

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



'22 JUL -7 P3 :20

SENATE
S.B. No. 148

RECEIVED BY 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

**AN ACT
GRANTING A MATERNITY BENEFIT TO WOMEN WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL
ECONOMY, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11210,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

One of the drivers of Republic Act No. 11210 or the Expanded Maternity Leave Law is to increase the prevalence of breastfeeding among working mothers. The data is rich and clear that investing in national policies and programs to support breastfeeding – such as increased maternity benefits for working women – leads to marked improvements in social, health and economic development outcomes.

While the R.A. 11210 has been beneficial to working women, a large swathe of the work force, as well as their infants, remains unable to enjoy the provisions and benefits of the Expanded Maternity Leave Law. These are women working in the informal economy who are non-members of the Social Security System (SSS).

Peer-reviewed research has quantified the economic toll that inadequate breastfeeding takes on individuals, communities and countries, and has found that the current cost to the Philippine health care system due to inadequate breastfeeding is around US\$16.3 million per year, and future cognitive losses of US\$2.3 billion a year owing to reduced development and earning potential can be expected. The costs of infant formula also significantly reduce a family's disposable income. Providing a maternity benefit to women workers in the informal economy equivalent to around US\$350 per mother is paltry compared to the potential economic benefits of improving breastfeeding rates at population level. In fact, according to the same study, the estimated cost of a 14-week maternity leave is only 5% of the cost of not breastfeeding in the Philippines¹.

Therefore, a maternity benefit for women workers in the informal economy is not just a social justice measure and an important way to address the multiple burdens and

¹ <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/mcn.13098>

increased vulnerabilities of women who are also mothers and informal workers, it also leads to demonstrable and quantifiable health outcomes at the population level.

For these reasons, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator

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

1 Section 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Maternity Benefit for Women in*
2 *the Informal Economy Act.*"

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to protect the
4 rights and welfare of women workers in the informal economy, to ensure optimal maternal
5 health consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals, and to encourage and support
6 the practice of breastfeeding in furtherance of its obligation to ensure the survival and
7 development of Filipino children.

8 Sec. 3. *Maternity benefit for women workers in the informal economy.* – Section
9 11 of Republic Act No. 11210 is hereby deleted and replaced with a new Section 11, which
10 will read as follows:

11 SECTION 11. MATERNITY BENEFITS FOR FEMALE WORKERS WHO ARE NON-
12 MEMBERS OF THE SSS. – FEMALE WORKERS WHO ARE NEITHER VOLUNTARY
13 NOR REGULAR MEMBERS OF THE SSS SHALL RECEIVE, THROUGH THE
14 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD), A ONE-TIME
15 DIRECT MATERNITY CASH BENEFIT PER DELIVERY EQUIVALENT TO THE
16 PREVAILING DAILY MINIMUM WAGE RATE IN HER REGION OF RESIDENCE
17 MULTIPLIED BY FORTY FOUR (44) DAYS.

18 Sec. 4. *Funding source.* – The amounts necessary to fund this maternity benefit
19 shall be taken from revenues from excise taxes on sweetened beverages, alcohol, tobacco
20 products, heated tobacco products, and vapor products, and may be augmented under
21 the General Appropriations Act.

1 Sec. 5. *Separability Clause.* – Should any provision of this Act be declared
2 unconstitutional, the remaining parts not affected thereby shall remain valid and
3 operational.

4 Sec. 6. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, circulars, issuances, rules
5 and regulations and parts thereof which are inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed,
6 amended or modified accordingly.

7 Sec. 7. *Effectivity.* – This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
8 in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.
Approved,