

SENATE
S. B. No. 2131

BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE :

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 15, provides that:

The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

The Constitution, Article 13, Section 11 also provides that:

xxx There shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers.

According to the University of Kentucky Health Care, osteoporosis is a disease in which the bones become extremely porous, are subject to fracture, and heal slowly, occurring especially in women following menopause and often leading to curvature of the spine from vertebral collapse. It is called the 'silent thief,' because it robs us of bone strength. The disease usually goes undetected and worsens, until even a slight trauma can cause a debilitating fracture, resulting in loss of income and mobility. In fact, it is one of the major causes of mortality (death) and morbidity (illness & disability) among the elderly. It is estimated to affect about 150 million people worldwide.



The Osteoporosis Society of the Philippines notes from a survey carried out at the National Orthopedic Hospital (now called the Philippine Orthopedic Center) from 1979-1988 that 62.9% of the patients aged 50 and over who had been admitted for fractures were affected by osteoporosis. Sixty three percent of these fractures were at the femur (the hip), suggesting that osteoporosis is indeed a serious problem in the country.

Today, statistics show that the Filipino elderly population (those who are at least 60 years old), is more than 5 million. Furthermore, it is increasing at a rate of 5.45% yearly. By 2020, this age segment is estimated to comprise 9.5% of the population.

This increase in the elderly population have implications in regard to the country's response to the special needs of the aged; specifically, the adequacy of geriatric health facilities, trained personnel and welfare programs for those who cannot afford private healthcare. Despite the traditional high regard for older persons in Filipino society, they are the most vulnerable to neglect as the family tries to face the pressures of survival.

To address these issues, early detection, prevention and maintenance are the best weapons. Osteoporosis may be debilitating; however, it can be prevented or at least minimized through proper nutrition and exercise before bone loss. And even those affected by severe bone loss can take preventive measures to minimize the risk of disabilities.

This bill seeks to address the need to be informed about osteoporosis, its effects and its prevention.


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(1) determining the best practices for providing information and outreach services (including programs and information, such as forums, seminars, and large-print, easy-to-understand, multilingual literature) relating to prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of osteoporosis; and

(2) measuring the effectiveness of such program over a three-year period, as shown by an increase in the percentages of individuals who have demonstrated expanded awareness and knowledge of osteoporosis (including knowledge of personal risk factors).

(B) In carrying out such program, the Secretary shall collaborate with the leading nongovernmental health organizations, academic institutions, local health officer, as well as other health entities, with a mission both to promote lifelong bone health nationwide and to provide outreach to local governments and communities, for the purpose of determining the best practices for providing bone-health information and outreach services to at-risk populations.

SECTION 5. *Osteoporosis Research and Reports.* – Not later than 18 months after the enactment of this Act, the DOH shall conduct a study on the prevalence of osteoporosis among the country’s population. The study shall also contain an evaluation of the national public awareness campaigns conducted by the DOH, as well as recommendations on measures that could be undertaken to strengthen osteoporosis education and prevention programs. A report of this study shall be submitted to Congress not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part thereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SECTION 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,