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SENATE

S. No. 1393

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**Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.**

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**AN ACT MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN BARANGAYS, AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

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

At the forefront of this mandate are the Barangay Health Workers (BHWs), who are strongly connected with the health concerns of their communities. BHWs are the ones who are most familiar, to most extent to a personal level, to the health and medical history of their constituents. Given their direct and experiential knowledge, BHWs are very instrumental in providing primary health care at their locality.

According to the National BHW Registry System of the Department of Health, there are 241,282 active BHWs in the entire country as of 2020. As frontliners in the Primary Health Care Approach, BHWs are entrusted with crucial tasks ranging from administering first aid and community-based immunizations; maternal, neonatal and child care; family planning and nutrition, and other health and wellness activities of their respective barangays.

In recognition of the contribution of BHWs in our health system, Republic Act No. 7883, otherwise known as "*The Barangay Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995*" granted benefits and incentives to accredited BHWs for their voluntary

community service. The law provides for special civil service eligibility to BHWs, under certain conditions, which can qualify them for permanent positions in the government. However, the position of a BHW remains to be on a voluntary basis. They merely receive allowances and do not enjoy security of tenure. There is, therefore, a remarkable irony between the significant role that they play and the value that is given to them by the government. Despite these inequities, BHWs continue to perform their duties with immeasurable commitment.

Inevitably, our country will continue to face challenges in health and nutrition. The scope and gravity are beyond our foresight but one fact remains certain - our health system is devolved and we will definitely be relying on the services of the BHWs in addressing them. It is important that we empower and capacitate our BHWs to make them more competent and effective in performing the duties that we have entrusted to them.

This measure seeks to mandate the appointment of BHWs in every barangay by the city or municipal government. Consequently, BHWs shall enjoy security of tenure with entry pay level of Salary Grade 1, and benefits and allowances similar to those granted to Public Health Workers provided under RA 7883 and Republic Act No. 7305, otherwise known as the "*Magna Carta for Public Health Workers*".

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is most earnestly sought.

  
RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

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

Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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**AN ACT MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN BARANGAYS, AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 the "*Barangay Health*  
2 *Workers Act of 2022*".

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to  
4 protect and promote the right to health of the people by providing the conditions of  
5 health empowerment, where each individual has adequate access to information and  
6 services that will bring about health and well-being, and by delivering effective health  
7 care programs and services based on the needs of the communities.

8 Towards this end, the State recognizes that the Primary Health Care Approach  
9 is an effective strategy towards realizing health empowerment and effective health  
10 care programs and services through community-based participatory strategies. The  
11 State recognizes, moreover, the indispensable role of Barangay Health Workers as the  
12 frontliners in the Primary Health Care Approach; and the importance of strengthening  
13 and systematizing their services, and of providing them just compensation, consistent  
14 with the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value.

15 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act:

16 a. *Barangay Health Worker (BHW)* shall refer to a person who is appointed  
17 to act as a health worker in a barangay unit in accordance with Section  
18 4 hereof; and,

1           b. *Public Health Worker (PHW)* shall be as defined under Section 3 of the  
2           Republic Act No. 7305 or "*Magna Carta for Public Health Workers*" as  
3           referring to all persons who are engaged in health and health-related  
4           work, all persons employed in all hospitals, sanitaria, health infirmaries,  
5           health centers, rural health units, barangay health stations, clinics, and  
6           other health related establishments owned and operated by the  
7           Government or its political subdivisions with original charters and shall  
8           include medical, allied health professional, administrative and support  
9           personnel employed regardless of their employment status.

10           Sec. 4. *Appointment and Qualifications.* — There shall be appointed in each  
11           barangay such number of BHWs as the Department of Health (DOH) shall determine  
12           and recommend in consideration of the number of households in a barangay:  
13           *Provided,* That the total number of BHWs per barangay shall not be less than three  
14           (3) nor more than one percent (1%) of the barangay's total population. The city or  
15           municipal mayor, as the case may be, shall appoint the BHWs in all barangays in the  
16           city or municipality on the strength of their accreditation by the local health board:  
17           *Provided,* That the local health board shall only issue accreditation to the following:

- 18           a. A person who has completed the BHW training program of the DOH, or  
19           the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), or  
20           undergone a training specific for BHW by a TESDA-accredited or DOH-  
21           accredited institution, and has passed the BHW training assessment, and  
22           obtained the equivalent certification;
- 23           b. All active BHWs at the time of the effectivity of this Act, regardless of  
24           accreditation or training status, who have previously served for at least  
25           one (1) year: *Provided,* That they undergo and pass the BHW  
26           assessment by DOH/TESDA-accredited assessors, and obtained the  
27           equivalent certification.

28           All active and existing BHWs accredited by the local health board under Republic Act  
29           No. 7883 shall be given preference in the appointment of BHWs pursuant to this Act.

