



Republic of the Philippines  
**House of Representatives**  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1403

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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REGISTRATION UNIT BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE	

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Introduced by **Honorable ERLPE JOHN "PING" M. AMANTE**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill seeks to designate and develop regional state universities that shall serve as the State's vehicles in providing world-class, inclusive, and accessible higher education in order to promote regional development and empowerment.

Various studies have suggested the strong correlation between regional development and the quality of higher education available thereat. The report of Hedin (2009)<sup>1</sup> highlighted the crucial role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in enhancing the regional impact of the people by offering education that matches the needs of both private and public employers in the region. It added that HEIs can significantly contribute to the development of a knowledge-based economy in the regions by providing applied and need/user-driven research.

In support of this position, the paper presented by the University of the Philippines (UP) last March 2016 entitled, "Knowledge-based Development and Governance: Challenges and Recommendations to the 2016 Presidential Candidates," stressed the importance of the country's human or knowledge capital as a potent resource to achieve and sustain inclusive growth because "the ability to harness the tools for developing regions and cities largely depends on the skills and capacities of the workforce to create new knowledge, innovate, and improve productivity."

Taking off from these standpoints, it becomes imperative for the State to implement measures to speed up the improvement of higher education and consequently the quality of human capital in the regions if it is indeed bent in hastening regional development. One of such measures could be the designation and development of regional state universities (RSUs).

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<sup>1</sup> Hedin, S. *Higher education institutions as drivers of regional development in the Nordic countries*, Nordregio Working Paper, Stockholm, 2009.

The designation of RSUs borrows and expands the concept of hub-and-spokes being proposed by UP. First, the RSUs shall be developed into world-class educational institutions that shall be at the forefront of upgrading the quality of manpower and education in the regions. Second, the RSUs shall serve as R&D hubs that shall lead in the advancement of regional research agenda, knowledge capital development, and technological innovation. Third, these institutions shall also be centers for grassroots development for arts, culture, and sports to promote holistic and inclusive development in the regions.

It is expected that with the full development of the RSUs the State will be able to encourage more firms to locate in the regions – especially those who were initially turned off by the lack of qualified manpower – thus spur growth in the countryside. In addition, by providing more employment and career opportunities in the regions we will be able to reduce migration to highly-urbanized areas and address the problem of regional brain drain.

In view thereof, the approval of this bill is earnestly requested.

  
**ERLPE JOHN "PING" M. AMANTE**



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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR THE DESIGNATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF**  
**REGIONAL STATE UNIVERSITIES AND PROVIDING FUNDS**  
**THEREOF.**

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

**SECTION 1.** *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the  
“**Regional State Universities Development Act.**”

**SECTION 2.** *Objectives.* — The State shall provide world-class, inclusive, and accessible higher education to all regions in the country in order to:

- a. Provide quality human resources in the regions in strategic fields to promote and support economic activity all over the country with the aim of decentralizing growth and development;
- b. Serve as regional research and development hubs that shall lead in knowledge capital development and technological innovation, and coordinate with various stakeholders for the advancement of regional research agenda that shall promote the sustainable use of indigenous resources; support agricultural development and industrialization; and address regional issues and concerns;

- c. Strengthen grassroots development in the fields of sports and the arts to be able to produce world-class Filipino athletes and talents;
- d. Encourage foreign faculty and student exchanges and international student enrollment to advance the competitiveness of Filipino educators and graduates; and boost the exposure of the regions to the global community; and,
- e. Address the problems of “brain drain” in the regions and urban migration, especially in Metro Manila.

**SECTION 3.**     *Mandate of Regional State Universities.* — The State shall prioritize the development of regional state universities – hereinafter referred as RSUs – that shall serve as major providers of world-class tertiary education in the regions. The RSUs shall:

- a. Offer at least one undergraduate from each of the following fields:
  - 1. Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries
  - 2. Engineering and information technology
  - 3. Natural and applied sciences and mathematics
  - 4. Health and sports sciences
  - 5. Social sciences, communication, and law
  - 6. Business management, economics, accountancy, tourism, and statistics
  - 7. Humanities, fine arts, performing arts, and music

*Provided,* That a RSU will not be required to offer a program in a particular field if a related program – with Level I accreditation from any recognized accreditation body – is already being offered in a state/local university or college located within the region prior to the effectivity of this Act.

*Provided further,* That programs offered by the RSUs that are under the aforementioned fields and with available accreditation instruments must be accredited Level I by any recognized accreditation body within three (3) years from the date of the effectivity of this Act for existing programs and within four (4) years from the date of first offering for new programs.

*Provided furthermore,* That the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), in collaboration with recognized accreditation bodies, shall ensure that all fields indicated in Section 3 (a) shall have at least two (2) programs with available accreditation instruments to provide the RSUs with options;

- b. Provide a safe and conducive learning environment through the provision of state-of-the-art educational facilities and equipment and adequate support infrastructures;
- c. Support the development of their faculty and staff by carrying out programs that will enhance and modernize pedagogy and implementing scholarship programs that will encourage the take up and completion of post-graduate studies;
- d. Promote research and development activities by offering research grants in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and social sciences and creating linkages with different local and foreign research bodies, academic institutions, advocacy groups, and civil society organizations;
- e. Implement programs that will facilitate the entry of international students and promote foreign faculty and student exchanges; and,
- f. Serve as major centers for the development of sports and the arts. As such, RSUs shall be equipped with adequate facilities and equipment to support this mandate.

