

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



Senate
Office of the Secretary

22 JUL 25 P1:23

SENATE

S. No. 827

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Loren B. Legarda

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR A FREE ANNUAL MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR FILIPINOS
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS, THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Constitution states, "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them."

Further, Section 11, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution provides, in part, that "The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be a priority for the needs of the underprivileged sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children."

Thus, Republic Act No. 11223, or the "Universal Health Care Act," was enacted into law to fulfill the mandate to "ensure that all Filipinos are guaranteed equitable access to quality and affordable health care goods and services and protected against financial risk." The law aims to strengthen the public health system and make health services accessible and equitable to the Filipino people.

Primary health care should provide 80-90% of a person's health needs¹ and address a broader coverage and prevent social disparities in health care while reducing the financial burden on the public health system. Only 50% of Filipinos have access to an RHU/HC within 30 minutes of travel time. The Philippines has around 3,900 primary care facilities (PCF), of which 2,593 are Rural Health Units/ Health Centers (RHU/HCs). The country needs an additional 2,400 RHU/HCs by 2025.²

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported that in 2020, the health spending financed through government schemes and compulsory contributory health care financing schemes recorded the largest among sources of health financing in the country, amounting to Php 409.39 billion or 45.7 percent of the Current Health Expenditure (CHE). Household-out-of-pocket payment (OOP) came second at Php 400.10 billion (44.7%), followed by voluntary health care payment schemes, which contributed to Php 86.39 billion (9.6%). Every Filipino spent Php 8,216.42 on healthcare and services in the same year.³

Even when the country is moving towards full health coverage, access to essential healthcare services remains a significant challenge. This bill aims to provide each Filipino a free annual medical check-up to enhance health outcomes and improve healthcare resource allocation.

In view of the foregoing considerations, the immediate passage of this measure is sought.


LOREN LEGARDA

¹ World Health Organization (2018). Quality in primary health care. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/primary-health-care-conference/quality.pdf>

² Department of Health (2020). Philippine Health Facility Development Plan 2020-2040. Retrieved from https://doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/publications/DOH_PHILIPPINE%20HEALTH%20FACILITY%20DEVELOPMENT%20PLAN%202020_2040_0.pdf

³ Philippine Statistics Authority (14 October 2021). Health Spending Registered 12.6 Percent Growth, Share of Health to Economy Went Up to 5.6 Percent in 2020. Reference No.: 2021-427. Retrieved from <https://psa.gov.ph/pnha-press-release/node/165216>

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

1 Section. 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Free Annual Medical
2 Check-Up Act."

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Principle.* - It is the policy of the State to support and
4 promote the right to health by enhancing programs that focus on preventive and
5 curative medicine that advance the health and well-being of Filipinos and prevent
6 disease, disability, and death. Pursuant thereto, Filipinos shall be entitled to an annual
7 medical check-up that is free of charge in any government hospital and institution.

8 Sec. 3. *Coverage.* - Filipino Citizens, by virtue of their membership in the
9 Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), mandated under Republic
10 Act No. 11223, or the Universal Health Care Law, shall be entitled to the applicable
11 benefits under the Philippine Health Insurance Program.

12 Members shall be entitled to a free annual medical check-up that shall include
13 blood sugar and cholesterol tests. Laboratory and diagnostic tests shall be expanded,
14 subject to the availability of PhilHealth funds.

15 Sec. 4. *Schedule of Free Medical Check-Up.* - To promote health, identify risks, and
16 ensure early diagnosis, PhilHealth shall establish a system that allows access to an
17 annual medical check-up and ensure that Filipinos shall be accorded the quality health
18 care services that they deserve.

1 Sec. 5. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be
2 charged against the PhilHealth funds.

3 Sec. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Department of Health shall, in
4 coordination with PhilHealth, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the
5 proper implementation of this Act not later than ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

6 Sec. 7. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part of this Act is declared
7 unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full
8 force and effect.

9 Sec. 8. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, executive orders, issuances, rules, and
10 regulations, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

11 Sec. 9. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
12 in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,