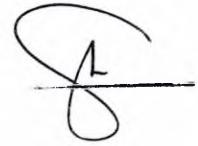


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

Senate
Office of the Secretary

'22 JUL 25 P1:30

SENATE
S. No. 835



Introduced by Senator Loren B. Legarda

**AN ACT
PROVIDING POLICIES AND PRESCRIBING PROCEDURES TO
PREVENT, CONTROL, AND RESPOND TO INFECTIOUS DISEASES,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11332,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MANDATORY REPORTING OF
NOTIFIABLE DISEASES AND HEALTH EVENTS OF PUBLIC
HEALTH CONCERN ACT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) has infected more than five hundred forty-five million individuals and has claimed the lives of more than six million worldwide in two (2) years.¹ Notable variants of the virus have emerged since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic in 2020. The new variants are reported to be more aggressive and contagious, increasing pressure on global health systems and the economy.

In the Philippines alone, as of July 14, 2022, COVID-19 has infected more than three million seven hundred thousand Filipinos (3,723,014 confirmed cases) and has claimed the lives of more than sixty thousand six hundred others (60,640 deaths).²

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought lasting social and economic losses to the government, the private sector, and even individual Filipinos. Public health measures

¹ World Health Organization Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard as of July 4, 2022. <https://covid19.who.int/>

² COVID-19 Tracker as of July 14, 2022 | Department of Health website (doh.gov.ph)

and mitigation interventions have been established. However, there were noted policy gaps that must be immediately addressed. With this, there is a need to update policies, align processes, and establish a response system for effective and immediate measures to analyze, address, and prevent public health and safety threats.

This bill seeks to provide additional measures to preserve the health of the Filipino people, ensure health promotion, and respond effectively in the event of the emergence or re-emergence of an infectious disease.

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



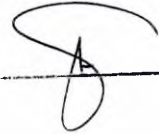
LOREN LEGARDA



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HEALTH CONCERN ACT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 Section. 1. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 11332, otherwise known as the
2 "*Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Health Concern*
3 *Act,*" is hereby amended as follows:

4 "SEC. 4. *Objectives.* - This Act shall have the following objectives:

5 (a) To continuously develop and upgrade the list of nationally
6 notifiable diseases and health events of public health concern
7 with their corresponding case definitions and laboratory
8 confirmation;

9 (b) To ensure the establishment and maintenance of relevant,
10 efficient, and effective disease surveillance and response
11 system at the national and local levels;

12 (c) To expand collaborations beyond traditional public health
13 partners to include others who may be involved in the disease
14 surveillance and response, such as agricultural agencies,
15 veterinarians, environmental agencies, law enforcement

1 entities, and transportation and communication agencies,
2 among others;

3 (d) To provide accurate and timely health information about
4 notifiable diseases and health-related events and conditions to
5 citizens and health providers as an integral part of response to
6 public health emergencies;

7 (e) To establish effective mechanisms for strong collaboration
8 with national and local government health agencies to ensure
9 proper procedures are in place to promptly respond to reports
10 of notifiable diseases and health events of public health
11 concern, including case investigations, treatment, control, and
12 containment, including **APPROPRIATE RESTRICTIONS**
13 **ON DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, AND**
14 follow-up activities;

15 (f) To ensure that public health authorities have the statutory and
16 regulatory authority to ensure the following:

17 (1) Mandatory reporting of reportable diseases and health
18 events of public health concern;

19 (2) Epidemic/outbreaks and/or epidemiologic
20 investigation, case investigations, patient interviews,
21 review of medical records, contact tracing, specimen
22 collection and testing, risk assessments, laboratory
23 investigation, population surveys, and environmental
24 investigation;

25 (3) **RAPID** quarantine and isolation; and

26 (4) Rapid containment and implementation of measures for
27 disease prevention and control;

28 (g) To provide sufficient funding to support operations needed to
29 establish and maintain epidemiology and surveillance units at
30 the DOH, health facilities and local government units (LGUs);
31 efficiently and effectively investigate outbreaks and health
32 events of public health concern; validate, collect, analyze and

1 disseminate disease surveillance information to relevant
2 agencies or organizations; and implement appropriate
3 response;

