


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

'16 DEC -1 A10 :32

**SENATE**  
S.B. No. 1257

RECEIVED BY: 

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**Introduced by SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA**

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**AN ACT TO PROTECT FILIPINO PREGNANT AND LACTATING MOTHERS, INFANTS, AND YOUNG CHILDREN DURING THE FIRST 1000 DAYS OF LIFE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

Explanatory Note

The first 1,000 days of a baby's life, from pregnancy until the child's 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday, is the foundation of a person's future health, intellectual development, and motor and social skills. Good nutrition for mothers and babies at pregnancy and infancy stage is therefore crucial to sustain a sturdy foundation for a child's well being.

However, World Health Organization (WHO) shows that the leading causes of death worldwide of over 5.9 million children under 5 years old in 2015 were linked to malnutrition. The Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) reported that the country has now reached its highest rate of chronic malnutrition in 10 years among children aged 0-2, which is at 26.2%.

Meanwhile, achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3, which aims to reduce global maternal mortality rate to less than 70 per 100,000 births, remains a great task for the nation as World Bank reported that mortality ratio was 114 per 100,000 birth in 2015. The same report provides that globally, about 800 women die everyday due to pregnancy-related complications.

This bill seeks to establish a strategic and sustainable strategy to address the crisis in malnutrition among children and women in prenatal and newborn care. Health and nutrition programs in every barangay shall be established, along with the strengthening of the National Nutrition Council (NNC) as the policy-making body in nutrition to secure the implementation of programs to protect mothers and their infants.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

  
**LOREN LEGARDA**  
Senator



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**AN ACT TO PROTECT FILIPINO PREGNANT AND LACTATING MOTHERS, INFANTS, AND YOUNG CHILDREN DURING THE FIRST 1000 DAYS OF LIFE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

- 1 **SECTION 1. Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "First 1,000 Days Act."
- 2
- 3 **Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - The right to health is a fundamental principle
- 4 guaranteed by the State as mandated in Section 15, Article 2, of the 1987
- 5 Constitution, mandating that "The State shall protect and promote the right to
- 6 health of the people and instill health consciousness among them."
- 7
- 8 Moreover, pursuant to various international human rights instruments and
- 9 agreements that the State adheres to, the State guarantees the right to
- 10 adequate food, care and nutrition to children, especially those from zero to five-
- 11 years old.
- 12
- 13 The advancement and protection of the right of men and women to access
- 14 all information necessary to make informed choice on the proper care,
- 15 nutrition and food choices for their children and family shall be central to
- 16 the efforts of the State to comprehensively and sustainably address
- 17 malnutrition.
- 18
- 19 The State likewise declares its determination to eliminate hunger and to reduce
- 20 all forms of malnutrition. The State further maintains that nutrition is both an
- 21 end-goal and a means to achieve sustained development. It is a multi-faceted
- 22 issue requiring committed inputs from all sectors. As such, nutrition shall be
- 23 a priority of the government to be implemented by all its branches in
- 24 collaboration with non- government organizations and the private sector, in
- 25 an integrated manner.
- 26
- 27 The State furthermore allocates its resources in a sustainable manner thereby
- 28 eradicating malnutrition of women of reproductive age, pregnant women, and
- 29 children from 0 to 24 months.
- 30
- 31 The State finally refocuses the intervention program on malnutrition to the first
- 32 1,000 days of a child's life, i.e. the nine months in the womb and the first 24
- 33 months of his/her life which are crucial in preventing malnutrition.

1 **Sec. 3. Objectives.** - This Act specifically aims to:  
2

3 (a) Provide a more comprehensive, sustainable and multi-sectoral  
4 approach to address malnutrition;  
5

6 (b) Provide a policy environment conducive to nutrition improvement;  
7

8 (c) Provide mechanisms, strategies and approaches in implementing  
9 programs and projects to improve nutritional status and to eradicate  
10 malnutrition and hunger;  
11

12 (d) Strengthen the National Nutrition Council (NNC) as the policy-making  
13 body on nutrition; and  
14

15 (e) Ensure the meaningful and active participation, partnership and  
16 cooperation of NNC-member agencies, other National Government  
17 Agencies (NGAs), Local Government Units (LGUs), Non-Government  
18 Organizations (NGOs), and the private sector, in an integrated and  
19 holistic manner, for the promotion of the nutritional well-being of the  
20 population.  
21

22 **SEC.4. Comprehensive Anti-Malnutrition Program.** - There shall be a  
23 comprehensive and sustainable program to address malnutrition in the  
24 country to be formulated by the National Nutrition Council, in cooperation  
25 with other government agencies, local government units, the private  
26 sector relevant civil society organizations and industry, within three (3)  
27 months from the effectivity of this Act.  
28

