

9 SEP -3 AM '35

SENATE

S.B. No. 3423

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Introduced by **SENATOR PIA S. CAYETANO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill designates every third week of November as "**National Consciousness Week Against Counterfeit Medicines**" in order to draw and raise public attention and awareness about counterfeit medicines and the urgency to control its proliferation in the country.

The proliferation of counterfeit medicines is a serious public health concern not only in the Philippines but worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that between 8 – 10 percent of pharmaceutical products in the market are counterfeit medicines. Likewise, the Department of Health estimates around 10 percent of the medicines available in the country are counterfeit or fake medicines. Despite the passage of Republic Act No. 8203, or the "Special Law on Counterfeit Drugs," this serious threat to public health continues to exist and may potentially harm thousands of Filipinos.

An individual who takes a counterfeit drug may be at risk for a number of dangerous health consequences, including death. With counterfeits, patients may experience unexpected side effects, allergic reactions, or worsening of their medical condition that could result in death.

This bill mandates a comprehensive public education and awareness program on counterfeit medicines to help enlighten people about this serious concern and push for the strict implementation of the laws aimed to curb the proliferation of counterfeit medicines. A focal point of this program is an information campaign about the importance of protecting the Filipinos from the harmful effects of counterfeit medicines.

For the health and protection of our people, immediate approval of this bill is sought.

PIA S. CAYETANO
Senator

SENATE

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AN ACT
DECLARING EVERY THIRD WEEK OF NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR AS
"NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS WEEK AGAINST COUNTERFEIT MEDICINES"

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as "National Consciousness
2 Week Against Counterfeit Medicines Act."

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4 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** – In line with the principles and mandates set
5 by the Philippine Constitution that "the State shall protect and promote the right to
6 health of the people and instill health consciousness among them" (Article 2, Section
7 15) and that "the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health
8 development" (Article 13, Section 11), the third week of November of every year
9 throughout the Philippines shall be known under the name of "National Counterfeit
10 Medicines Consciousness Week."

11
12 **SECTION 3. Public Education and Awareness Program.** – To ensure the
13 meaningful observance of the week as herein declared, a comprehensive public
14 education and awareness program shall be undertaken on the proliferation and dangers
15 of counterfeit medicines which poses detrimental effects to health of patients. The
16 program shall specifically discuss the sources, common characteristics, and effects of
17 counterfeit medicines, including the urgent need for reporting of incidents to the Bureau
18 of Food and Drugs and the strict enforcement of R.A. 8203, otherwise known as "The
19 Special Law on Counterfeit Drugs."

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21 **SECTION 4. Inter-Agency and Multi-Sectoral Effort.** – The Department of Health
22 shall lead in the implementation of the comprehensive public education and awareness
23 program on counterfeit medicines through a collaborative inter-agency and multi-
24 sectoral effort at all levels. It shall particularly ensure widespread and expeditious public
25 information about the proliferation and dangers of counterfeit medicines.

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27 **SECTION 5. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
28 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

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30 *Approved,*