SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

Senste Of the Secretary

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*13 JUL 29 P2:28

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Vision loss can, especially without appropriate rehabilitation and skills training, significantly impact an individual's ability to conduct activities of daily living, as well as developmental learning, communicating, working, health, and quality of life. While it is believed that half of all blindness can be prevented, the number of Filipinos who are blind or visually impaired is expected to double by 2030. One in twenty preschoolers experience visual impairment which, if unaddressed, can affect learning ability, personality, and adjustment in school.

Vision rehabilitation helps people with vision loss to live safely and independently at home and in the community, reduce medication errors, cook and perform other daily activities reliably, and avoid accidents which may lead to injury or even the onset of additional disabilities, especially among older persons living with vision loss.

Greater efforts must be made at the national and local levels to increase awareness of vision loss and its causes, its impact, the importance of early diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation, and effective prevention strategies.

This Act intends to establish a full-scale integrated public health strategy to comprehensively address vision loss and its causes that, at a minimum, includes the following: communication and education, surveillance, epidemiology, and prevention research, and programs, policies, and systems change.*

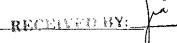
MIRIAM DEFHNSOR SANTIAGO

^{*} This bill was originally filed in the Fourteenth Congress, Second Regular Session.

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	Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago
1 2 3	AN ACT MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ESTABLISH HEALTH PROGRAMS TO PREVENT VISION LOSS
	Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:
4	SECTION 1. Short Title This Act shall be known as the "Vision Preservation Act."
5	SECION 2. Preventive Health Measures with Respect to Vision Loss. —
6	A. Communication and Education—
7	1. In General - The Secretary of Health shall expand and intensify programs to
8	increase awareness of vision problems, including awareness of the following:
9.	a. the impact of vision problems; and
10	b. the importance of early diagnosis, management, and effective prevention and
11	rehabilitation strategies.
12	2. Activities – In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may—
13	a. conduct public service announcements and education campaigns;
14	b. enter into partnerships with eye-health professional organizations and other
15	vision-related organizations;
16	c. conduct community disease prevention campaigns;
17	d. conduct testing, evaluation, and model training for vision screeners based on
18	scientific studies; and
19	e. evaluate strategies to reduce barriers to access to treatment by optometrists
20	and ophthalmologists.
21	3. Evaluation – In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall –

2	b. establish appropriate measurements to determine the effectiveness of existing
3	campaigns to increase awareness of vision problems;
4	c. establish quantitative benchmarks for determining the effectiveness of
5	activities carried out under this subsection; and
6	d. not later than twelve (12) months after the date of the enactment of this Act,
7	submit a report to the Congress on the results achieved through such activities.
8	B. Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Health Services Research –
9	1. In General – The Secretary shall expand and intensify activities to establish a solid
10	scientific base of knowledge on the prevention, control, and rehabilitation of
11	vision problems and related disabilities.
12	2. Activities – In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may—
13	a. create a national ongoing surveillance system;
14	b. identify and test screening modalities;
15	c. evaluate strategies to reduce barriers to access to treatment by optometrists,
16	ophthalmologists, and other vision rehabilitation professionals;
17	d. evaluate the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of current and future
18	interventions and community strategies; and
19	e. update and improve knowledge about the true costs of vision problems and
20	related disabilities.
21	C. Programs, Policies, and Systems-
22	1. In General – The Secretary shall expand and intensify research on the prevention
23	and management of vision loss.
24	2. Activities – In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may—
25	a. build partnerships with voluntary health organizations, nonprofit vision
26	rehabilitation agencies, and local public health agencies, eye-health
27	professional organizations, and organizations with an interest in vision issues;
28	b. work with health care systems to better address vision problems and
29	associated disabilities; and

a. establish appropriate measurements for public awareness of vision problems;

therapies to meet the unique needs of older adults with vision loss) in -

Į	2.	serving a variety of populations of older individuals with vision loss, including
2		racial and ethnic minorities, low-income individuals, and other underserved
}		populations.
ļ	D. Ap	plication - To seek a grant under this section, an entity shall submit to the Secretary

- D. Application To seek a grant under this section, an entity shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.
- SECTION 5. 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 6. Repealing Clause. All laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.
- SECTION 7. *Effectivity Clause*. This 'Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days followingits publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

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