29 **SEC. 5. Coverage and Phases of the Program.** - This Act covers all  
30 Filipinos who are nutritionally at risk, with specific focus on women of  
31 reproductive age, pregnant women, lactating mothers, particularly  
32 teenage mothers, and all Filipino children ages zero to two (2) years  
33 old that reside in nutritionally-poor areas identified by the Food and  
34 Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI).  
35

36 The Comprehensive Anti-Malnutrition Program, hereinafter cited as  
37 CAMP, shall be implemented in two phases. The first phase which will be  
38 implemented in the first three years of the program, will cover areas  
39 identified by the FNRI as having the most number of nutritionally at risk  
40 populations. The second phase, which will be implemented in the succeeding  
41 three years of the program, shall be implemented in the fourth to sixth class  
42 municipalities in the country.  
43

44 **Sec. 6. Types and Definition of Malnutrition.** - The following types of  
45 malnutrition are hereby defined:  
46

47 a) Low birth weight refers to weight at birth of less than 2500 grams  
48 or 5.5 pounds;  
49

50 b) Underweight refers to low weight-for-age which is less than negative  
51 two (2) standard deviations (SO) of the WHO Child Growth Standard  
52 median;  
53

54 c) Stunting refers to low height-for-age which is less than negative 2 SO of  
55 the WHO Child Growth Standard median and which is an indicator of  
56 long standing or chronic malnutrition;

1  
2 d) Wasting refers to low weight-for-height which is less than negative 2 SO  
3 of the WHO Child Growth Standard median.

4  
5 e) Overweight refers to weight above normal for height, which is greater  
6 than positive 2 standard deviations (SD) of the WHO Child Growth  
7 Standard median;

8  
9 **Sec. 7. Coverage.** - This Act covers all Filipinos who are nutritionally at risk,  
10 with specific focus on women of reproductive age, pregnant and lactating  
11 women, particularly teen-age mothers, and all Filipino children from birth to  
12 ages zero to two (2) years old that reside in Geographically Isolated and  
13 Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA), i.e. areas that are isolated due to distance,  
14 weather conditions and transportation, have high incidences of poverty,  
15 presence of vulnerable sector, communities in or recovering from situation of  
16 crisis or armed conflict and recognized as such by the Food and Nutrition  
17 Research Institute (FNRI).

18  
19 **SEC. 8. Target.** - The CAMP shall target to reduce the prevalence rate  
20 of underweight children from 0 to 5 years of age by 10 percent in five (5)  
21 years.

22  
23 **SEC. 9. Shared Responsibility.** - Couples must share responsibility in  
24 providing care, health, and nutrition to children, according to their religious  
25 and cultural beliefs. *Provided, that* such beliefs are not detrimental to the  
26 over-all well being of their children.

27  
28 **SEC. 10. Breastfeeding and the Mother's Right to Informed Choice.**-  
29 Consistent with Republic Act No. 10028 or the Expanded Breastfeeding  
30 Promotion Act of 2009, the State shall provide adequate information  
31 and communication materials to promote breastfeeding and all forms of  
32 nutritious food and supplement to ensure every Filipino child's optimal  
33 nutrition.

34  
35 However, in cases when the mother is unable to breastfeed for various  
36 reasons, and consistent with international human rights instruments that  
37 the State has adhered to which guarantees the right to information and  
38 informed choice, the mother has the right to access all available  
39 information on and to choose from among the many options of feeding her  
40 child and should not be made inferior if she chose to opt for the latter.

41  
42 **SEC. 11. Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) and Strategies.**  
43 - The PPAN is the integrated short, medium and long-term plan of the  
44 government in response to the global call to eradicate hunger and  
45 malnutrition. It is the blueprint for achieving nutrition adequacy for all as  
46 an important element for international competitiveness, people  
47 empowerment and human development.

48  
49 The PPAN aims to reduce prevalence of protein-energy malnutrition, Vitamin  
50 A deficiency, iron deficiency anemia and iodine deficiency disorders.

