


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

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SENATE  
S. No. 1736

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE



The Constitution, Article II, Section 15, provides:

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

Asthma is the most common chronic respiratory disease among children and is the third leading cause of preventable hospitalizations.

According to the United Nation Daily Highlights, asthma kills over 180,000 people worldwide annually. In the Philippines, asthma affects over six (6) million children. The Philippines is ranked 32nd in "self-reported asthma." The country has a prevalence rate of about 12 %. A nationwide study conducted by the University of Santo Tomas showed that about 12.4% of children aged 14 to 15 years old are afflicted with asthma. Most of these children come from low-income families or communities. Over all, one out of 10 Filipinos has asthma, based on a Philippine General Hospital survey.

The government has a major role to alleviate the effects of asthma and other related respiratory diseases among its constituents living in poverty. This bill seeks to authorize the Department of Health to carry out programs and grants regarding the prevention and management of asthma and related respiratory problems for low-income families and communities.\*

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  


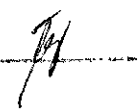
\* This bill was originally filed during the Thirteenth Congress, First Regular Session.

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1 AN ACT  
2 AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CARRY OUT  
3 PROGRAMS AND GRANTS REGARDING THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT  
4 OF ASTHMA AND RELATED RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS  
5 FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

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

8 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Asthma Awareness,  
9 Education, and Treatment Act of 2007.”

10 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote  
11 the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

12 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the term:

13 (A) “Asthma” means the chronic and inflammatory lung disease characterized by  
14 recurrent breathing problems. It is a respiratory disorder characterized by wheezing usually of  
15 allergic origin.

16 (B) “DOH” means the Department of Health.

17 (C) “Secretary” means the DOH Secretary.

18 (D) “Committee” means the National Asthma Education Prevention Program  
19 Coordinating Committee.

1           SECTION 4. *Grants of Projects for Asthma-Related Activities for Low-Income Families*  
2 *and Communities.* –

3           (A) *In General.* – The Secretary shall provide grants to applicant public and nonprofit  
4 private entities to carry out projects which will aid individuals in low-income families and  
5 communities. Such aid shall include, but not be limited to:

6                   (1) Screenings for and referrals regarding asthma and related respiratory problems  
7 in accordance with subsection (B);

8                   (2) Providing information and education regarding the conditions in accordance  
9 with subsection (C); and

10                  (3) Holding or sponsoring workshops regarding the conditions for parents,  
11 teachers, physical education instructors, school nurses, school counselors, athletic  
12 coaches, and other individuals who serve in supervisory roles of children in such  
13 communities.

14           (B) *Screenings and Referrals.* – The Secretary shall ensure that screenings for and  
15 referrals to the proper health personnel regarding asthma, and related respiratory problems under  
16 subsection (A) are comprehensive, and that the settings in which the screenings and referrals are  
17 provided include –

18                   (1) Traditional medical settings such as hospitals, health clinics, and the offices of  
19 physicians; and

20                   (2) Non-traditional settings for the provision of such services, such as nurseries,  
21 elementary and secondary schools, community centers, public housing units, volunteer  
22 organizations, convenience stores, local governmental offices, day care centers, sites that  
23 offer nutrition-related services for women, infants, and children, and governmental  
24 offices that provide cash assistance for low-income individuals.

25           (C) *Information and Education.* – The Secretary shall ensure that information and  
26 education on asthma and related respiratory problems under subsection (A) are provided in  
27 accordance with the following:

1 (1) The information and education will be provided in the language and cultural  
2 context that is most appropriate for the individuals for whom the information and  
3 education are intended.

4 (2) The information and education shall include the following:

5 (a) Symptoms of the conditions.

6 (b) Prevention of the conditions.

7 (c) Monitoring and management of the conditions, including –

8 (i) Avoiding circumstances that may cause asthma attacks or other  
9 respiratory problems; and

10 (ii) Being aware of appropriate medication options, such as the  
11 need to keep in one's possession an asthma inhaler.

12 (d) The importance of developing a treatment plan that will permit  
13 asthmatic children to regularly engage in sports and other physical activities.

