

CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL No. 1077

Introduced by HONORABLE EUFRANIO C. ERIGUEL, M.D.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has become a hub for medical tourism. In the last two years, an increasing number of foreigners come in solely for stem cell therapy that some hospitals offer at a cheaper cost than when done outside the country. Stem cell treatments, a type of regenerative medicine, introduce new cells into damaged tissue in order to treat a disease or injury Prometheus like. Through rigorous research on stem cell treatment which was first developed from the findings of Canadian scientists Ernest A. McCulloch and James E. Till in the 1960s, thousands of patients around the globe have already benefitted from using stem cell delivered safely by skilled and certified physicians. Diseases once considered incurable are responding well to stem cell treatment and are restoring hope to patients who thought they had lost their lives forever.

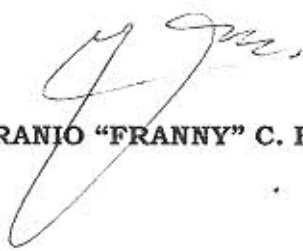
Though the benefits of stem cell treatment are a major breakthrough in the field of biotechnology, the cost far outweighs its benefits. It is very expensive and only few physicians are licensed to do the procedure, especially in the Philippines. At this moment, the full promise of stem cell research remains unknown. There is much to be learned about its benefits and application in the cure of some of the most devastating diseases and conditions. It is potentially a cure for a severed spinal cord, diabetes, Parkinson's, cancer, heart disease and others.

In response, this bill establishes a Stem Cell Research and Storage Center mandated to conduct stem cell research under established standards of open scientific exchange, peer review, and public oversight. Aside from this, it seeks to promote research and human clinical trials using stem cells that are ethically

obtained and show evidence of providing clinical benefit for human patients; promote the derivation of pluripotent stem cell lines without the creation of human embryos for research purposes and without the destruction or discarding of, or risk of injury to, a human embryo.

Such an act will make the country a haven for open scientific inquiry and technological innovation. The bill will promote investment and generate jobs citing the experience of other countries. In California alone, the biomedical industry is a critical component of the state's economy providing employment in over 2,500 companies to over 225,000 Californians, and pays \$12.8 billion in wages and salaries, investing more than \$2.1 billion in research, and reports nearly \$7.8 billion in worldwide revenue.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. EUFRANIO "FRANNY" C. ERIGUEL, M.D.

1 **CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES**

2 **FIFTEENTH CONGRESS**

3 *First Regular Session*

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5 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

6 **HOUSE BILL No. 10707**

7
8 **Introduced by HONORABLE EUFRANIO C. ERIGUEL, M.D.**

9
10 **AN ACT TO INTENSIFY STEM CELL RESEARCH**

11 **AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

12
13 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in*
14 *Congress assembled:*

15
16 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act may be cited as the "Stem Cell
17 Therapeutic and Research Act of 2010."

18
19 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to protect
20 and promote the people's right to life and health. Toward this end, the State
21 aims to bolster evidence-based research on medicinal interventions and
22 technology to cure debilitating diseases. This policy is pursuant to
23 provisions of the 1987 Constitution as follows:

24 Article II, Section 15, [t]he State shall protect and promote the right
25 to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;

1 Article XIII, Section 12, [t]he state shall establish and maintain an
2 effective food and drug regulatory system and undertake appropriate health
3 manpower development and research responsive to the country's health
4 needs and problems.

5 Article XIV, Section 10, [s]cience and technology are essential for
6 national development and progress. The State shall give priority to research
7 and development, invention, innovation and their utilization...

8 Article II, Section 12, [i]t shall equally protect the life of the mother
9 and the life of the unborn from conception.
10

11 **SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.*** For purposes of this Act, the following
12 terms are defined.

13 (1) HUMAN EMBRYO- refers to any organism, not protected as a human
14 subject that is derived by fertilization, parthenogenesis, cloning, or
15 any other means from one or more human gametes or human diploid
16 cells.

17 (2) STEM CELLS – refer to primary cells in the human body from which
18 all other tissues “stem” from. They are programmed in the laboratory
19 to potentially become any other kind of cell. As unspecialized cells, it
20 can self-renew indefinitely and also differentiate into more mature
21 cells with specialized functions and which could be used to repair
22 damaged tissues and replace diseased organs.

23 (3) EMBRYONIC STEM CELLS – refer to the primitive type of cell that can
24 be coaxed into developing into any of the 220 types of cells found in
25 the human body (e.g. blood cells, heart cells, brain cells, nerve cells,

1 etc). They are derived from embryos that develop from eggs that have
2 been fertilized *in vitro* and not from a woman's body.

3 (4) ADULT STEM CELLS – refer to undifferentiated cells found
4 throughout the body that divide to replenish dying cells and
5 regenerate damaged tissues. It is also known as somatic stem cells.

6 (5) INDUCED PLURIPOTENT STEM CELLS - refer to specially treated
7 ordinary cells -- e.g. skin cells -- that are specially processed to exhibit
8 some of the properties of embryonic stem cells.

9
10 **Section 4. Stem Cell Research and Storage Center.** - A Stem Cell
11 Research and Storage Center is hereby established under the direct
12 supervision of the Department of Health through the Secretary. It shall
13 conduct and support basic and applied research to develop techniques for
14 the isolation, derivation, production, testing, and human clinical use of stem
15 cells that may result in improved understanding of or treatments for
16 diseases and other adverse health conditions, including pluripotent stem
17 cells that have the flexibility of embryonic stem cells, prioritizing research
18 with the greatest potential for near-term clinical benefit in human patients,
19 provided that such isolation, derivation, production, testing, or use will not
20 involve the following:

- 21 (1) the creation of a human embryo for research purposes;
22 (2) the destruction of or discarding of, or risk of injury to, a living
23 human embryo; or
24 (3) the use of any stem cell, the derivation or provision of which
25 would be inconsistent with the standards established.

1 **Section 5. Guidelines** - Not later than 90 days after the date of the
2 enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue guidelines to carry out
3 Section 4. Such guidelines shall, as appropriate, take into consideration
4 guidelines on human stem cell research developed by nationally and
5 internationally recognized scientific organizations.

6
7 **Section 6. Reporting Requirements** - (a) The Secretary shall annually
8 prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of the Congress a report
9 describing the activities carried out under this law during the preceding
10 fiscal year, and including a description of whether and to what extent stem
11 cell research has been conducted.

12 (b) The Secretary shall also submit to the Congress a report outlining
13 the number of research proposals that were peer reviewed, a summary and
14 detailed list of all such research proposals that were not funded, and an
15 explanation of why the proposals did not merit funding.

16 (c) The Head of the Bureau of Food and Drugs should keep the head of
17 the Stem Cell Research and Storage Center informed of the types of human
18 stem cell and related research that would facilitate the evaluation of the
19 safety or effectiveness of drugs, devices, and biological products.

20 **Section 7. Public Disclosure** - The Director of the center created for this
21 purpose shall publish the guidelines issued and keep a public website which
22 shall be constantly updated to reflect the researches done.

23 **Section 8. Appropriations.** Such sums as may be necessary for the initial
24 implementation of this Act shall be taken from the current appropriations of

1 the DOH. Thereafter, the fund necessary to carry out the provisions of this
2 Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

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4 **Section 9. Effectivity Clause.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days
5 after its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

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7 Approved,

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