


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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SENATE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

7 JUL -3 P1 08

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

S. No. 761

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR COMPAÑERA PIA S. CAYETANO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

There is no food most natural in the world and proven safest for human babies than breastmilk, and no choice most natural and proven safest than breastfeeding. Breastmilk is the perfect, irreplaceable gift a mother can give to her baby. It is the best start a baby can have in life.

Today, roles are changing. Many women have become working mothers, joining the workforce in order to augment the income of their husbands. Unfortunately, studies show that maternal employment is significantly associated with its early cessation. Data from the National Demographic and Health Survey which lists "mothers working" as the second top reason for stopping breastfeeding. Knowing the difficulty of continuing breastfeeding upon returning to work, some women do not breastfeed at all or start weaning their baby before their maternity leave ends.

Cognizant of these realities, the bill, among other measures, proposes the establishment of lactation stations in workplaces and public places where nursing female employees and otherwise mobile lactating mothers can breastfeed or express their breastmilk, and to further provide other specific measures to enable working mothers to continue breastfeeding.

The objective of the bill is to reestablish the culture of breastfeeding as the normal, natural and preferred method of feeding infants and young children.

For these reasons, approval of this Bill is urgently sought.


COMPAÑERA PIA S. CAYETANO
Senator

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AN ACT

EXPANDING THE PROMOTION OF BREASTFEEDING, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7600, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING INCENTIVES TO ALL GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE HEALTH INSTITUTIONS WITH ROOMING-IN AND BREASTFEEDING PRACTICES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

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

SEC. 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2007."

SEC. 2. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7600 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - The State adopts rooming-in as a national policy to encourage, protect and support the practice of breastfeeding. It shall create an environment where basic physical, emotional, and psychological needs of mothers and infants are fulfilled through the practice of rooming-in and/ breastfeeding.

"THE STATE SHALL LIKEWISE PROTECT WORKING WOMEN BY PROVIDING SAFE AND HEALTHFUL WORKING CONDITIONS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THEIR MATERNAL FUNCTIONS, AND SUCH FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL ENHANCE THEIR WELFARE AND ENABLE THEM TO REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL IN THE SERVICE OF THE NATION. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND CONVENTIONS TO WHICH THE PHILIPPINES IS A SIGNATORY SUCH AS THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW), WHICH EMPHASIZES PROVISION OF NECESSARY SUPPORTING SOCIAL SERVICES TO ENABLE PARENTS TO COMBINE FAMILY OBLIGATIONS WITH WORK RESPONSIBILITIES; THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE, WHICH PROMOTES HARMONIZATION OF WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN; AND THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, WHICH RECOGNIZES A CHILD'S INHERENT RIGHT TO LIFE AND THE STATE'S OBLIGATIONS TO ENSURE THE CHILD'S SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT.

"Breastfeeding has distinct advantages which benefit the infant and the mother, including the hospital and the country that adopt its practice. It

is the first preventive health measure that can be given to the child at birth. It also enhances mother-infant relationship. Furthermore, the practice of breastfeeding could save the country valuable foreign exchange that may otherwise be used for milk importation.

"Breastmilk is the best food since it contains essential nutrients completely suitable for the infant's needs. It is also nature's first immunization, enabling the infant to fight potential serious infection. It contains growth factors that enhance the maturation of an infant's organ system.

"TOWARDS THIS END, THE STATE SHALL PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE BREASTFEEDING AND PROVIDE THE SPECIFIC MEASURES THAT WOULD PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MOTHERS TO CONTINUE EXPRESSING THEIR MILK AND/OR BREASTFEEDING THEIR INFANT OR YOUNG CHILD."

