

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
First Regular Session

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

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SENATE

S. No. 607

RECEIVED BY: Ordo

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE


This bill seeks to prevent the undesirable practice of hospitals and medical clinics in preventing the discharge of fully recovered or otherwise dead patients for non-payment, either partially or fully, of hospital bills.

The said practice unnecessarily delay in the discharge of patient, thus resulting to more expensive hospital bill for the distressed patients. Unchecked and continuously tolerated, the practice is a simple case of detention, which is an act against the will of the patients constituting deprivation of liberty without legal cause. In any language, it is a legally and morally unacceptable posture.

The bill allows the underprivileged patient to leave the hospital upon the execution of a duly secured promissory note and imposes a penal sanction for violation of any of its provisions.

While the rights of hospital owners and/or medical practitioners must be respected, there must be a better and more human way of treating patients who, having been adequately attended to, already wish to leave the hospital were it not for their unpaid bills. To the financially incapable patient, it is a matter of liberty and livelihood; to the hospital owners and the medical practitioners, it simply means a little financial sacrifice.

In view of all the foregoing, the approval of the Bill is fervently called.


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.
Senator

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
First Regular Session

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

'04 JUN 30 78:18

SENATE

S. No. 607

RECEIVED BY: *Ardu*

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

**AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF LIVE OR DEAD PATIENTS IN
HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NON-PAYMENT OF
HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress Assembled;

SECTION 1. It shall be unlawful for any hospital or medical clinic in the country to detain or otherwise cause, directly or indirectly, the detention of patients who have fully or partially recovered or have been adequately attended to or who may have died for reasons of non-payment in part or in full, of hospital bills or medical expenses.

SEC. 2. Patients who have fully or partially recovered and who already wish to leave the hospital or medical clinic but are financially incapable to settle, in part or in full, their hospitalization expenses, including professional fees and medicines, shall be allowed to leave the hospital or medical clinic, with the right to demand the issuance of the corresponding medical certificate and other pertinent papers upon the execution of a promissory note covering the unpaid obligation. The promissory note shall be secured by either a mortgage or by a guarantee of a co-maker, acceptable to the hospital management, who will be jointly and severally liable with the patient for the unpaid obligation. In the case of a deceased patient, the corresponding death certificate and other documents required for interment and other purposes shall be released to any of his surviving relatives executing the promissory note.

SEC. 3. Any officer or employee of the hospital or medical clinic responsible for releasing patients, who violates the provisions of this Act shall be punished by a fine of not less than Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) but not more than Fifteen Thousand Pesos (P15,000.00) or imprisonment of not less than one (1) month, but not more than six (6) months, or both such fine and imprisonment.

SEC. 4. The Department of Health shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.