HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 736

Introduced by REP. JUDY J. SYJUCO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the discovery of yet another killer disease called Japanese encephalitis---a vector-borne but still highly transmissible illness, made people aware of the potential harm infectious diseases can bring about to people.

SARS and Japanese encephalitis, however, are not the only health problems we need to thwart. Other communicable infections could be as dangerous if not timely addressed. In fact, pneumonia and tuberculosis remains in the list of the most common and deadly contagious diseases affecting the Philippines. In the year 2000, the country's morbidity for pneumonia tolled at 632,930 while tuberculosis accounts for 126,489.

According to the World Health Organization, Vietnam had conquered the deadly SARS virus by identifying and isolating cases promptly, tracing their contacts, protecting medical workers, isolating suspected cases, screening travelers and quickly sharing useful facts with other governments.

Thus, the same formula employed in Vietnam to overcome the killer pneumonia can be replicate in precluding further transmission of infectious diseases in the Philippines, including but not limited to SARS and Japanese encephalitis.

Isolation is a primary step to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Therefore, immediate establishment and maintenance of isolation and quarantine facility in government and private hospital will greatly reduce, if not entirely eradicating the spread of infectious diseases in the country.

Hence, in view of the need for control and preventive measures against infectious diseases, immediate approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

JUDY J. SYJUCO

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AN ACT
MANDATING ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE FACILITY FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as the "Hospital Isolation Facility Act of 2004."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared as the policy of the State to safeguard the health of the people at all times and to exert all possible means to contain the spread of infectious and communicable diseases.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms – As used in this Act, the term:

a. Hospital – shall refer to an institution for care of sick.

b. Clinic – shall refer to a place for medical examination, advice or treatment.

c. Isolation – shall refer to the separation for the period of communicability of infected persons from other persons, in such places and under such conditions as will prevent the direct or indirect conveyance of the infectious agent from infected persons to other persons who are susceptible or who may spread the agent to others.

d. Quarantine – shall refer to the limitation of freedom of movement of persons that have been exposed to a communicable disease for a period of time equal to the longest usual incubation period of the disease, in such manner as to prevent effective contact with those not so exposed.

e. Infectious Disease – shall refer to a disease of man resulting from an infection.

f. Infection – shall refer to the entry and development or multiplication of an infectious agent in the body of man.

SECTION 4. Mandatory Establishment of Isolation and Quarantine Facilities – There shall be established and maintained an isolation and quarantine facility for infectious diseases in all government and private hospitals.

SECTION 5. Standard Requirements and Inspection - The Department of Health, through its Bureau of Health Facilities and Services shall formulate and implement standard requirements for the effective establishment and maintenance of isolation and quarantine facilities.

Periodic inspection of isolation and quarantine facilities to ensure the proper observance of the standard requirements shall likewise be under the supervision of the Bureau of Health Facilities and Services.

SECTION 6. Appropriation. The amount needed to carry out the provisions of this Act is hereby authorized to be appropriated in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SECTION 6. 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,