4 (h) To require public and private physicians, allied medical
5 personnel, professional societies, hospitals, clinics, health
6 facilities, laboratories, pharmaceutical companies, private
7 companies and institutions, workplaces, schools, prisons,
8 ports, airports, establishments, communities, other
9 government agencies, and non-government organizations
10 (NGOs) to actively participate in disease surveillance and
11 response, **AND PREVENTION MEASURES; [and]**

12 (i) To respect to the fullest extent possible, the rights of people to
13 liberty, bodily integrity, and privacy while maintaining and
14 preserving public health and security[.];

15 **(J) TO PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN PHYSICAL AND**
16 **MENTAL HEALTH AND PROTECT FRONTLINE**
17 **HEALTH WORKERS AND VULNERABLE**
18 **POPULATIONS BY PRESCRIBING NECESSARY**
19 **POLICIES IN THE EVENT OF THE EMERGENCE OR RE-**
20 **EMERGENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES;**

21 **(K) TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND**
22 **MEASURES TO CONTROL THE SPREAD AND**
23 **PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES;**

24 **(L) TO CONTINUOUSLY PROVIDE AND DEVELOP**
25 **INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS**
26 **OF THE PUBLIC WHILE ADAPTING TO THE**
27 **PREVAILING CIRCUMSTANCES; AND**

28 **(M) TO ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE MECHANISMS AND**
29 **INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO RESPOND ACCURATELY**
30 **AND IMMEDIATELY TO EMERGING AND RE-**
31 **EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES WITHIN AND**
32 **OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY."**

1 Sec. 2. A new Section 6 shall be inserted, to read as follows, and the succeeding
2 sections shall be renumbered accordingly:

3 **"SEC. 6. SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING. - THE**
4 **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) SHALL ENSURE THE**
5 **PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES BY**
6 **PROVIDING AND DISSEMINATING RELEVANT INFORMATION**
7 **THROUGH CONSTANT SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING OF**
8 **EMERGING AND RE-EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES, WHICH**
9 **MAY POSE THREATS TO PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND**
10 **SECURITY.**

11 **THE DOH SHALL PROVIDE THE PUBLIC WITH TIMELY**
12 **INFORMATION PERTAINING TO HEALTH CONCERNS AND**
13 **PRESENT RESPECTIVE PARTICULARITIES AND CASE**
14 **DEFINITIONS. IT SHALL LIKEWISE CONDUCT MASS TESTING**
15 **FOR EARLY PREVENTION AND CONDUCT PERIODIC**
16 **REPORTING ON RESULTS FOR EFFECTIVE RISK**
17 **COMMUNICATION AND IMMEDIATE RESPONSE AND**
18 **MITIGATION OF SAID THREAT TO PUBLIC HEALTH."**

19 Sec. 3. A new Section 7 shall be inserted, to read as follows, and the succeeding
20 sections shall be renumbered accordingly:

21 **"SEC. 7. PREPAREDNESS, PREVENTION, AND CONTROL. -**
22 **THE FOLLOWING MEASURES SHALL BE PERFORMED UPON**
23 **CONFIRMATION AND VERIFICATION OF THE EMERGENCE OR**
24 **RE-EMERGENCE OF AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE WITHIN OR**
25 **OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY.**

26 **(A) THE DOH AND ITS LOCAL COUNTERPARTS SHALL BE**
27 **MANDATED TO PROVIDE NATIONAL AND LOCAL**
28 **HEALTH STRATEGIES AND MEASURES TO PREPARE AND**
29 **CURB THE SPREAD OF THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE;**

30 **(B) THE DOH SHALL PUBLISH A LIST OF EXPERTS AND**
31 **MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES TO**
32 **BE CONSULTED AND MOBILIZED;**

1 (C) THE DOH SHALL ENSURE THAT THERE IS AN AMPLE
2 SUPPLY OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, PROTECTIVE
3 EQUIPMENT, AND MEDICINES IN ALL HOSPITALS, RURAL
4 HEALTH UNITS, AND MEDICAL FACILITIES;

5 (D) THE DOH SHALL PROVIDE STRATEGIES TO ENSURE THE
6 DIAGNOSTIC AND TREATMENT CAPACITY OF
7 HOSPITALS, RURAL HEALTH UNITS, AND MEDICAL
8 FACILITIES TO HANDLE THE SURGE IN CASES WHILE
9 ENSURING CONTINUITY OF ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICE
10 DELIVERY;

