

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)



Senate
Office of the Secretary

'16 JAN 25 P5 20

SENATE
S. No. 3127

RECEIVED BY: J

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

AN ACT
AUTHORIZING THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH TO MAKE GRANTS TO
PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL RETROFIT INSTALLATION OF FIRE ALARM
DETECTION SYSTEMS AND OTHER FIRE DETECTION AND PREVENTION
TECHNOLOGIES IN LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Fire is one of our country's major challenges. The Bureau of Fire Protection has recorded a total of 8,823 fire incidents nationwide in 2006 that led to 271 fatalities, 596 injuries, and an estimated ₱3.2 billion worth of damage to properties.¹ Not only do these fires destroy properties, more importantly, they destroy lives. No one is more vulnerable to fire related injuries and deaths than people who cannot care for themselves. Under the principle of *parens patriae*, the State has the responsibility to protect the people who cannot protect themselves. Institutions providing long term care services such as nursing homes, hospice facilities, assisted living facilities, residential care program facilities, and board and care facilities find themselves in a constant dilemma of having to choose between allocating their resources on safety facilities and addressing the needs of their clients directly. As most of these institutions cater to our less fortunate countrymen, they are often forced to make the decision of having to take only one of these options.

A state grant covering the retrofit of these establishments to provide them with the latest fire safety technology will go a long way towards protecting both the institutions and their clients. This bill seeks to mandate the Secretary of Health to extend grants to

¹ "Fire Prevention Saves Lives and Property." *Business Mirror*. 22 February 2007.

institutions providing long term health care in order to help them secure the necessary fire safety technology for their establishments, thereby affording better protection to them and to our loved ones in their care.²

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
DP

² This bill was originally filed during the Fourteenth Congress, Third Regular Session.

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Long Term Care Fire
2 Safety Act."

3 SECTION 2. *Definition.* – As used in this Act, the term:

4 a) "Fire alarm detection system" or other fire detection and prevention technology
5 means a system, a portion of a system, or a combination of systems and components for
6 fire protection, such as integrated systems of manual devices and automatic sensors that,
7 when activated, cause the systems to warn building occupants and emergency forces;
8 smoke detectors; automatic fire sprinkler systems; specialized suppression systems and
9 other active fire protection systems or components installed in accordance with the
10 National Building Code and other applicable laws and regulations; and

11 b) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Health.

12 SECTION 3. *Grant Program.* – Not later than 120 days after the date of
13 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Health shall establish a Program to award grants
14 to nursing homes, hospice facilities, assisted living facilities, residential care program
15 facilities, board and care facilities, and any other long term care facilities that are duly

1 licensed or certified and are determined by the Secretary to be appropriate for a grant
2 under this Act, for the purpose of retrofitting such homes and facilities with any
3 professionally installed fire alarm detection system or other fire detection and prevention
4 technology.

5 **SECTION 4. *Determination of Priority.*** – In awarding grants under this Act, the
6 Secretary shall give priority to applicants that demonstrate a need or hardship. In
7 determining hardship, the Secretary may take into account factors such as the age and
8 condition of the facilities of the applicant, the need for facility beds in the community
9 involved, and requirements imposed on the applicant to meet applicable fire safety
10 regulations.

11 **SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
12 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other
13 provisions hereof.

14 **SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or
15 portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby
16 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

17 **SECTION 7. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
18 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

clr/1Dec2015