Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Batasan Hills, Quezon City  

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session  

HOUSE BILL No. 509  

Introduced by  
ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO,  
BAYAN MUNA Party-List Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,  
Rep. FERDINAND GAITE and Rep. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,  
GABRIELA Women’s Party Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS,  
and KABATAAN Party-List Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO  

AN ACT  
CREATING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THE PLANTILLA POSITIONS OF GUIDANCE COUNSELORS IN EVERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND ADDITIONAL PLANTILLA POSITIONS OF GUIDANCE COUNSELOR FOR HIGH SCHOOL, INCREASING THE SALARIES OF GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND GUIDANCE-RELATED POSITIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR  

EXPLANATORY NOTE  

Guidance and counseling play an important part in the holistic development of a child. They address the basic psychological needs of children and strengthen the educational program of schools.  

School guidance and counseling seek to provide for the realization of students’ potentialities, to help children with developing problems, to contribute to the development of the school’s curriculum, to provide teachers with technical assistance, and to contribute to the mutual adjustment of students and the school. Guidance counselors and guidance-related personnel even aim to increase school participation and to lessen drop-out incidences by determining addressing factors for absences, failures, drop-outs, and others, as well as conducting targeted interventions for learners suffering from such factors.  

1 Gibson, R.L., Introduction to Guidance and Counseling (2008)
The Philippine public school system is flooded with challenges including classroom management, student discipline, and the necessity to address the needs of underachieving students and children with learning and other disabilities. These challenges demonstrate the pressing need for a sufficient number of guidance counselors who have the professional expertise and training to help the youth not only in their present lives as students, but also with their future—college and career aspirations, personal and social development, and more.

Republic Act 9258 or the Guidance and Counseling Act of 2004 provides for a policy of promoting the “improvement, advancement, and protection of the guidance and counseling services profession by undertaking and instituting measures that will result in professional, ethical, relevant, efficient, and effective guidance and counseling services for the development and enrichment of individuals and group lives.”²

However, these needs are unmet, as the Guidance Counselor and guidance-related positions (Guidance Coordinator, Guidance Services Associate, and Guidance Services Specialist) are rare within the Department of Education. First, the government provides Guidance Counselor items only for high schools—there are none for elementary schools. Most elementary schools assign guidance counseling and coordinating duties to public school teachers despite their lack of qualifications and training for the job, and notwithstanding the fact that guidance counselling is an additional load or burden to the teachers. As of August 2017, the DepEd has only 1,457 Guidance Counselor I-III and Guidance Coordinator I-III items nationwide.

Second, the few guidance-related items provided are not being filled up because of the low compensation offered (minimum of Salary Grade 11) despite the high qualifications (a masterial degree, among others), expertise and the heavy case load. When the Salary Standardization Law took effect in 1989, the guidance counselors’ salary grade became equivalent to Teacher III despite their specialty and higher qualifications. As a result, most licensed guidance counselors are found in private schools that can offer good compensation.

This bill therefore seeks to increase the number of guidance counselors and guidance-related personnel in the public school system by mandating the creation of sufficient plantilla positions for our public schools and to attract more of them by increasing their salaries.

² Article 1, Section 2
For these reasons, passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Rep. FRANCIS L. CASTRO  
ACT Teachers Party-List

Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE  
BAYAN MUNA Party-List

Rep. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT  
BAYAN MUNA Party-List

Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO  
KABATAAN Party-List
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Be it enacted in the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Creation of plantilla positions. The Department of Education, with the Department of Budget and Management, shall ensure that there is sufficient number of plantilla positions for guidance counselors in every public elementary and high school.

For purposes of this Act, the Department of Education shall endeavor to meet the recommended ratios of one guidance counselor for every 200 students in the public elementary and high schools.
SECTION 2. *Increase in Salary Grades of Guidance Coordinators, Guidance Counselors, Guidance Services Associates, and Guidance Services Specialists*. The present minimum salary grade levels of guidance coordinators, guidance counselor, guidance services associates, and guidance services specialists shall be increased in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Position Classification</th>
<th>Current Salary Grade</th>
<th>Increased Salary Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor I</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor II</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor III</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Coordinator I</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Coordinator II</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Coordinator III</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Services Associate I</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Services Associate II</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Services Specialist I</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Services Specialist II</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Services Specialist III</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Services Specialist IV</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guidance Services Specialist V</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SECTION 3. *Appropriations*. The amounts necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the savings of the Department of Education. Thereafter, the funds shall be provided in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 4. *Separability Clause*. Should any provision herein be declared unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity of the other provisions of this Act.

SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause*. All other laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity*. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,