**SECTION 4.**      *Designation of Regional State Universities.* — The following state university campuses are hereby designated as Regional State Universities:

- a. Region 1 - Mariano Marcos State University – Batac, Ilocos Norte;
- b. Region 2 – Nueva Vizcaya State University – Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya;
- c. Region 3 – Central Luzon State University – Muñoz, Nueva Ecija;
- d. Region 4A – University of the Philippines – Los Baños, Laguna;
- e. Region 5 – Bicol University – Legazpi City, Albay;
- f. Region 6 – Western Visayas State University – Iloilo City, Iloilo;
- g. Region 7 – Cebu Normal University – Cebu City, Cebu;
- h. Region 8 – Visayas State University – Baybay, Leyte;
- i. Region 9 – Western Mindanao State University - Zamboanga City;
- j. Region 10 – Central Mindanao University - Musuan, Bukidnon;
- k. Region 11 – University of Southeastern Philippines – Tagum City, Davao del Norte;

- l. Region 12 - University of Southern Mindanao - Kabacan, North Cotabato;
- m. Region 13 - Caraga State University - Butuan City, Agusan del Norte;
- n. MIMAROPA - Palawan State University - Puerto Princesa City, Palawan;
- o. CAR - Benguet State University - La Trinidad, Benguet;
- p. NCR - University of the Philippines Diliman and University of the Philippines Manila;
- q. NIR - Negros Oriental State University - Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental; and,
- r. ARMM - Mindanao State University - Marawi City, Lanao del Sur.

**SECTION 5.**      *RSU Development Plan.* — The CHED - in coordination with the administration of the identified schools, relevant government agencies, local government units, business groups, and civil society organizations - shall submit to Congress and to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act a 10-year Regional State Universities Development Plan, to be referred hereinafter as the Plan, that shall detail the programs and projects necessary to the performance of the mandates of the RSUs and attainment of the objectives of this Act. *Provided,* That the Plan shall be updated every three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act.

**SECTION 6.**      *Implementation.* — The CHED shall ensure the effective and timely implementation of the Plan in coordination with the RSUs' administration and relevant government agencies. *Provided,* That it shall be prohibited to set tuition fee and other fees increases as preconditions to the implementation of the Plan.

**SECTION 7.**      *Appropriations.* — Annual appropriations shall include the amounts necessary to support the funding requirements of all projects included in the Plan. The Plan shall be based on a ceiling, for the first five (5) years, of Ten Billion Pesos (P20,000,000,000.00).

**SECTION 8.**      *Research & Development Fund.* — The sum of One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated annually from the date of the effectivity of this Act to be used to provide research grants to the RSUs. *Provided,* That the CHED shall manage the fund and ensure that all RSUs shall benefit equitably from this fund.

**SECTION 9.**      *Faculty and Staff Development Fund.* — The sum of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated annually from the date of the effectivity of this Act to be used to fund the post-graduate studies of the faculty and staff of the RSUs.

*Provided, That the CHED shall manage the fund and ensure that all RSUs shall benefit equitably from this fund.*

**SECTION 10.** *Sports Development Fund.* — Each RSU shall be allocated the sum of Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00) upon the effectivity of this Act that shall be used to jumpstart a credible sports development program in line with the directions set by the Philippine Sports Commission.

**SECTION 11.** *Arts and Culture Development Fund.* — Each RSU shall be allocated the sum of Two Million Pesos (P2,000,000.00) upon the effectivity of this Act that shall be used to support arts and cultural development programs; with the end of promoting appreciation and support to culture and the arts in the regions.

Any income derived from all artistic and cultural activities of a RSU shall be placed in a revolving fund to be used to support and maintain its arts and cultural development programs.

**SECTION 12.** *Congressional Oversight Committee.* — There is hereby created a Congressional Oversight Committee to monitor and oversee the implementation of the provisions of this Act. The Committee shall be composed of six (6) members from the Senate and six (6) members from the House of Representatives with the House Chairperson of Higher and Technical Education and Senate Chairperson of Education, Arts and Sports as Joint Chairpersons. The four (4) members from each chamber shall be designated by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives respectively. The minority shall have at least two (2) representatives from both chambers.

**SECTION 13.** *Sunset Review.* — As the need arises, or within ten (10) years after its effectivity, the Congressional Oversight Committee shall conduct a sunset review of this Act. The term "sunset review" shall mean a systematic evaluation of the accomplishments and impact of this Act, as well as the performance and organizational structure of its implementing agencies, for purposes of determining remedial legislations.

**SECTION 14.** *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — The Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education shall issue rules and regulations as he/she may deem necessary for the implementation of this Act.

**SECTION 15.** *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

**SECTION 16.**     *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected hereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

**SECTION 17.**     *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

**Approved,**