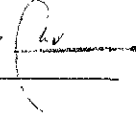


FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

10 JUL 21 P4:02

SENATE
S. No. 1757

RECEIVED BY 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Recent studies in the United States show that health disparities are a function of not only access to health care, but also the social determinants of health, including the environment, the physical structure of communities, nutrition and food options, educational attainment, employment, race, ethnicity, geography, and language preference that directly and indirectly affect the health, health care, and wellness of individuals and communities.

This bill¹ authorizes the Secretary of Health, at the request of a broad-based community partnership, to designate a community that experiences disproportionate disparities in health status and health care as a health empowerment zone. It also requires officials to give priority in awarding competitive grants to grants used in or benefiting a health empowerment zone. Further, the bill directs the Health Secretary to provide:

- (1) Technical assistance (or grants) to entities seeking to form a community partnership or obtain a health empowerment zone designation for a community; and
- (2) Grants to community partnerships for implementation of the strategic plan for a health empowerment zone.


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

¹ This bill was originally filed in the third regular session of the 14th Congress.

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SENATE
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1 AN ACT
2 TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH TO DESIGNATE
3 HEALTH EMPOWERMENT ZONES

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

4 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Health Empowerment
5 Zone Act.”

6 SEC. 2. *Designation of Health Empowerment Zones.* –

7 (A) *In General.* – At the request of an eligible community partnership, the
8 Secretary of the Department of Health (here called the “Secretary”) may
9 designate an eligible area as a health empowerment zone.

10 (B) *Eligibility Criteria.* –

11 (1) *Eligible Community Partnership.* – A community partnership is
12 eligible to submit a request if the partnership:

13 (a) demonstrates widespread public support from key individuals
14 and entities in the eligible area, including State and local
15 governments, nonprofit organizations, and community and
16 industry leaders, for designation of the eligible area as a health
17 empowerment zone; and

18 (b) includes representatives of:

19 (i) a broad cross section of stakeholders and residents from
20 communities in the eligible area experiencing

1 disproportionate disparities in health status and health
2 care; and

3 (ii) organizations, facilities, and institutions that have a
4 history of working within and serving such
5 communities.

6 (2) *Eligible Area.* – An area is eligible to be designated as a health
7 empowerment zone if one or more communities in the area experience
8 disproportionate disparities in health status and health care. In
9 determining whether a community experiences such disparities, the
10 Secretary shall consider the data collected on the following areas:

- 11 (a) Access to high-quality health services.
- 12 (b) Arthritis, osteoporosis, and chronic back conditions.
- 13 (c) Cancer.
- 14 (d) Chronic kidney disease.
- 15 (e) Diabetes.
- 16 (f) Injury and violence prevention.
- 17 (g) Maternal, infant, and child health.
- 18 (h) Medical product safety.
- 19 (i) Mental health and mental disorders.
- 20 (j) Nutrition and overweight.
- 21 (k) Disability and secondary conditions.
- 22 (l) Educational and community-based health programs.
- 23 (m) Environmental health.
- 24 (n) Family planning.
- 25 (o) Food safety.
- 26 (p) Health communication.
- 27 (q) Health disease and stroke.
- 28 (r) HIV/AIDS.
- 29 (s) Immunization and infectious diseases.

- 1 (t) Occupational safety and health.
- 2 (u) Oral health.
- 3 (v) Physical activity and fitness.
- 4 (w) Public health infrastructure.
- 5 (x) Respiratory diseases.
- 6 (y) Sexually transmitted diseases.
- 7 (z) Substance abuse.
- 8 (aa) Tobacco use.
- 9 (bb) Vision and hearing.

10 (C) *Procedure.* –

11 (1) *Request.* – A request under subsection (A) shall:

- 12 (a) describe the bounds of the area to be designated as a health
13 empowerment zone and the process used to select those
14 bounds;
- 15 (b) demonstrate that the partnership submitting the request is an
16 eligible community partnership described in subsection (B)(1);
- 17 (c) demonstrate that the area is an eligible area described in
18 subsection (B)(2);
- 19 (d) include a comprehensive assessment of disparities in health
20 status and health care experience by one or more communities
21 in the area;
- 22 (e) set forth:
 - 23 (i) a vision and a set of values for the area; and
 - 24 (ii) a comprehensive and holistic set of goals to be achieved
25 in the area through designation as a health
26 empowerment zone; and
- 27 (f) include a strategic plan for achieving the goals described in
28 subparagraph (e)(ii).

1 (2) *Approval.* – Not later than 60 days after the receipt of a request for
2 designation of an area as a health empowerment zone, the Secretary
3 shall approve or disapprove the request.

4 (D) *Minimum Number.* – The Secretary shall:

5 (1) Designate not more than 110 health empowerment zones; and

6 (2) Designate at least one health empowerment zone in each of the
7 provinces in the country.

8
9 SEC. 3. *Assistance to Those Seeking Designation.* – At the request of any
10 organization or entity seeking to submit a request, the Secretary shall provide technical
11 assistance, and may award a grant, to assist such organization or entity to:

12 (A) Form an eligible community partnership;

13 (B) Complete a health assessment, including an assessment of health disparities;
14 or

15 (C) Prepare and submit a request, including a strategic plan.

16 SEC. 4. *Benefits of Designation.* –

17 (A) *Priority.* – In awarding any competitive grant, priority shall be given to any
18 applicant that:

19 (1) Meets the eligibility criteria for the grant;

20 (2) Proposes to use the grant for activities in a health empowerment zone;
21 and

22 (3) Demonstrates that such activities will directly and significantly further
23 the goals of the strategic plan approved for such zone.

24 (B) *Grants for Initial Implementation of Strategic Plan.* –

25 (1) *In General.* – Upon designating an eligible area as a health
26 empowerment zone at the request of an eligible community
27 partnership, the Secretary shall, subject to the availability of

1 appropriations, make a grant to the community partnership for
2 implementation of the strategic plan for such zone.

3 (2) *Grant Period.* – A grant under paragraph (1) for a health
4 empowerment zone shall be for a period of two years and may be
5 renewed, except that the total period of grants under paragraph (1) for
6 such zone may not exceed ten years.

7 (3) *Limitation.* – In awarding grants, the Secretary shall not give less
8 priority to an applicant or reduce the amount of a grant because the
9 Secretary rendered technical assistance or made a grant to the same
10 applicant.

11 (4) *Reporting.* – The Secretary shall require each recipient of a grant to
12 report to the Secretary not less than every six months on the progress
13 in implementing the strategic plan for the health empowerment zone.

14 SEC. 5. *Appropriations.* – The funds needed for the initial implementation of this
15 Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Health. Thereafter,
16 such amount as may be necessary for its full implementation shall be included in the
17 annual General Appropriations Act as a distinct and separate item.

18 SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or
19 unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise affected shall
20 remain valid and subsisting.

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

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

Approved,