

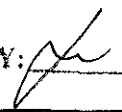
FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session



'11 MAR 15 P 6:51

SENATE

S. No. 2745

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Unilateral Hearing Loss or UHL is a type of hearing impairment where there is normal hearing in one ear and impaired hearing in the other and hearing loss may range from mild, moderate, severe, or profound. It can be present at birth where genetics is the most likely reason or it might be due to problems during pregnancy or complications arising from childbirth. Those who get UHL later in life may attribute the impairment to an illness like meningitis or mumps or even a bad case of ear infection. It may also be caused by blaring sound such as loud music or exposure sudden explosions.

Although there are no statistics available in the Philippines that would determine the number of Filipinos suffering from UHL, it is beginning to increase awareness among parents whose children are suffering from the same. Students suffering from UHL tend to have a limited attention span and may also have difficulty comprehending instructions which in turn take toll on the child's academic performance.

Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. As such, there is a need to provide an information, education and communication (IEC) campaign to educate the general public on the unilateral hearing loss.

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


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator

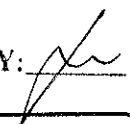
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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A HOLISTIC RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ON UNILATERAL HEARING LOSS TO EASE AND IMPROVE REHABILITATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM SINGLE-SIDED DEAFNESS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSE

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "**Comprehensive Unilateral Hearing Loss Research and Development and Rehabilitation Act of 2011.**"

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people to full, healthy and holistic development and the right to self-determination. As such, the State shall promote an environment conducive to the development of all its citizens to become, to the best of their potentials, independent, self-reliant and productive members of society.

Towards this end, the State commits itself to the establishment of institutional mechanisms to provide quantitative and qualitative research and rehabilitation activities on Unilateral Hearing Loss that is responsive to the country's health needs.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

(a) "**Committee**" refers to the Committee on Unilateral Hearing Loss and Rehabilitation.

(b) "**Unilateral Hearing Loss**" is a type of hearing impairment where there is normal hearing in one ear and impaired hearing in the other ear.

(c) "**Secretary**" shall refer to the Secretary of the Department of Health;

SEC. 4. *Comprehensive Research on Unilateral Hearing Loss* - The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) is hereby mandated to conduct a comprehensive research and information drive on incidence of unilateral hearing loss in the country. The Department is also mandated to support medical and epidemiological research activities to expand the knowledge and understanding of unilateral hearing loss in the country.

The DOH is mandated to strengthen its research focus concerning unilateral hearing loss, including a renewed investment into basic and clinical research, expanded research into the link between environmental factors and the said condition, and continued investigations into causation, diagnosis, early detection and treatment for the same. Such factors that will be studied shall also include, among others, hormones and reproductive factors, genetic factors, socio-demographic factors, and others.

SEC. 5. *Committee on Unilateral Hearing Loss Research* - To assist the Secretary in receiving accurate and complete information about unilateral hearing loss, its symptoms, origin, classification, prevention and treatment, there is hereby established a Committee, to be known as the Committee on Unilateral Hearing Loss, to ensure the strategic management, communication, and oversight of the policy formation, research, and activities of the government regarding the condition

The objectives of the Committee on Unilateral Hearing Loss shall endeavor to:

- a) to promote public awareness, education and information on issues concerning the condition;
- b) to establish sustainable networks of support group for families of afflicted persons;
- c) to provide referral services to individuals with the impairment and identify the appropriate educational and medical expertise and facilities suited to the needs of the patient;
- d) to combat the spectrum of medical problems related to the condition through screening, education, early intervention, prompt referrals for treatment and services;
- e) to undertake research and/or collaborate with other entities on research activities regarding the prevalence of the condition in the Philippines;
- f) to receive donations and grants from international donor institutions, foundations, and multilateral and bilateral foreign donor agencies involved in research, prevention, cure and rehabilitation of persons with the condition;
- g) to provide the avenue for exchange of information, exchange programs and sharing of best practices on issues relating to the early detection, prevention, and treatment of afflicted patients; and

h) to ensure that materials concerning the condition are available, up to date, and responsive to reports of problems with Unilateral Hearing Loss, and that timely aggregate data concerning such reports shall be made available to the public upon request and consistent with existing confidentiality standards.

SEC. 6. Composition. - The Committee on Unilateral Hearing Loss Research shall be composed of the following members:

- (a) One (1) representative from the Department of Health (DOH);
- (b) One (1) representative from the National Institute of Health (NIH);
- (c) One (1) representative from the duly accredited drug and vaccine manufacturers and distributors;
- (d) One (1) representative from the duly accredited association of hospitals in the Philippines;
- (e) One (1) representative from the duly accredited association of medical doctors in the Philippines; and
- (f) One (1) representative from the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in the advocacy for the prevention, cure and rehabilitation of persons with Unilateral Hearing Loss.

The Secretary of the Department of Health shall seat as the Chairperson for the Committee on Unilateral Hearing Loss Research.

SEC. 7. Meetings. – The Committee on Unilateral Hearing Loss Research shall meet at least once a month upon a three-day notice signed by the two (2) Chairpersons or as often as necessary upon the written request signed by two-thirds (2/3) of its members.

The presence of a majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum in order for it to conduct its business.

The meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public and public witnesses shall be given the opportunity to speak and make presentations at such meetings.

Each member shall make a presentation to the full Committee at each meeting concerning the activities conducted by such member.

SEC. 8. Early Identification and Intervention for Persons with Unilateral Hearing Loss. – The DOH is hereby mandated to establish a program for early identification, screening and detection of persons with Unilateral Hearing Loss.

SEC. 9. *Prevention of Conflict of Interest in the Research Process.* -

Within six (6) month from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DOH shall issue the necessary standards, guidelines and regulations in order to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the research agenda of the researchers and the drug manufacturers or government agencies promoting the widespread usage of a particular vaccine or medicine for the treatment and rehabilitation of persons with Unilateral Hearing Loss.

The DOH shall ensure the timely publication and dissemination of information of these guidelines and regulations in order to ensure that the various health providers and stakeholders all over the country are adequately informed.

SEC. 10. *Appropriations.* - To carry out the provisions of this Act, the funds necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be incorporated in the annual general appropriations of the Department of Health (DOH).

SEC. 11. *Separability Clause* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 12 *Repealing Clause* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provision of this act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 13. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,