

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 2895

Introduced by Representative Susan A. Yap

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the Philippines, ten to twelve women die everyday due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth. The maternal mortality rate (MMR) in our country is said to be the highest in Southeast Asia, even surpassing Cambodia and East Timor. According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Philippines Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Progress Report, the Philippines is unlikely to reduce the MMR to 52 per 100,000 live births by 2015. As of the latest UNDP report, the current MMR is at 162 per 100,000 live births. Although it is lower compared to the base year (209 per 100,000 live births in 1990), it is still unlikely to achieve the MDG target.

One of the many reasons of the alarming number of maternal mortality in the Philippines can be attributed to the inadequate access to proper maternal health services. In survey conducted by the National Statistics Office in 2008, it was found out that three out of four women do not receive proper medical attention because of lack of money for treatment, lack of medication, and lack of medical providers. Moreover, a great number of childbirth occurs at home and without assistance of medical providers. Only 44 percent of births in our country are delivered in a health facility, in which 27 percent are in a public health facility and 18 percent in a private health facility.

The abovementioned issues are legitimate social demands that must be heeded. One of the ways to improve the maternal healthcare in the Philippines is to provide quality midwife services in every barangay across the country.

Under Republic Act 7392 (An Act Revising Republic Act No. 2644, As Amended, Otherwise Known As The Philippine Midwifery Act), licensed midwives are authorized to supervise and take care of women during pregnancy, labor and management of normal deliveries. Thus, this bill mandates the appointment of a midwife for each barangay to increase access to health care services for the expecting mothers. The midwife in each barangay will be tasked to ensure that both the mother and the child are given the essential healthcare services. Priority of appointing midwives will be given to geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas where there are no existing healthcare professionals and facility, and with high maternal mortality rate.

As of this date, there are an approximate 41,841 barangays in the country. The recommended ratio of deployment of midwives is one midwife for a barangay with 5,000 residents. For a barangay with more than 5,000 residents, the Department of Health has the prerogative to assign more than one midwife. This ratio is a modest one but is expected to substantially contribute to the improvement of maternal healthcare services.

This bill upholds that improving the quality of maternal health services is an important part of the health care system aimed at reducing the high rates of death and

disability caused by complications of pregnancy and childbirth, as well as improving the survival rate of newborns in the Philippines.

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



SUSANA A. YAP

Representative, 2nd District of Tarlac

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS)
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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AN ACT
MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF ONE MIDWIFE FOR EACH
BARANGAY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

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2 **Section 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "*Midwife to the Barangay Act of 2010.*"
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4 **Section 2. Statement of Policy.** - It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right
5 to health of the people. The State shall provide appropriate programs and measures to
6 provide access to affordable and quality health and social services, especially in rural areas.
7

8 The services of midwives, as front liners in the country's health care delivery system,
9 are essential in achieving the State's health policy, especially with regard to pre-natal and post
10 natal maternal, and newborn, care. Toward this end, this Act shall mandate the appointment
11 of midwives for each barangay to increase access to health care services for the people,
12 especially the underprivileged.
13

14 **Section 3. Ratio of Midwives to the Barangay.** All barangays shall be equipped with one (1)
15 midwife; *Provided*, That if the population of a barangay exceeds five thousand (5,000), the
16 number of midwives shall be increased, as determined by the Department of Health (DOH).
17

18 **Section 4. Role of Midwives to the Barangay.** - All midwives are mandated to ensure that
19 mothers and infants, in their respective jurisdictions, are given quality and essential health
20 care services, including, but not limited to, pre- natal and post natal care, breastfeeding
21 support, providing information on the importance of immunization and ensure that infants
22 are given the proper vaccines as provided in the DOH Expanded Program on
23 Immunization, and proper care and nutrition of both the mothers and the infants.
24

25 **Section 5. Appointment of Midwives to the Barangay.** - The DOH, through its Center for Health
26 Development, is mandated to appoint a midwife to each barangay. It shall immediately
27 determine which areas are in need of midwives. Priority in appointments shall be given to
28 remote areas where there are no existing healthcare professionals providing for the
29 healthcare services of the population and areas which have high maternal mortality rate.
30

31 **Section 6. Qualifications of Midwives to the Barangay.** - The DOH shall provide for the
32 qualifications of the midwives to be appointed to the barangay, who shall, as much as
33 possible, come from the same barangay or municipality where he or she will be appointed.
34

35 **Section 7. Basic Emergency Obstetric Care** - The DOH shall ensure that the midwives are
36 equipped with Basic Emergency Obstetric Care. It shall also determine, subject to guidelines
37 that it may issue, the need to further provide these midwives with training on

1 Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care.

2
3 **Section 8. *Compensation and Benefits.*** - All midwives to be appointed to the barangay shall be
4 appropriately compensated by the DOH and shall be entitled to all the benefits provided in
5 Republic Act No. 7305, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta of Public Health Workers."

6
7 **Section 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulation.*** - The DOH, in cooperation with the Department
8 of Interior and Local, Government, the Civil Service Commission, and other concerned
9 government agencies and non-government organizations, shall formulate and promulgate,
10 within ninety days (90) from its effectivity, the rules and regulations necessary to implement
11 this Act.

12
13 **Section 10. *Appropriations.*** - For a period of five (5) years from the passage of this Act, the
14 amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the
15 appropriations of the DOH. Thereafter, such funds as may be necessary for the continued
16 implementation of this Act shall be in the appropriations of the respective Local
17 Government Units.

18
19 **Section 11. *Separability Clause.*** - If any part or provision of this Act shall be held
20 unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions thereof which are not affected thereby shall
21 continue to be in full force and effect.

22
23 **Section 12. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, executive orders, and other presidential
24 issuances which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified
25 accordingly.

26
27 **Section 13. *Effectivity.*** -This Act takes effect immediately after its publication in at least two
28 (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,