51  
52 The PPAN shall employ a twin strategy: promotion of household food  
53 security; and the prevention, control and elimination of micro-nutrient  
54 malnutrition. It shall involve short, medium, and long-term  
55 interventions to address hunger and malnutrition. Further, programs to  
56 ensure household food security through availability and accessibility of

1 safe and nutritious foods shall be encouraged.  
2

3 **SEC. 12. The National Nutrition Council.** - The National Nutrition Council  
4 (NNC), composed of a Governing Board and a Secretariat, is the highest policy  
5 making body on nutrition. It coordinates the formulation and the  
6 implementation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN). It shall  
7 provide overall direction for the nutrition plans and programs and  
8 coordinate all others agencies which contribute resources and expertise for  
9 nutrition development.  
10

11  
12 Due to the urgent need to address malnutrition, and in order to increase  
13 its efficiency and effectiveness, the NNC is hereby transferred to the  
14 Office of the President (OP) immediately upon the effectivity of this Act.  
15

16 The composition of the NNC Governing Board is hereby amended and  
17 further expanded:  
18

19 I. The Governing Board. - The Governing Board (GB) shall be  
20 composed of the following:  
21

- 22 a. President of the Philippines, as Chairperson;
- 23 b. Secretary of Agriculture;
- 24 c. Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development;
- 25 d. Secretary of the Department of Health;
- 26 e. Secretary of the Department of Education;
- 27 f. Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology;
- 28 g. Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management;
- 29 h. Department of Trade and Industry;
- 30 i. Chairperson of the Philippine Commission on Women;
- 31 j. Presidents of the League of Cities, League of Municipalities, League  
32 of Provinces;
- 33 k. Three representatives from the private sector to be appointed by the  
34 President of the Philippines shall each come from the food and  
35 nutrition industry, and women.  
36

37 The Board shall create a Technical Committee or such other committee of  
38 experts as it may deem necessary to act as the Council's advisory body on  
39 policy and program matters.  
40  
41

42 The Secretariat shall serve as the Executive arm of the Governing Board. It  
43 shall be headed by an Executive Director, assisted by two Deputy  
44 Executive Directors, all of whom shall be appointed by the President.  
45  
46

47 **SEC. 13. Functions and Powers of the NNC.** - The Council shall have  
48 the following functions and powers:  
49  
50

- 51 (a) Formulate national nutrition policies, plans, strategies and  
52 approaches  
53 for nutrition improvement;  
54
- 55 (b) Oversee and serve as a focal point in the integration of  
56 nutrition policies and programs of all member agencies and  
57 instrumentalities charged with the implementation of existing laws,  
58 policies, rules and regulations concerning nutrition;  
59

1 (c) Coordinate, monitor and evaluate programs and projects of both  
2 public  
3 and private sectors as well as of LGUs in order to insure integration of  
4 nutrition with national policies;  
5

6 (d) Receive grants, donations and contributions in any form from  
7 foreign governments, private institutions and other funding entities for  
8 nutrition programs and projects: *Provided, That* no conditions shall be  
9 made contrary to the policies or provisions of this Act;  
10

11 (e) Coordinate the release of public funds for the promotion of  
12 nutrition well-being of the country in accordance with the approved  
13 programs and projects; and  
14  
15

16 (f) Call upon any government agency and instrumentalities comprising  
17 the pillars of the executive system for such assistance as may be  
18 required to implement the provisions of this Act in order to reduce and  
19 eventually eliminate malnutrition in the country.  
20  
21

22 **SEC. 14. Role of NNC -Member Agencies, other National Government**  
23 **Agencies, Local Government Units, and the Private Sector in the**  
24 **implementation of this Act.** - Member agencies shall be responsible for  
25 insuring the implementation of programs and projects, development of  
26 promotive, preventive and curative nutrition programs, and integration of  
27 health and nutrition concerns into their respective policies and plans. It  
28 shall provide additional resources in any form in support of the local  
29 nutrition programs as a continuing involvement of the national government to  
30 local programs.  
31

32  
33 The consortium of State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) shall  
34 intensify  
35 nutrition related training, research and extension support activities  
36 through the Barangay Integrated Development Approach for Nutrition  
37 Improvement (BIDANI) Network Program of the Rural Poor and other  
38 relevant approaches, thereby strengthening delivery systems in partnership  
39 with the LGUs.  
40  
41

42 Local Government Units (LGUs), pursuant to the Local Government Code  
43 of 1991, shall provide and deliver basic nutrition services and  
44 facilities to the community. The LGUs shall integrate nutrition  
45 considerations in their short, medium and long-term development plans,  
46 and programs and shall coordinate with the Council in the enforcement  
47 of this Act. The State shall provide incentives to the LGUs for projects  
48 targeting young children. Other National Government Agencies (NGAs) shall  
49 serve as important links in promoting nutrition in development through its  
50 participation in the continuing advocacy for nutritional improvement,  
51 and integration of nutrition considerations in their sectoral plans and  
52 programs.  
53

54  
55 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) shall be encouraged to  
56 undertake nutrition related researches and to recommend procedures and  
57 guidelines promotive of good nutrition among employees of agencies or  
58 members of NGOs.