11 (E) THE DOH SHALL LEAD THE PROMPT CONDUCT OF RISK
12 ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY HIGH-RISK AND VULNERABLE
13 POPULATIONS, AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING, IN
14 COORDINATION WITH THE NATIONAL DISASTER RISK
15 REDUCTION COUNCIL (NDRRMC), DEPARTMENT OF
16 INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG), AND
17 OTHER GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES. THE
18 CONTINGENCY PLAN SHALL INCLUDE MEASURES TO
19 RECONFIGURE HEALTH FACILITIES AND REPURPOSE
20 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FACILITIES TO PROVIDE SAFE
21 AREAS FOR EMERGENCY CASE MANAGEMENT,
22 QUARANTINE, AND ISOLATION;

23 (F) THE DOH SHALL ISSUE PARAMETERS AND GUIDELINES
24 ON CASE REPORTING, MONITORING, AND CASE
25 HANDLING, AS WELL AS ESTABLISH HEALTH AND
26 SAFETY PROTOCOLS. LGUS AND GOVERNMENT
27 AGENCIES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES ARE REQUIRED TO
28 COMPLY WITH SUCH GUIDELINES;

29 (G) THE DOH AND ITS LOCAL COUNTERPART SHALL
30 ESTABLISH INTEROPERABLE MONITORING
31 MECHANISMS AND CONTINUOUS INFORMATION
32 SYSTEMS TO MONITOR POTENTIAL AND CONFIRMED

1 **CASES OF THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE, LOCALLY AND**
2 **NATIONALLY.**

3 **(H) THE DOH SHALL EMPLOY THE USE OF TECHNOLOGICAL**
4 **SOLUTIONS, WHERE POSSIBLE, SUCH AS TELEMEDICINE,**
5 **TO MONITOR PATIENTS AND PROMOTE REMOTE**
6 **CONSULTATION, TO MINIMIZE RISK TO PATIENTS,**

7 **(I) THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND LGUS SHALL**
8 **CONDUCT PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST THE**
9 **INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXISTING**
10 **LAWS AND REGULATIONS. THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH,**
11 **PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR, OR CITY OR MUNICIPAL**
12 **MAYOR SHALL UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING**
13 **PREVENTIVE MEASURES, IN PART OR IN FULL, TO**
14 **PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ANY INFECTIOUS DISEASE:**

15 **(1) TO RESTRICT OR PROHIBIT GATHERINGS, SUCH AS**
16 **ASSEMBLIES, RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, OR ANY**
17 **OTHER MASS GATHERINGS;**

18 **(2) TO PARTIALLY OR TEMPORARILY CLOSE NON-**
19 **ESSENTIAL PLACES OF WORK, BUSINESS, AND**
20 **EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS;**

21 **(3) TO PARTIALLY OR FULLY RESTRICT TRAVEL WITHIN**
22 **THEIR LOCALITY OR REGULATE TRAVEL BY LAND,**
23 **SEA, OR AIR;**

24 **(4) TO PARTIALLY OR FULLY CLOSE ALL AIRPORTS AND**
25 **SEAPORTS;**

26 **(5) TO ORDER THE SANITATION AND DISINFECTION OF**
27 **FACILITIES, BUILDINGS, OR COMMUNITIES, AS MAY**
28 **BE DEEMED NECESSARY;**

29 **(6) TO DESIGNATE MEDICAL FACILITIES OR BUILDINGS**
30 **AS LOCAL ISOLATION AND TREATMENT CENTERS;**

31 **(7) TO ESTABLISH SURVEILLANCE UNITS AND**
32 **MECHANISMS, FROM THE BARANGAY TO THE**

1 PROVINCIAL LEVEL, TO CAPTURE ACCURATE AND
2 TIMELY DATA NECESSARY TO PREVENT, MONITOR,
3 AND CURB THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE; AND

4 (8) TO DESIGNATE OR CONTRACT PERSONNEL TO
5 ASSIST IN CONTACT TRACING, TESTING, RISK
6 COMMUNICATION, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT,
7 HEALTH PROMOTION, OR OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH
8 INTERVENTIONS;

9 (J) THE PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY SHALL ISSUE CONSTANT
10 RELEVANT INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THE
11 INFECTIOUS DISEASE."

