


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

7 JUL -3 10:30

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

Senate Bill No. 691

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INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

More than insufficiency of resources, lack of innovation in harnessing collective non-pecuniary resources to come up with basic programs that seek to take care of the country's health needs explains poor delivery of basic health services as well as failure to critically respond to basic health concerns on the part of the government.

Indeed, budgetary constraints should never be an excuse for failure to handle important governmental undertakings, such as health.

For instance, breast cancer has long been a concern since time immemorial and yet the government has not come up with decisive policy direction, let alone concrete plan of action to address the same. It may sound alarming, noting that breast cancer is the leading common cancer among Filipino women and second among both sexes, but it is muted by the fact that no programs are set in place at the moment.

The proposed measure which focuses on addressing breast cancer is a crucial starting point in our joint quest for meaningful response mechanism without necessary use of huge resources. Although it may sound resource exhaustive, as it seeks to establish breast care centers in every region nationwide, it actually utilizes less resources since these centers will merely be attached departments to existing regional hospitals of the national government. In other words, it creatively re-channels existing government funds, instead of wasting additional ones, to respond to urgent needs.

Using cost-benefit analysis, these centers once established will greatly benefit millions of Filipinos who suffer, and who are about to suffer from breast cancer unless timely intervention is implemented. They will spearhead sustained information campaign to raise public awareness on the disease, take the lead in providing affordable services in disease prevention and consequently change existing mindset on how breast cancer should be approached and prevented.

Our people's health largely depends on important legislative measures. If only to abate a disease that has long caused sufferings to millions of people, the immediate enactment of the proposed measure should never be an issue.

  
JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA  
Senator

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**AN ACT**  
**PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BREAST CARE CENTERS IN EVERY REGION NATIONWIDE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

**SECTION 1. *Establishment of Breast Care Centers*** – A Breast Care Center, known as the “Center,” shall be established in every region of the country to spearhead the fight against breast cancer. It shall be a new department of existing regional hospitals of the National Government. Should there be no regional hospital in a region, the Center shall be attached to any district hospital in the region which is most accessible to the highest number of constituents.

**SEC 2. *Equipment and Personnel*** - The Center shall be provided with such equipment, tools, implements, devices, apparatus, and personnel as may be necessary for them to carry out multiple programs such as Breast Protection, Breast Surveillance, Breast Imaging, Breast Diagnostic and Surgery, Breast Cancer Chemotherapy and Breast Cancer Awareness and Information.

**SEC 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*** - The Secretary of the Department of Health shall issue such guidelines, orders or rules and regulations as may be necessary for the establishment of a Center in every regional hospital of the national government or in a district hospital to be designated by the Secretary of Health for being the most accessible to the highest number of constituents in a region where there is no existing regional hospital; for the acquisition of the necessary equipment, tools, implements, devices and apparatus, the hiring of personnel and fix reasonable fees for the services of the Centers and to carry out the provisions and purposes of this Act.

**SEC 4. *Functions*** - The Centers shall, in coordination with local government units, local health offices, the Philippine Information Agency and other government agencies, shall spearhead a sustained and extensive information and awareness campaign within their respective region to raise the level of awareness of the region’s constituents especially the women sector on the ills, causes and symptoms of the disease for its early detection and prevention.

It shall coordinate with regional and local education officials to ensure that female high school students in both public and private schools are taught the pertinent information about the disease and are trained to habitually self-examine themselves as a part of the regular secondary curriculum.

**SEC 5. Operationalization and Appropriations** - To fully implement the provisions of this Act, the Secretary of Health shall immediately include in the Department's program the operationalization of the Centers, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SEC 6.** This Act shall take effect immediately upon its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*