HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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DATE: JUL 01 2013
TIME: 9:30
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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 733

Introduced by REP. JUDY J. SYJUCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Aspartame is, by far, the most dangerous substance on the market that is added to foods. Aspartame is the technical name for the brand names, NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, and Equal-Measure. Aspartame is made up of three chemicals: aspartic acid, phenylalanine, and methanol.

Aspartame accounts for over 75 percent of the adverse reactions to food additives reported to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Many of these reactions are very serious including seizures and death as recently disclosed in a February 1994 Department of Health and Human Services report.

A few of the 90 different documented symptoms listed in the report as being caused by aspartame includes: headaches/migraines, dizziness, seizures, nausea, numbness, muscle spasms, weight gain, rashes, depression, fatigue, irritability, tachycardia, insomnia, vision problems, hearing loss, heart palpitations, breathing difficulties, anxiety attacks, slurred speech, loss of taste, tinnitus, vertigo, memory loss, and joint pain.

According to researchers and physicians studying the adverse effects of aspartame, the following chronic illnesses can be triggered or worsened by ingesting of aspartame: brain tumors, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, chronic fatigue syndrome, parkinson's disease, alzheimer's, mental retardation, lymphoma, birth defects, fibromyalgia, and diabetes.

This proposed measure seeks to ban and prohibit the use of "aspartame" on food, beverages and drugs and the sale and distribution of artificial sweeteners or sugar substitutes such as NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, Equal-Measure and other brand names with similar contents.

In view of addressing the hazard brought by these artificial sweeteners to our people's health, immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.

JUDY J. SYJUCO

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AN ACT
PROHIBITING THE USE OF "ASPARTAME" ON FOOD, BEVERAGES AND DRUGS AND THE SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Short Title – This Act shall be known as the " Aspartame Ban Act of 2004".

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy – It is the policy of the State to establish and maintain an effective food and drug regulatory system and undertake appropriate health manpower development and research, responsive to the country's health needs and problems.

SECTION 3. Prohibition on the Use of "Aspartame". – It is hereby declared prohibited to use "aspartame" on food, beverages and drugs such as, but not limited to, instant breakfasts, cereals, frozen dessert, gelatin dessert, yogurt, juice beverages, milk drinks, shake mixes, cocoa mixes, coffee beverage, soft drinks, tea beverages, instant teas and coffees, tabletop sweeteners, topping mixes, wine coolers, breath mints, sugar-free chewing gum, multivitamins and pharmaceuticals and supplements.

SECTION 4. Ban on the Sale and Distribution of Artificial Sweeteners or Sugar Substitute. – The sale and distribution of artificial sweeteners or sugar substitutes such as NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, Equal-Measure and other brand names with similar content, is hereby declared prohibited.

SECTION 5. Regulatory Power. – The Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) is hereby mandated to monitor the use of aspartame on selected food, beverages and drugs and to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 6. Penalties. – The penalty of *reclusion temporal* to *reclusion perpetua* and a fine ranging from five hundred thousand pesos to five million pesos shall be imposed upon any individual or officers of a manufacturing or distributing corporation or company who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. All acts, decrees, orders, executive orders, instructions, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation. The publication shall not be later than seven (7) days after approval hereof.

Approved,