

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5327



Introduced by Honorable **EDUARDO C. ZIALCITA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In this country, only 49 percent of Filipinos use a method of contraception, whether natural or artificial. This level of contraceptive prevalence has not changed much in the five years from 1998, when it was at 47 percent, to 2003.

Yet knowledge of family planning methods is very high at 98 to 99 percent among currently married men and women. Philippine population control advocates insist that increased access to contraception would increase usage and social acceptance, ignoring the fact that despite substantial American and local funding and support, there has been no such change of heart in Filipinos towards family planning.

Filipinos may indeed be interested in having less children, but they are not interested in artificial contraceptives. The educational campaign must therefore focus instead on the merits of responsible parenthood, the modern methods of natural family planning, and the emphasis on pro-life alternatives to unexpected pregnancies.

This Act envisions the establishment of more pregnancy health care centers set up by the private sector, due to the availability of tax credits, as long as the health care center has at least one year's experience. These pregnancy health care centers will empower women to make healthy life choices consistent with the intrinsic value of every human life and the inherent dignity, when properly used, of the procreative, conjugal act.

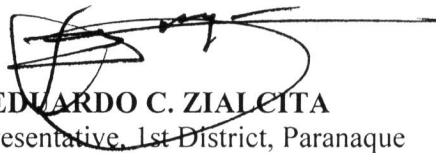
The centers will provide pregnancy testing, pregnancy confirmation through ultrasound, mentoring and nurturing support, linkage to community resources, education, material aid, housing referrals, abstinence education for unmarried persons, and natural family planning methods for those married couples who are considering a postponement of their first or additional children.

These pregnancy health care centers will provide services to all women, but particularly to those who are pregnant and may be considering illegal abortions. These are the women who severely lack the right information and support.

Pregnant women with unexpected pregnancies do not get illegal abortions because of freedom of choice, but because they feel they have no freedom and no choice. This Act will also correct that problem by funding practical alternatives to abortion. This assistance could include direct care such as medical attention, nutritional support, housing assistance, adoption services, employment assistance and parenting education and support.

It is time we encourage life-affirming choices for pregnancy and sexuality, aside from promoting abstinence as the positive life choice for unmarried persons. These pregnancy care centers will value the sanctity of life, chastity, marriage, and personal responsibility.

There is no need to fear the risk that these pregnancy care centers would use these funds to promote a specific religion. Since our countrymen have their own religious beliefs which they can practice freely in the many churches, mosques and gathering places all over the islands, Filipinos will not turn to these pregnancy care centers for religious support but for counseling and practical help.



EDUARDO C. ZIALCITA
Representative, 1st District, Paranaque

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 5327

Introduced by Honorable **EDUARDO C. ZIALCITA**

AN ACT PROVIDING TAX CREDITS TO ASSIST THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN
ESTABLISHING NATION-WIDE PREGNANCY CARE CENTERS THAT WILL
PROVIDE COUNSELING, CARE AND INFORMATION RELATED TO
ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION AND ARTIFICIAL CONTRACEPTION

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

SECTION 1. *Title*

This Act shall be known as “The Pregnancy Care Centers Act of 2006.”

SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms*

For purposes of this Act, the following terms have the meaning given:

- (a) "abortion" means the use of any legal or illegal means, whether by surgical or other medical procedure, or through the use of drugs, pills or devices, to terminate the pregnancy of a woman known to be pregnant, with the knowledge that the termination with those means will, with reasonable likelihood, cause the death of the unborn child.
- (b) "unborn child" means an individual organism of the species *Homo Sapiens* from fertilization until birth.
- (c) “pregnancy care center” is an organization, facility, clinic, or hospital providing free pregnancy-related services to all women such as tests, ultrasound, information, counseling, classes on childbirth and/or child care, and other services to support women who are pregnant or may be pregnant. May also be known as “crisis pregnancy center.”

SECTION 3. *Eligibility for Grants and Tax Rebates*

(a) The Department of Health shall make grants and tax rebates to agencies or organizations for the reasonable expenses of programs:

(1) providing information on, referral to, and assistance in securing the services of relevant existing programs or agencies that assist women in carrying their pregnancies to term or providing services that assist women in carrying their pregnancies to term, including, but not limited to, agencies and programs that provide:

- (i) medical attention for the pregnant woman for the duration of her pregnancy;
- (ii) nutritional support services;
- (iii) housing assistance;
- (iv) adoption services;
- (v) education and employment assistance; and
- (vi) parenting education and support services.

(2) providing information or services to women, in person and through community outreach, that encourage and assist women in carrying their pregnancies to term.

(b) To be eligible for a grant or a tax rebate, an agency or organization must:

(1) be a private, nonprofit corporation;

(2) demonstrate that the program is conducted under appropriate supervision;

(3) not charge women for services provided under the program;

(4) provide each pregnant woman counseled with accurate information on the developmental characteristics of unborn children, including offering any printed information or multimedia presentation;

(5) ensure that the program's sole purposes are to assist and encourage women in carrying their pregnancies to term;

(6) ensure that none of the funds provided are used to encourage or counsel a woman to have an abortion, to provide her such an abortion, or to refer her for such an abortion;

(7) have had a program exclusively for natural family planning in existence for at least one year as of the enactment of this law.

(8) ensure that there is a policy in place to keep all information about women seeking their services is kept confidential nor shared with any other organization without the woman's written consent. This information shall include, but not be limited to, her name, address, age, and other relevant data.

(c) Any organization or an affiliate of an organization that provides abortions, promotes abortions, or directly refers women for abortions elsewhere is ineligible to receive a grant or tax rebate under this program.

SECTION 4. *Public Information Campaign*

(a) The Secretary of the Department of Health shall develop and carry out a nationwide public information campaign to educate the public about:

(1) the scientifically accurate developmental characteristics of the unborn child at various stages of gestation;

(2) alternatives to having an abortion or taking contraceptives to prevent or terminate pregnancy, including bringing a child to term to parent or for adoption;

(3) the availability and importance of prenatal care, including how to obtain it;

(4) the availability of adoption services; and

(5) parenting and support services, including medical care, nutrition information, counseling, job training and assistance, education, and housing assistance.

(b) The public information campaign may include the following, all of which materials must be objective, nonjudgmental, and designed to convey only accurate scientific information and must be designed to reach populations of different languages and of different social and economic backgrounds:

(1) the preparation, publication, and dissemination of information, pamphlets, brochures, and other reports, including multimedia presentations and formats;

(2) the preparation, maintenance, and promotion of informative Web sites; and

(3) the preparation and dissemination of advertising.

SECTION 5. *Appropriations*

Upon enactment, the amount of _____ is appropriated annually to the Department of Health to make grants or tax rebates according to Section 3 of this Act.

The amount of _____ is appropriated annually to the Department of Health to make grants according to Section 4 of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Duties of the Department of Health*

The Department of Health shall make grants and provide tax credits under Section 3 beginning no later than _____, 2006 and review the programs of each grantee to ensure that the grantee carefully adheres to the purposes and requirements of Section 3 and shall cease funding a grantee that fails to do so.

SECTION 7. *Severability*

If any provision, word, phrase, or clause of this Section or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect those provisions, words, phrases, clauses, or applications of this Section that can be given effect without the invalid provision, word, phrase, clause, or application and to this end, the provisions, words, phrases, and clauses of this Section are declared to be severable.

SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*

The Secretary of the Department of Health, in coordination with the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Finance shall promulgate such rules and regulations in relation to the matters as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause*

All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, presidential proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity*

This Act shall take effect after thirty (30) days from publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.