1 The Private Sector shall also be encouraged to provide technical and  
2 financial assistance to community-based nutrition projects through their  
3 corporate social responsibility programs, as their participation in the  
4 country's bid to enhance human capital formation.

5  
6 **SEC. 15. Remuneration and Skills Training for Barangay Health**  
7 **Workers and Barangay Nutrition Scholars.** -LGUs are mandated to provide  
8 adequate honoraria to Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS) and Barangay  
9 Health Workers (BHWs). They shall likewise endeavor to provide sustained  
10 capability building skills to BNS and BHWs in support of local nutrition  
11 programs.

12  
13 The DOH shall be responsible for disseminating all information necessary  
14 and providing training programs to the LGUs' nutrition programs. The  
15 LGUs, with the technical assistance of the DOH, shall be responsible for the  
16 training of BHWs and BNS and other barangay volunteers on nutrition  
17 promotion.

18  
19  
20 The national government shall provide additional and necessary funding  
21 and other necessary assistance for the effective implementation of this Act.

22  
23 **SEC. 16. Nutrition in the Aftermath of Natural Disasters and Calamities.**  
24 - Areas that are struck by disasters must be prioritized in the delivery of  
25 nutrition programs.

26  
27 National, regional, and local governments are mandated to immediately  
28 provide emergency food supplies for proper nourishment of lactating  
29 mothers and children, specifically those from zero to two (2) years old.

30  
31 Private sector donations in emergency situations shall be allowed  
32 immediately in the aftermath of natural disasters and calamities. The  
33 National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRMMC) is  
34 hereby mandated to formulate guidelines in pursuit of this Section.

35  
36 National and local disaster risk reduction and management councils are  
37 hereby enjoined to involve women in the decision making process, allowing  
38 them to take part in implementing disaster preparedness, recovery and  
39 rehabilitation programs.

40  
41 **SEC. 17. Teen-Age Mothers and Lactating Women.** - LGUs shall endeavor  
42 to monitor teen-age mothers and lactating women from poor households.  
43 Access to nutrition by these nutritionally at risk populations must at all  
44 times be ensured by health centers and barangay officials.

45  
46 **SEC. 18. Appropriations.** - An initial sum of 100 Million  
47 Pesos (PhP100,000,000) is hereby appropriated for this Act in support of  
48 locally initiated nutrition programs; Thereafter, an appropriation for this  
49 Act shall be provided annually in the General Appropriations Act.

50  
51 LGUs which have been identified by the FNRI as among those that  
52 have  
53 populations that are nutritionally at risk, will supplement the funds  
54 necessary for the implementation of this Act through a mandatory  
55 allocation of at least five percent (5%) of their Internal Revenue Allotment  
56 for malnutrition reduction: *Provided That*, the Local Gender and  
57 Development Budget shall likewise be utilized for nutrition programs

1 pursuant to the nutrition standard promulgated by the NNC on local  
2 feeding programs.

3  
4 The funds needed by the NNC to carry out the provisions of this Act shall  
5 be charged to the appropriations of the NNC under the annual General  
6 Appropriations Act in addition to the appropriations of other  
7 department/agencies whose programs and activities are in support of the  
8 PPAN and this Act: *Provided That*, no public fund shall be used for feeding  
9 programs that will be implemented for less than 120 days continuously.

10  
11 Funds needed by SUCs in implementing BIDANI and other nutrition  
12 approaches shall be incorporated in the annual appropriation of SUCs.

13  
14  
15 **SEC. 19. Review and Sunset Clause.** - Six years after the effectivity of this  
16 Act and every three years thereafter, the NNC shall conduct a review of the  
17 nutrition status of the country and shall make a determination if  
18 international standards have been complied with.

19  
20 In the event the standards have not been met upon expiry of this Act,  
21 Congress shall reauthorize this Act for such period as may be necessary to  
22 comply with the international standards set on malnutrition.

23  
24 **SEC. 20. Separability Clause.** - If any provision of this Act or the  
25 application of such provision to any instrumentalities or entities or  
26 circumstances is held invalid or unconstitutional for any reason or  
27 reasons. The remainder of this Act or the application of such other  
28 provisions shall not be affected thereby.

29  
30 **SEC. 21. Repealing Clause.** - All laws and part of laws, decrees, orders,  
31 proclamations, issuance, rules and regulations which are inconsistent  
32 with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified  
33 accordingly.

34  
35 **SEC. 22. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take *effect* fifteen days after its  
36 publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) national newspapers  
37 of general circulation whichever comes earlier.

38  
39 Approved,