SEC. 3. Section 3 of the same law is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of this Act, the following definitions are adopted:

a) *Age of Gestation* – the length of time the fetus is inside the mother's womb;

b) *Bottlefeeding* – the method of feeding an infant using a bottle with artificial nipples, the contents of which can be any type of fluid;

c) *Breastfeeding* – the method of feeding an infant directly from the human breast.

d) *Breastmilk* – the human milk from a mother;

e) *BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTE* – MEANS ANY FOOD BEING MARKETED OR OTHERWISE REPRESENTED AS PARTIAL OR TOTAL REPLACEMENT OF BREASTMILK WHETHER OR NOT SUITABLE FOR THAT PURPOSE;

f) *[e] Expressed Breastmilk* – the human milk which has been extracted from the breast by hand or by pump. It can be fed to an infant using a dropper, a nasogastric tube, a cup and spoon, or a bottle.

g) *EXPRESSING MILK*- THE ACT OF EXTRACTING HUMANMILK FROM THE BREAST BY HAND OR BY PUMP.

h) *EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 51, OR THE "NATIONAL CODE OF MARKETING OF BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES, BREASTMILK SUPPLEMENT AND OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS;*

i) *[f] Formula Feeding* – the feeding of a newborn with infant formula usually by bottlefeeding. It is also called artificial feeding.

j) *[g] Health Institutions* – are hospitals, health infirmaries, health centers, lying-in centers, or puericulture centers with obstetrical and pediatric services.

[h) *Health Personnel* – are professionals and workers who manage and/or administer the entire operations of health institutions and/or who are involved in providing maternal and child health services.]

K) *HEALTH WORKERS* – SHALL REFER TO ALL PERSONS WHO ARE ENGAGED IN HEALTH AND HEALTH-RELATED WORK, AND ALL PERSONS EMPLOYED IN ALL HOSPITALS, SANITARIA, HEALTH INFIRMARIES, HEALTH CENTERS, RURAL HEALTH UNITS, BARANGAY HEALTH STATIONS, CLINIC AND OTHER HEALTH-RELATED ESTABLISHMENTS, WHETHER GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE, AND SHALL INCLUDE MEDICAL, ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL EMPLOYED REGARDLESS OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT STATUS;

L) [i] *Infant* – a child within zero (0) to twelve (12) months of age;

M) [j] *Infant Formula* – the breastmilk substitute formulated industrially in accordance with applicable Codex Alimentarius standards, to satisfy the normal nutritional requirements of infants up to six months of age, and adopted to their physiological characteristics;

N) *INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE* – SHALL REFER TO THE COMMITTEE CREATED UNDER EO NO. 51, AND COMPOSED OF THE SECRETARIES OF HEALTH, TRADE AND INDUSTRY, JUSTICE, AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT;

O) [k] *Lactation Management* – the general care of a mother-infant nursing couple during the mother's prenatal immediate postpartum and postnatal periods. It deals with educating and providing knowledge and information to pregnant and lactating mothers on the advantages of breastfeeding, THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES AND MILK PRODUCTS NOT SUITABLE AS BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES, SUCH AS BUT NOT LIMITED TO CONDENSED MILK AND EVAPORATED MILK, the physiology of lactation, the establishment and maintenance of lactation, the proper care of the breasts and nipples, and such other matters that would contribute to successful breastfeeding;

P) *LACTATION STATIONS* – SHALL REFER TO PRIVATE, CLEAN AND WELL-VENTILATED ROOMS OR AREAS IN THE WORKPLACE OR PUBLIC PLACES WHERE NURSING MOTHERS CAN BREASTFEED OR EXPRESS THEIR MILK;

Q) [l] *Low Birth Weight Infant* – a newborn weighing less than two thousand five hundred (2,500) grams at birth;

R) [m] *Mother's Milk* - the breastmilk from the newborn's own mother;

S) *NON-HEALTH INSTITUTIONS* – SHALL REFER TO PUBLIC PLACES AND WORKING PLACES, AS DEFINED IN SUB-PARAGRAPHS (T) AND (X), RESPECTIVELY;

T) *PUBLIC PLACE* – SHALL REFER TO ENCLOSED OR CONFINED AREAS SUCH AS SCHOOLS, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TERMINALS, SHOPPING MALLS, AND THE LIKE;

U) [n] *Rooming-In* – the practice of placing the newborn in the same room as the mother right after delivery up to discharge to facilitate mother-infant bonding and to initiate breastfeeding. The infant may either share the mother's bed or be placed in a crib beside the mother;