12 Sec. 4. A new Section 8 shall be inserted, to read as follows, and the succeeding
13 sections shall be renumbered accordingly:

14 "SEC. 8. *HANDLING OF POTENTIAL AND CONFIRMED*
15 *CASES. - THE FOLLOWING MEASURES SHALL BE OBSERVED:*

16 (A) THE DOH AND LGUS SHALL IMMEDIATELY IDENTIFY
17 AND DESIGNATE HOSPITALS, RURAL HEALTH UNITS, OR
18 MEDICAL FACILITIES OPERATING SOLELY TO HANDLE
19 AND TREAT THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE;

20 (B) THE LGU AND HEALTH OFFICES SHALL ISSUE A LIST OF
21 POTENTIAL CARRIERS OF THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE
22 BASED ON THE GUIDELINES PRESCRIBED BY THE DOH;

23 (C) THE LGU SHALL PREPARE ITS OWN PANDEMIC
24 PREPAREDNESS PLAN ALIGNED WITH THE NATIONAL
25 PLAN;

26 (D) IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL CARRIERS ARE DIRECTED TO
27 UNDERGO QUARANTINE PROCEDURES IN IDENTIFIED
28 HOSPITALS UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF LOCAL HEALTH
29 AUTHORITIES AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL;

30 (E) UPON VERIFICATION OF THE CONFIRMED CARRIER,
31 CONTACT TRACING SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY
32 CONDUCTED BY THE DOH IN COORDINATION WITH

1 LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES. THE FOLLOWING MAY BE
2 USED FOR THE EFFICIENT CONDUCTION OF CONTACT
3 TRACING:

- 4 (1) PATIENT INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES; AND
5 (2) LOCAL AUTHORIZED HEALTH PERSONNEL SHALL
6 USE DATA FROM THE GPS AND LOCATION FROM THE
7 SOCIAL MEDIA SITES OF THE PATIENT FOR
8 EFFICIENT CONTACT TRACING. THE USE OF DATA IS
9 ONLY FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF SURVEILLANCE OF
10 THE DISEASE AND CONTACT TRACING AND IS
11 SUBJECT TO DATA SECURITY AND
12 CONFIDENTIALITY MEASURES.

13 (F) AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING, BUT NOT
14 LIMITED TO, THE USE OF SMARTPHONES AND
15 TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES, SHALL BE UTILIZED IN
16 MONITORING THE MOVEMENT AND HEALTH
17 CONDITIONS OF THE POTENTIAL AND CONFIRMED
18 CARRIER;

19 (G) PRIVATE BUSINESSES OPERATING IN PUBLIC PLACES
20 SHALL BE REQUIRED TO COLLECT DATA FROM THEIR
21 PATRONS AND VISITORS FOR PURPOSES OF
22 FACILITATING CONTACT TRACING AND NOTIFICATION,
23 SUBJECT TO EXISTING RULES AND REGULATIONS ON
24 DATA SECURITY AND PRIVACY. EMPLOYERS ARE
25 RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTACT TRACING & NOTIFICATION
26 IN THE WORKPLACE, WHILE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
27 ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTACT TRACING &
28 NOTIFICATION IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT."

29 Sec. 5. A new Section 9 shall be inserted, to read as follows, and the succeeding
30 sections shall be renumbered accordingly:

31 "SEC. 9. INCENTIVES. - PRIVATE GROUPS AND ENTITIES
32 ENGAGED IN SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING SHALL BE

1 GRANTED INCENTIVES INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO,
2 EXEMPTION FROM PAYMENT OF RELEVANT TAXES, AND
3 OTHER INCENTIVES AS MAY BE PROVIDED UNDER EXISTING
4 LAWS AND REGULATIONS.”

5 Sec. 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared as
6 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provisions not affected thereby shall
7 remain in force and effect.

8 Sec. 7. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
9 order, letter of instruction, rule or regulation inconsistent with the provisions of this
10 Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

11 Sec. 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
12 following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general
13 circulation.

Approved,