CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 1465

INTRODUCED BY **HON. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution provides that the State shall protect the life of the mother and the unborn from conception.

It is now established by studies and researches that drinking alcohol during pregnancy causes debilitating physical and mental conditions to the fetus.

Among the ravages of alcohol on the unborn child; are: (a) head and face deformities, such as small skull formation, distorted and flattened face, drooping eyelids and a large interval between the lip and the nose; (b) major organ system malfunctions resulting in heart defects, ear infections, hearing loss, poor eyesight, and bad teeth; (c) central-nervous-system dysfunctions, causing mental retardation and hyperactivity that is not easily controlled by drugs; and (d) arrested growth, both before and after birth.

The result on the infant is now known as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). Unlike drugs such as barbiturates or opiates, alcohol can attack virtually any of the body's cells.

Yet FAS is entirely preventable. All a mother has to do is to stop drinking alcoholic drinks during pregnancy. Beer, wine and hard liquor have the same effects.

In some states in the United States, the policy is to require liquor bottles to carry the warning that alcohol intake during pregnancy is hazardous to the life and health of the unborn child. This bill seeks to do the same. Every year millions of affected Filipino children are born who could have been protected from the irreversible effects of FAS.

The cost of the additional warning label, such as could be found in cigarette products, is relatively small compared to the danger faced by many Filipino children. Approval of this bill could mean the start of a national campaign to foster this needed consciousness among our Filipino mothers.

For these reasons, the immediate approval of this bill is earnestly urged.

CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

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AN ACT REQUIRING THAT ALL LIQUOR PRODUCTS CARRY A WARNING LABEL THAT ALCOHOL INTAKE DURING PREGNANCY IS HAZARDOUS TO THE LIFE AND HEALTH OF THE UNBORN CHILD

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

SECTION 1. *National Policy* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect the life of the unborn child from conception against the harmful physical and me mental effects of drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

SEC. 2. *Policy Implementation.* - All liquor products, regardless of alcohol content, shall carry a warning that alcohol intake during pregnancy is hazardous to the life and health of the unborn child.

SEC. 3. Any liquor manufacturers and/or distributors who shall violate this Act shall pay the following fines:

(a) First offense - payment of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) but not more than Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00);

(b) Second offense – payment of fine of more than Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000.00) but less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00);

(3) Third Offense - payment of fine of more than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) but less than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00) and the suspension of the license to manufacturer and/or distribute the liquor product;

(4) Fourth offense - the revocation of the license to manufacture and/or distribute the liquor plus the payment of fine between the amounts One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00) and Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P500,000.00).

SEC. 4. *Implementing Agency* - The Department of Health (DOH) shall carry out the provisions of this Act by issuing the necessary rules and regulations to implement and to monitor the compliance with this Act.

SEC. 4. *Effectivity. - Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,