V) [o] *Seriously Ill Mothers* – are those who are: with severe infections; in shock; in severe cardiac or respiratory distress; or dying; or those with other conditions that may be determined by the attending physician as serious;

W) [p] *Wet-nursing* – the feeding of a newborn from another mother's breast when his/her own mother cannot breastfeed;

X) *WORKPLACE* – SHALL REFER TO THE WORK PREMISES WHERE NURSING FEMALE EMPLOYEES ARE HABITUALLY EMPLOYED, WHETHER PRIVATE ENTERPRISES OR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, INCLUDING THEIR SUBDIVISIONS, INSTRUMENTALITIES AND GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS; AND

Y) *YOUNG CHILD* - SHALL REFER TO A CHILD FROM THE AGE OF TWELVE (12) MONTHS AND ONE (1) DAY UP TO TWENTY-FOUR (24) MONTHS.

SEC. 4. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 7600 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 4. *Applicability* – WHENEVER APPLICABLE, the provisions in this Chapter shall apply TO BOTH private and government health AND NON-HEALTH institutions.

“UPON APPLICATION TO AND DETERMINATION BY THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR, PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT NON-HEALTH INSTITUTIONS MAYBE EXEMPTED FOR A RENEWABLE PERIOD OF TWO YEARS FROM SECTION 11 OF THIS ACT WHERE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LACTATION STATIONS IS NOT FEASIBLE OR NECESSARY DUE TO THE PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE WORKPLACE OR PUBLIC PLACE TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION, AMONG OTHERS, EMPLOYEE COMPOSITION, PHYSICAL SIZE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, AND THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF PATRONS WHO VISIT.”

SEC. 5. Section 10 of Republic Act No. 7600 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 10. *Provision of Facilities for Breastmilk Collection and Storage FOR HEALTH INSTITUTIONS.* – The health institution adopting rooming-in and breastfeeding shall provide equipment, facilities, and supplies for breastmilk collection, storage and utilization, the standards of which shall be defined by the Department of Health.” HEALTH INSTITUTIONS ARE LIKEWISE ENCOURAGED TO SET UP MILK BANKS FOR STORAGE OF BREASTMILK DONATED BY MOTHERS AND WHICH HAVE UNDERGONE PASTEURIZATION. THE STORED BREASTMILK WILL PRIMARILY BE GIVEN TO CHILDREN IN THE

NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT WHOSE OWN MOTHERS CANNOT PRODUCE, OR DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH, BREASTMILK.

SEC. 6. A new Section 11 is added to read as follows:

“SEC. 11. *ESTABLISHMENT OF LACTATION STATIONS IN NON-HEALTH INSTITUTIONS.* – IT IS HEREBY MANDATED THAT NON-HEALTH INSTITUTIONS SHALL ESTABLISH LACTATION STATIONS. THE LACTATION STATIONS SHOULD BE ADEQUATELY EQUIPPED WITH THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES, SUCH AS: LAVATORY FOR HAND-WASHING, UNLESS THERE IS AN EASILY-ACCESSIBLE LAVATORY NEARBY; REFRIGERATION OR APPROPRIATE COOLING FACILITIES FOR STORING; ELECTRICAL OUTLETS FOR BREAST PUMPS; A SMALL TABLE; COMFORTABLE SEATS; AND OTHER ITEMS, THE STANDARDS OF WHICH SHALL LIKEWISE BE DEFINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.”

SEC. 7. A new Section 12 is hereby added to read as follows:

“SEC. 12. *LACTATION PERIODS.* – IN COOPERATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SUBJECT TO SUCH REGULATIONS AS THE SECRETARY OF DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT MAY PRESCRIBE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR, NURSING FEMALE EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE GIVEN REASONABLE COMPENSABLE TIME DURING WORKING HOURS TO BREASTFEED OR EXPRESS THEIR MILK.”

