015).<sup>3</sup> The three proposed host municipalities have a combined population of about 80,889 (PSA, 2015). Allen is 44 kilometers from Catarman; San Isidro, about 81 kilometers; and Lavezares, about 40 kilometers.<sup>4</sup> The establishment of these three campuses will significantly improve access to quality education in the Province—especially those residing in the western part where these three municipalities are located—and support local and regional development.

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<sup>2</sup> TESDA and CHED are now working together to harmonize technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and Higher Education practice toward the implementation of the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF). The PQF is a quality-assured national system for the development, recognition, and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills, and values acquired in different ways and methods by learners and workers of the country (DOLE). It ensures that learners are adequately supported through harmonization and strengthening of Diploma Programs, Philippine Credit Transfer System, and the Philippine Qualifications Register (PhQuaR).

<sup>3</sup> Northern Samar is one of the three provinces into which Samar island is divided, the other two being Samar and Eastern Samar. The island is the third biggest in the Philippine archipelago, next only to Luzon and Mindanao.

<sup>4</sup> Population-wise, according to the 2015 Census registered with PSA, Northern Samar has a provincial population of 632,379.

This Bill aims that each satellite campus should focus on specific concentrations to ensure cost-efficiency and meet the challenges in the province, the region, and the new normal.

Below are potential program concentrations that may be offered in each campus:

(a) **Allen Satellite Campus** – As host to a port, Allen’s growth relies on improving the skills sets of its population toward the needs of industrial and transportation sectors, while at the same time, the need of the economy under the new normal. Appreciating the intent of PQF, course/program offerings for future degree programs such as industrial and mechanical education courses may qualify as prerequisites for other degree programs (i.e., toward a degree in engineering). The following program concentrations may be offered in the satellite campus:

- (i) Industrial and mechanical education and technology, which may include courses on industrial trades, metal and steel industries, heavy equipment systems and operations, energy and electricity systems, and power tools and equipment for both light grade use and industrial and transportation purposes.
- (ii) Electronics and information technology, which may include programs and courses on computer hardware and software, operating systems, web-based information and applications, telephones and other telecommunications products, video equipment and multimedia products, personal computers, computer literacy and information technology (IT)-related courses, and programming and digital technology.
- (iii) Other IT- and knowledge-related programs such as knowledge management, business process outsourcing, data science, web and graphic design, photography and photography applications, and SEO optimization and analytics.

(b) **Lavezares Satellite Campus** – Lavezares is nearest to Biri islands and host to white sand beaches, which offer high potential for service-oriented enterprises and eco-tourism. The following program and course concentrations may be offered in the campus, cognizant of the evolving nature of travel, leisure, and hospitality under new normal:

- (i) Design programs/courses including architecture and interior design, landscape architecture, computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM) programming/operation, sustainable and green building, and master planning.
- (ii) Tourism/eco-tourism and hospitality-related courses relating to hotel, restaurant, and tourism development management, marketing and communications, language proficiency, and heritage and culture.
- (iii) Agriculture and farm technology including courses in small to medium-scale gardening and propagation, horticulture, aquaculture, livestock raising, food processing technology, and culinary arts.

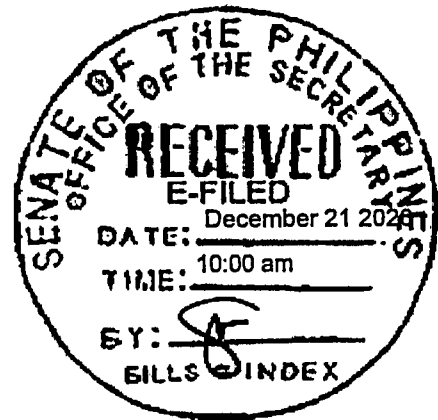
(c) **San Isidro Satellite Campus** – San Isidro has rugged terrain, with rolling hills and steep mountains. It is also host to a port, several rivers, and waterfalls systems such as Busay, Veriato, and Kang Pongkol falls. The following courses may be offered in the campus, appreciating the thrust toward food security, environmental management, and climate resilience:

- (i) Irrigation technician and water management courses such as on irrigation systems and installation, repair and maintenance, backflow, audit, mini-hydro water systems, and flood risks management, and water harvesting systems.
- (ii) Programs in agriculture, forestry, and wood science/technology including forest management, silviculture, commercial forestry, agroforestry, and conservation.

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

  
**JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**

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ESTABLISHING CAMPUSES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN PHILIPPINES  
(UEP) IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ALLEN, VICTORIA, AND LAVEZARES,  
PROVINCE OF NORTHERN SAMAR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1           **SECTION 1.** This Act shall be known as the "University of Eastern Philippines  
2           (*UEP*) – *Allen, Victoria, and Lavezares Campuses Act.*"

3           **SEC. 2.** There are hereby established satellite campuses of the University of  
4           Eastern Philippines (UEP), hereinafter referred to as the University, in the Municipalities  
5           of Allen, Victoria, and Lavezares, Province of Northern Samar, to be known as the UEP-  
6           Allen Campus, UEP- Victoria Campus, and UEP, Lavezares Campus.

7           **SEC. 3.** The UEP-Allen Campus, UEP-Victoria Campus, and UEP Lavezares Campus  
8           shall primarily provide short-term, technical-vocational, undergraduate, and graduate  
9           courses within their respective areas of competency and specialization, pursuant to the  
10          mandate of the University, and according to their capabilities as the Board of Regents,  
11          hereinafter referred to as the Board, may deem necessary for the accomplishment of the  
12          objectives of the University, and those which respond to the human resources  
13          development needs of the Province of Northern Samar and Region VIII.

14  
15          The UEP – Allen Campus, UEP-Victoria Campus, and UEP- Lavezares Campus are  
16          also mandated to undertake research and extension services.

17          **SEC. 4.** – The UEP – Allen Campus, UEP – Victoria Campus, and UEP – Lavezares  
18          Campus shall be headed by Campus Directors who shall render fulltime service and shall  
19          be appointed or designated by the Board, upon the recommendation of the search  
20          committee and the President of the University. Such appointment or designation shall be  
21          subject to the guidelines, qualifications and standards set by the Board.

22          **SEC. 5.** – All assets, real and personal, personnel, and records of the UEP-Allen  
23          campus, UEP – Victoria Campus, and UEP – Lavezares Campus, as well as liabilities or  
24          obligations, shall be transferred to the University.

25  
26          All parcels of land belonging to the government occupied by the UEP – Allen  
27          Campus, UEP- Victoria Campus, and UEP – Lavezares Campus shall be declared to be the  
28          property of the University and shall be titled under that name: *Provided,* That should the

1 University cease to exist or be abolished, or should aforementioned parcels of land be no  
2 longer needed by the University, the same shall revert to the concerned LGUs or to the  
3 Republic of the Philippines, as the case may be.

4 **SEC. 6.** The provisions of Republic Act No. 8292, otherwise known as the "Higher  
5 Education Modernization Act of 1997", shall form part of this act, and together, shall serve  
6 as the governing charter of the University.

7 **SEC. 7.** All other powers, functions, privileges, responsibilities and limitations  
8 under existing laws shall be deemed granted to or imposed upon the University and its  
9 officials, whenever appropriate.

10 **SEC. 8.** The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be  
11 included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

12 **SEC. 9.** If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or  
13 unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force  
14 and effect.

15 **SEC. 10.** All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations  
16 contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are repealed or modified  
17 accordingly.

18 **SEC. 11.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the  
19 *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,