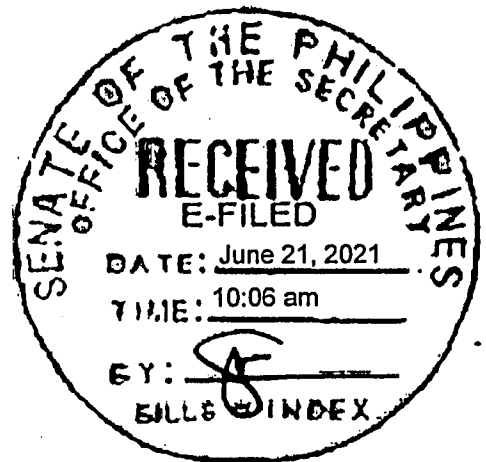


**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**
Third Regular Session

SENATE
S. B. No. 2297



Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE ANNUAL MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR FILIPINOS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines, as a state party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognizes the Right to Health as a fundamental human right. The Philippine Constitution also provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. Moreover, it is also the duty of the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic exhibited the many vulnerabilities of Filipinos, the biggest being our overall health and wellness as the disease resulted in the deaths of thousands – with most of them having various pre-existing conditions and comorbidities. What is unfortunate is that many of these conditions and comorbidities, such as coronary heart diseases or diabetes, could have been adequately addressed if these were screened early.

The Department of Health (DOH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) attributed this to the “poor health-seeking behavior” of Filipinos. In fact, according to a 2018 study by Dayrit, Lagrada, et al. published by the WHO, “care-seeking behavior among Filipinos is largely dictated by the ability to pay (household income) and, because of financial constraints especially among the poor, care-seeking is often

delayed. [...] Until the condition becomes serious, the patient may opt for self-care or take alternative remedies, including traditional healing.”

Hence, as Filipinos have become more cognizant of the importance of taking care of one’s health and wellness and as our government continues to resolve the current health crisis on top of rolling out an efficient and equitable Universal Health Care as provided under Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care Act, there is a need to provide another opportunity for Filipinos to be able to access preventive care without incurring additional financial burden. Through this measure, which is a counterpart version of HB 4093 by Rep. Michael Defensor of ANAKalusugan Partylist, Filipinos – who are automatically members of the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) by virtue of R.A. No. 11223 – would be able to access free annual medical check-ups which shall include blood sugar and cholesterol tests. This program, which shall be created and managed by PhilHealth, will not only help Filipinos assess their well-being and address their most immediate health concerns but also hopefully address the growing cost of healthcare in the country.

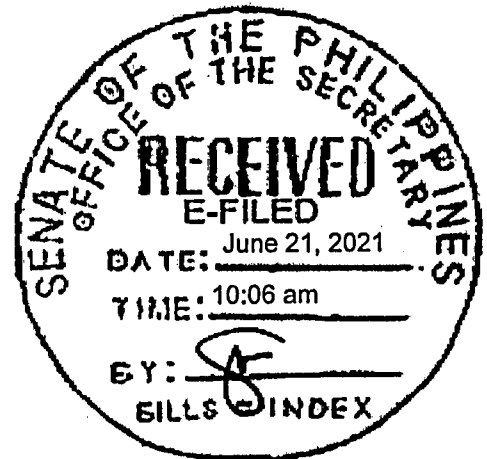
Through this policy, we are empowering Filipinos to take a more proactive stance towards their own health and, in turn, create a more health-conscious population.

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


SONNY ANGARA

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**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE ANNUAL MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR FILIPINOS**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the “Free Annual
2 Medical Check-Up Act of 2021”

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – The State recognizes its duty to protect and
4 promote the right to health of the people. Pursuant to its duty, the State shall provide
5 the services needed to ensure the health and wellness of every Filipino. Aside from
6 enhancing programs that focus on curative medicine, there should be emphasis on
7 improving the country’s health care system in terms of preventive interventions and
8 strengthening the health-seeking behavior of citizens. In line with this, Filipinos shall
9 be entitled to an annual medical check-up, through the programs of the Philippine
10 Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), that is free of charge in any government
11 hospital and institution.

12 **SEC. 3. *Coverage.***

13 A. Population Coverage. – Every Filipino citizen shall be covered by the free
14 annual medical check-up under this Act pursuant to Sec. 5 of R.A. No. 11223
15 or the “Universal Health Care Act.”

1 B. Medical Check-Up Coverage. – PhilHealth, in consultation with the
2 Department of Health (DOH), shall establish a program to provide Filipinos
3 with free annual medical check-up including, but not limited to, blood sugar
4 and cholesterol tests: *Provided, That*, prior to the avilment of laboratory
5 and/or diagnostic exams, the patient must first be screened by a PhilHealth-
6 accredited primary care provider as stated under Sec. 6(d) of R.A. 11223 in
7 order to evaluate the patient and identify which laboratory and/or diagnostic
8 exams should be administered: *Provided, further*, That the avilment of the
9 laboratory and/or diagnostic exams shall be through PhilHealth-accredited
10 health care institutions (HCIs): *Provided, furthermore*, That, upon approval
11 of the PhilHealth Board, these laboratory and/or diagnostic exam shall be
12 expanded subject to the availability of PhilHealth funds and the current and
13 emerging health necessities of Filipinos.

14 **SEC. 4. *Schedule of Free Medical Check-Up.*** – The duration of availing the
15 free medical check-up shall be for the whole calendar year. PhilHealth shall establish
16 a system to secure that every Filipino will be accommodated and get the services that
17 they are entitled to.

18 **SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*** – PhilHealth shall be
19 primarily responsible in implementing the provisions of this Act. PhilHealth, in
20 consultation with DOH, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and
21 regulations within thirty (30) days upon effectivity of this Act.

22 **SEC. 6. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall
23 be charged against the total revenue of PhilHealth, composed of premium
24 contributions from direct contributors and premium subsidies of the government for
25 the indirect contributors, of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

26 **SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision or part of this Act is declared
27 invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to
28 be in full force and effect.

29 **SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** - All other laws, decrees, orders, other issuances,
30 rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
31 hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

1 **SEC. 9. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
2 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,