

CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First-Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 1250

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE MARK A. VILLAR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Vitamin A is essential in maintaining one's overall health, particularly in maintaining one's healthy vision proper bone growth, and normal cell division and differentiation. It is likewise considered a fighter vitamin for it aids in strengthening one's immune system against infections. A deficiency in Vitamin A can lead to a number of health problems, the most common of which is blindness. And the most vulnerable to Vitamin A deficiency are the children, especially those in developing countries like the Philippines where a considerable number of children from poor families do not get the proper nutrition.

This legislation mandates that all Filipino infants and children below the age of seven must be provided and given free Vitamin A supplementation to save them from the health problems brought about by Vitamin A Deficiency (VAD). This bill likewise seeks to strengthen the existing commitment of the Department of Health to virtually eliminate VAD through its massive Vitamin A supplementation nationwide.

Thus, I recommend the approval of this bill.


MARK A. VILLAR
Representative
Lone District of Las Piñas City

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE MARK A. VILLAR**

AN ACT MANDATING THE FREE ADMINISTRATION OF VITAMIN A SUPPLEMENTATION AMONG INFANTS AND FILIPINO CHILDREN BELOW THE AGE OF SEVEN (SEVEN), PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Mandatory Vitamin A Supplementation.* To eliminate malnutrition and the rising statistics on the occurrence of childhood blindness, Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS) shall be administered mandatorily for infants and Filipino children, free of charge.

The Department of Health (DOH), in cooperation and consultation with relevant groups of pediatrics, parents and civil society, academe, shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations taking into consideration the following areas of concerns:

- (a) Recommended best time, age, administration and dosage for infants and children;
- (b) Vaccination and/or supplementation safety;
- (c) Allowed exemptions and treatment of high-risk children;

- (d) Accessible and registered health practitioners and institutions allowed to administer Vitamin A supplementation;
- (e) Partnering with private organizations on the full implementation of this Act.

SEC. 2. *Appropriations.* - The sum of Fifty Million Pesos (Php 50,000,000.00) is hereby authorized to be appropriated out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated to carry out the free Vitamin A Supplementation mandated under this Act. Thereafter, the sum needed to continue the program of supplementation shall be included in the annual budget of the Department of Health.

SEC. 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Health shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. *Submission of Report.* - The Department shall submit to Congress an annual report which shall include, among other things, policy recommendations which require legislative action towards the total eradication of malnutrition and childhood blindness.

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act or any part thereof be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are separable from the invalid ones, shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* - 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.

Approved,