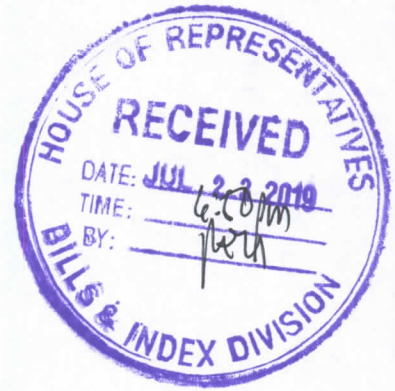




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2542

Introduced by Representative Paul Ruiz Daza

Explanatory Note

Specifically on education, Article XIV, Section 1 of the Constitution mandates: *"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."*

The University of Eastern Philippines (UEP) in Northern Samar, the first state university in the Visayas, from its lowly beginnings as a mere agricultural high school in 1918 to its becoming a full-fledged state university in 1964, has consistently and vigorously moved in an irreversible path of quality education at all levels.

In 1964, when it attained state university status, UEP was offering courses **only** in agriculture, arts and sciences, business, education, engineering, and veterinary medicine.

Today, its courses include **additionally**: law, criminology, information technology and nursing. Presently, its academic gamut encompasses 30 graduate (four doctoral and 26 masteral), 64 undergraduate, and one law degree programs¹.

To enable as many youth of Northern Samar as possible – especially from the poor families of its 24 municipalities² – to avail of quality education at all levels, UEP has already expanded its campuses to Laoang and Catubig. In 1999, the Laoang National Trade School (LNTS) became the UEP – Laoang Campus and the Pablo Rebadulla Memorial Agricultural College (PRMAC) the UEP – Catubig Campus.³

Now, this bill seeks to integrate the Balicuatro College of Arts and Trades (BCAT) in Allen with UEP in order for it to become UEP – Balicuatro Campus.

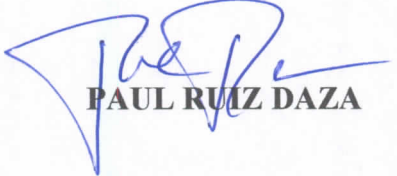
¹By contrast, because of statutory limitations under Republic Act No. 7796 (otherwise known as the TESDA Act of 1994) and Republic Act No. 7915 (which in 1995 converted Balicuatro National Vocational School into BCAT), BCAT offers only post-secondary non-degree programs and technical education and skills development.

² According to the statistics of the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA) in 2015, Northern Samar was the 4th poorest province nationwide, with about 60% poverty rate. However, in the 2018 statistics, Northern Samar improved by 12 rungs to the 16th poorest, with about 30% poverty rate.

³Laoang and Catubig are both in the northeastern part of Northern Samar.

Balicutro is the area in the northwestern part of Samar Island.⁴ Situated in Northern Samar, it consists of the mainland municipalities of Allen, Lavezares, San Isidro and Victoria and the island towns of San Antonio, Capul, and San Vicente. Allen, where BCAT is located, is 44 kilometers from Catarman, where the main UEP campus is.⁵

Thus, the early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.



PAUL RUIZ DAZA

⁴ 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.

⁵Population-wise, according to the 2015 Census registered with PSA, Northern Samar has a provincial population of 632,379 while the Balicutro has an area population of 125,299. Put otherwise, the Balicutro population is 20% of the total provincial population.



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**AN ACT MANDATING THE INTEGRATION OF THE BALICUATRO COLLEGE
OF ARTS AND TRADES (BCAT) WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN
PHILIPPINES (UEP) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

Section 1. The Balicuatro College of Arts and Trades (BCAT) in Allen, Northern Samar is hereby integrated with the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP) and shall be known as the University of Easter Philippines (UEP) – Balicuatro Campus.

Section 2. All assets, real and personal, personnel and records of the BCAT as well as liabilities or obligations are hereby transferred to the UEP. The positions, rights, and security of tenure of faculty members and personnel employed at the BCAT under existing laws prior to its integration with the UEP shall be respected.

All parcels of land belonging to the government occupied by the BCAT are hereby declared to be the property of the UEP and shall be titled under its name: *Provided*, That should the UEP cease to exist or be abolished or would no longer need such parcels of land aforementioned, the same shall revert to the local government units (LGUs) concerned.

Section 3. The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's funding of the BCAT provided by the General

Appropriations Act. Until such time that the full funding requirement of UEP – BalicuatroCampus is included in the appropriate General Appropriations Act, the national government shall provide to it the same funding provided to BCAT by the current General Appropriations Act.

Section 4. Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Commission on Higher Education and the UEP shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act.

Section 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,