SEC. 8. Section 11 of Republic Act No. 7600 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“**SEC. 13** [11]. *Continuing Education, Re-education and Training of Health WORKERS AND HEALTH INSTITUTIONS.* – The Department of Health with the assistance of other government agencies, professional and non-governmental organizations shall conduct continuing information, education and training programs for physicians, nurses, midwives, nutritionist/dietitians, community health workers and traditional birth attendants (TBAs) and other health WORKERS on current and updated Lactation Management. “Information materials shall be given to all health WORKERS involved in maternal and infant care in health institutions.

“HEALTH WORKERS AND INSTITUTIONS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 51 OR THE “NATIONAL CODE OF MARKETING OF BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES, BREASTMILK SUPPLEMENT AND OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS ARE MANDATED TO ENSURE THAT PREGNANT AND LACTATING MOTHERS ARE GIVEN PROPER INFORMATION ON LACTATION MANAGEMENT. HEALTH WORKERS SHALL, IN TURN, PRIMARILY RECOMMEND BREASTFEEDING AND SUPPORT A MOTHER’S EFFORT TO BREASTFEED HER INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD. HEALTH WORKERS CAN ONLY RECOMMEND BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES TO AN INFANT OR YOUNG CHILD WHERE AFTER ADEQUATE EXPLANATION AND INFORMATION ON BREASTFEEDING AND BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTE HAVE BEEN GIVEN, THE MOTHER STILL OPTS TO GIVE HER NEWBORN BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTE.”

SEC. 9. Section 12 of Republic Act No. 7600 is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC.14 [12]. *Information Dissemination AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS to Pregnant Women AND WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE.* – During the prenatal, perinatal and postnatal consultations and/or confinements of the mothers or pregnant women, it shall be the obligation of the health institution and the health WORKER to immediately and continuously teach, train, and support the women on current and updated Lactation Management and infant care, through participatory strategies such as organization of mothers' clubs and breastfeeding support groups and to distribute written information on such matters free of charge.

"THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IS HEREBY MANDATED TO DEVELOP AND PROVIDE BREASTFEEDING PROGRAMS FOR WORKING MOTHERS WHOSE EMPLOYERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO AVAIL OF IT AS PART OF THEIR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

"TO EQUIP WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ON MATERNAL NUTRITION AND PROPER NOURISHMENT IN PREPARATION FOR SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE BREASTFEEDING, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IS LIKEWISE MANDATED TO PRODUCE AND MAKE AVAILABLE RELEVANT INFORMATION AND PROGRAMS WHICH SHOULD BE DISSEMINATED TO ALL CITY, MUNICIPAL AND BARANGAY HEALTH CENTERS.

"EMPLOYERS ARE ALSO HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP BREASTFEEDING OR LACTATION SUPPORT PROGRAMS WHOSE MAIN FUNCTIONS ARE TO ASSESS THE NEEDS OF LACTATING WOMEN IN THEIR COMPANY AND PROVIDE PREGNANT AND LACTATING EMPLOYEES WITH ADEQUATE INFORMATION REGARDING LACTATION MANAGEMENT IN THE FORM OF BROCHURES, PAMPHLETS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS."

SEC. 10. A new Section 15 is hereby added to read as follows:

"SEC. 15. *INTEGRATION OF BREASTFEEDING EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULA.* – TO ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE BREASTFEEDING, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION, AND THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY SHALL INTEGRATE IN THE RELEVANT SUBJECTS IN THE ELEMENTARY, HIGH SCHOOL, AND COLLEGE LEVELS, ESPECIALLY IN THE MEDICAL AND ALLIED MEDICAL COURSES, AND IN TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, THE IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING."

SEC. 11. A new Section 16 is hereby added to read as follows:

"SEC. 16. *DESIGNATION AS "MOTHER FRIENDLY" ESTABLISHMENT.* - A NON-HEALTH INSTITUTION THAT COMPLIES WITH SECTION 11 OF THIS ACT MAY USE THE DESIGNATION "MOTHER FRIENDLY" IN ITS PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE

ESTABLISHMENT SHALL SUBMIT PROOF OF COMPLIANCE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, WHICH MAY ISSUE A CERTIFICATION THAT SUCH ESTABLISHMENT HAS COMPLIED WITH ALL THE REQUIREMENTS.

“THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SHALL MAINTAIN A LIST OF ‘MOTHER FRIENDLY’ ESTABLISHMENTS AND MAKE THE LIST AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION.”

SEC. 12. A new Section 19 is hereby added to read as follows:

“SEC. 19. *BREASTFEEDING AWARENESS MONTH.* – TO RAISE AWARENESS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF AND TO FURTHER PROMOTE BREASTFEEDING, THE MONTH OF AUGUST IN EACH AND EVERY YEAR THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES SHALL BE KNOWN AS ‘BREASTFEEDING AWARENESS MONTH.’”

SEC. 13. A new Section 20 is hereby added to read as follows:

“SEC. 20. *PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAM.* - TO ENSURE THE MEANINGFUL OBSERVANCE OF BREASTFEEDING MONTH AS HEREIN DECLARED, A COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAM SHALL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY FOR BREASTFEEDING THAT SHALL PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE BENEFITS AND SUPERIORITY OF BREASTFEEDING AS THE NORMAL, NATURAL AND PREFERRED METHOD OF FEEDING INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN COMPARED TO THE HIGH RISKS AND COSTS OF GIVING BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES WHETHER TO AN INFANT OR YOUNG CHILD, AND CONDUCT AND SUPPORT VARIOUS ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE BREASTFEEDING.”

SEC. 14. Section 13 of Republic Act No. 7600 is hereby amended to read as follows:

“**SEC. 21** [13]. *Incentives.* – The expenses incurred by a private health institution in complying with the provisions of this Act, shall be deductible expenses for income tax purposes up to twice the actual amount incurred: *Provided,* That the deduction shall apply for the taxable period when the expenses were incurred: *Provided, further,* That the hospital shall comply with the provisions of this Act within six months after its approval.

“Government health institutions shall receive an additional appropriation equivalent to the savings they may derive as a result of adopting rooming-in and breastfeeding. The additional appropriation shall be included in their budget for the next fiscal year.”

SEC. 15. A new Section 22 shall be added to read as follows:

“SEC. 22. *OVERSIGHT PROVISION.* – THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE (IAC) IS MANDATED TO MONITOR AND ENSURE STRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT AND ITS RULES AND REGULATIONS.”

SEC. 16. Section 14 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 23 [14]. *Sanctions.* – ANYONE WHO UNJUSTIFIABLY REFUSES OR FAILS TO COMPLY WITH THIS LAW AND ITS RULES AND REGULATIONS SHALL BE IMPOSED A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 50,000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 200,000.00) ON THE FIRST OFFENSE.

"ON THE SECOND OFFENSE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 200,000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 500,000.00).

"ON THE THIRD OFFENSE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 500,000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN ONE MILLION PESOS (PHP 1,000,000.00): *PROVIDED*, THAT FOR PRIVATE HEALTH OR NON-HEALTH INSTITUTIONS, THE BUSINESS PERMITS OR LICENSES TO OPERATE SHALL BE CANCELED OR REVOKED.

"IN ALL CASES, THE FINE IMPOSED SHOULD TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION, AMONG OTHERS, EMPLOYEE COMPOSITION, PHYSICAL SIZE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AND THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF PATRONS WHO VISIT.

"IN ADDITION, the Secretary of Health is hereby empowered to impose sanctions ON HEALTH INSTITUTIONS for the violation of this Act and the rules issued thereunder. Such sanctions may be in the form of reprimand or censure in case of willful and repeated violations, suspension of the permit to operate of the erring health institutions."

SEC. 17. Section 15 of Republic Act No. 7600 is amended to read as follows:

"**SEC. 24 [15].** *Rules and Regulations.* – The DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AS LEAD AGENCY, in consultation with THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION, TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND professional and non-governmental organizations concerned shall be authorized to prepare the rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act."

SEC. 18. *Separability Clause.* - If any part or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions thereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 19. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are not consistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 20. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,