14 (3) The places in which the information and education will be provided, which  
15 include the traditional settings described in subsection (B)(1) and the nontraditional  
16 settings described in subsection (B)(2).

17 (D) *Preparation of the Report on the Projects.* – The Secretary shall prepare a report on  
18 the projects carried under subsection (A), which shall include:

19 (1) The number of low income children and adults who shall have been screened  
20 and given referrals through the projects;

21 (2) The extent the projects have had an effect on the manner in which individuals  
22 prevent and manage asthma and related respiratory problems; and

23 (3) An evaluation of the effectiveness of materials used in providing information  
24 and education.

25 (E) *Inclusion in Project of Local Community-Based Organization.* – To receive a grant  
26 under subsection (A) an applicant must:

27 (1) Be a community-based organization that provides services in the low-income  
28 community in which the project is to be carried out; or

1           (2) Demonstrate to the Secretary that one or more representatives from such an  
2 organization will play a substantial role in carrying out the project.

3           (F) *Application for Grant.* – The Secretary may make a grant under subsection (A) only if  
4 an application for the grant is submitted to the Secretary and the application is in such form, is  
5 made in such manner, and contains such agreements, assurances, and information as the  
6 Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out this section.

7           SECTION 5. *National Media Campaign To Provide Asthma-Related Information.* –

8           (A) *In General.* – The Secretary may make awards of contracts to provide for a national  
9 media campaign to provide to the public and health care providers information on asthma and  
10 related respiratory problems, with priority given to the occurrence of such conditions in children.

11           (B) *Certain Requirements.* – The Secretary shall ensure that the national media campaign  
12 under subsection (A) is carried out in accordance with the following:

13                   (1) The campaign provides information regarding the prevention and management  
14 of asthma and related respiratory problems.

15                   (2) With respect to a community in which the campaign is carried out –

16                           (a) The campaign provides information regarding the availability in the  
17 community of programs that provide screenings, referrals, and treatment of the  
18 conditions and training in managing the conditions; and

19                           (b) The campaign is carried out in the language and cultural context that is  
20 most appropriate for the individuals for whom the campaign is intended. The  
21 campaign message, while tailored to the affected population, should have  
22 universal appeal and application to populations with different demographic  
23 backgrounds.

24           SECTION 6. *Research on Relationship between Air Pollutants and Asthma-Related*  
25 *Problems.* –

26           (A) *In General.* – The Secretary, in consultation with the proper agency of the  
27 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall provide for the conduct of

1 research to determine the kind and extent of air pollutants that cause asthma and related  
2 respiratory problems.

3 (B) *Requirement Regarding Clinical Participants.* –

4 (1) *In General.* – In the conduct of clinical research under subsection (A), the  
5 Secretary shall give priority to providing individuals described in the succeeding  
6 paragraph opportunities to undergo clinical evaluations for purposes of the research.

7 (2) *Relevant Populations.* – For purposes of paragraph (1), the individuals  
8 referred to in this paragraph are individuals who are residents of communities in which  
9 the average family income is at or below the poverty line, as established by the  
10 Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

11 SECTION 7. *National Asthma Education Prevention Program Coordinating Committee.*

12 – There shall be a Committee established within the DOH who shall:

13 (A) Conduct local asthma surveillance activities to collect data on the prevalence and  
14 severity of asthma and the quality of asthma management, including –

15 (1) Telephone surveys to collect sample household data on the local burden of  
16 asthma; and

17 (2) Health care facility specific surveillance to collect asthma data on the  
18 prevalence and severity of asthma, and on the quality of asthma care; and

19 (B) Compile and annually publish data on –

20 (1) The prevalence of children suffering from asthma in each region; and

21 (2) The childhood mortality rate associated with asthma nationally and in each  
22 region.

23 SECTION 8. *Appropriations.* – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such sums as may  
24 be necessary are hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury.

25 SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or  
26 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain  
27 valid and subsisting.

1           SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive  
2 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent  
3 with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

4           SECTION 11. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
5 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

6           Approved,