30           Sec. 5. *Duties and Responsibilities.* - The BHWs shall perform in their respective  
31           barangays the following duties and responsibilities:

- 1 a. Those which the DOH, or the city, municipality or barangay Sanggunian  
2 shall provide by ordinance, subject to the guidelines to be promulgated  
3 jointly by the DOH and the Department of Interior and Local Government  
4 (DILG), in connection with the delivery of basic and primary health care  
5 services, the implementation of family planning, feeding and nutrition,  
6 and immunization programs, disaster response and mitigation,  
7 sanitation programs, and anti-drug abuse rehabilitation and information  
8 campaigns, and the establishment of national or local health  
9 management information systems;
- 10 b. Provide assistance to physicians, dentists, nurses, nutritionists, or  
11 midwives who are employed, stationed, or are otherwise providing  
12 services at the barangay health center, daycare center or birthing  
13 center;
- 14 c. Administer first aids, and respond in natural calamities and disaster; and,
- 15 d. Gather data about the health profile of the barangay, incidence of  
16 communicable or chronic diseases, environmental or health hazards in  
17 the barangay, and other public health-relevant events or information,  
18 and report the same to the local health board.

19 *Sec. 6. Compensation and Benefits.* - The entry pay level of a BHW shall be the  
20 prevailing rate equivalent to Salary Grade One (SG 1). BHWs shall also be entitled to  
21 the following standards, incentives, and benefits provided for Public Health Workers  
22 under the Magna Carta for Public Health Workers:

- 23 a. Normal hours of work;
- 24 b. Overtime pay for overtime work;
- 25 c. Rest day;
- 26 d. Night Shift differential pay;
- 27 e. Hazard allowance;
- 28 f. Subsistence allowance;
- 29 g. Longevity pay;
- 30 h. Free medical examination;
- 31 i. Compensation for injuries;
- 32 j. Leave benefits;

- 1 k. Retirement pay; and
- 2 l. Right to self-organization.

3 Further, BHWs shall be covered by the existing statutory benefits such as GSIS,  
4 PhilHealth, and PAGIBIG, and be entitled to the following additional benefits:

- 5 a. Training, Education and Career Enrichment Programs. - The DOH, in  
6 coordination with the DILG, other government departments, agencies and non-  
7 government organizations, shall provide opportunities for the following:
  - 8 i. Educational programs that shall recognize years of primary health care  
9 service as credits to higher education in institutions with stepladder  
10 curricula, which will entitle BHWs to upgrade their skills and knowledge  
11 for community work, or to pursue further training as midwives,  
12 pharmacists, nurses or doctors;
  - 13 ii. Continuing education, study and exposure tours, training, grants, field  
14 immersion, scholarship, etc.; and
  - 15 iii. Special training programs such as those on traditional medicine, disaster  
16 response and preparedness, and other programs that address emergent  
17 community health problems and issues.
- 18 b. Free Legal Services. - Legal representation and consultation services for BHWs  
19 shall be immediately provided by the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) in cases of  
20 coercion, interference, and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against  
21 barangay health workers arising out of or in connection with the performance  
22 of their duties as such.
- 23 c. Preferential Access to Loans. - The DOH, in coordination with other concerned  
24 government agencies, shall provide a mechanism for access to loan services by  
25 organized BHWs. The agencies providing loan services will set aside one  
26 percent (1%) of their loanable funds for organized BHW groups that have  
27 community-based income generating projects in support of health programs or  
28 activities.

29 *Sec. 7. Security of Tenure.* - All duly appointed BHWs shall not be terminated,  
30 except for cause provided under existing civil service rules and regulations, and only  
31 after due notice and hearing: *Provided,* That if a BHW is found by the Civil Service  
32 Commission to be unjustly dismissed from work, they shall be entitled to reinstatement

1 without loss of seniority rights and to back wages with twelve percent (12%) interest  
2 computed from the time their compensation was withheld from him/her up to the time  
3 of reinstatement.

4       Sec. 8. *Implementing Agencies.* - Within one (1) year from the effectivity of  
5 this Act, the DOH, DILG, TESDA, and local government units shall immediately  
6 appropriate funds necessary for the full implementation of this Act. Within the same  
7 period, the DOH, DILG and TESDA shall formulate, launch and institutionalize the BHW  
8 training program, assessment, and national certification program.

9       Sec. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within three (3) months from  
10 the effectivity of this Act, the DOH, DILG, in consultation with the local government  
11 units, and existing health workers union and BHW organizations, shall promulgate the  
12 implementing rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

13       Sec. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, circulars, issuances, rules  
14 and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed,  
15 amended or modified accordingly.

16       Sec. 11. *Separability Clause.* - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared  
17 invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall  
18 remain in full force and effect.

19       Sec. 12. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following  
20 its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of  
21 general circulation in the Philippines.

*Approved,*