

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



FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

000 5287
House Bill No. _____

Introduced by **Honorable Carmelo F. Lazatin**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

George Wolff, author of the Biotech Investor's Bible, declares in his book that "researchers and biotech executives foresee the day when the effects of many catastrophic diseases can be reversed. The damaged brains of Alzheimer's disease patients may be restored. Severed spinal cords may be rejoined. Damaged organs may be rebuilt. Stem cells provide hope that this dream will become a reality".

Many countries have started tapping stem cell's potential in health and medical research, especially to find solutions to diseases such as cancer, heart attacks and other cardiovascular anomalies, Parkinson's and different birth defects.

The United States, for example, has started research on stem cells, creating an array of scientific advances and medical applications.

South Africa followed suit in 2004 by creating a stem cell bank while China recently passed a legislation allowing research on stem cell.

Our Southeast Asian neighbor, Singapore, has recently been dubbed as Asia's stem cell center, with over 40 stem cell research groups in the country.

The benefits of stem cell are overwhelming to be just simply ignored by the government because many Filipinos are suffering from different diseases that could be cured by this medical breakthrough.

This bill seeks to establish a STEM CELL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES which will spearhead the research and development of stem cell technology and at the same time, act as storage center for stem cell technology that it will develop.

The immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


CARMELO F. LAZATIN
First District, Pampanga

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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING STEM CELL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES AND
STRENGTHENING RESEARCH ON STEM CELL TECHNOLOGY**

BE it enacted in the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress assembled:

Sec. 1. Title: This act shall be known as "Stem Cell Center of the Philippines Act of 2010".

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy: It is State's policy to protect and uphold people's right to life and health.

It shall undertake appropriate health, manpower development, and research, responsive to the country's health needs and problems, as stated in Article 13, Section 12 of the 1987 Constitution.

Also, Article 14, Section 10 of the Constitution states that "Science and technology are essential for national development and progress. The State shall give priority to research and development, invention, innovation, and their utilization; and to science and technology education, training, and services. It shall support indigenous, appropriate, and self-reliant scientific and technological capabilities, and their application to the country's productive systems and national life."

In accordance with these provisions of the Charter, research on stem cell technology should be pursued as it can save thousands, if not millions, of Filipinos who are affected by diseases which can be cured by this modern technology.

Sec. 3: Definition of term:

1. STEM CELL – The primary cell in the human body from which all other tissues stem from. They are developed in the laboratory into some or many different types of cells in the body and serve as a repair damaged tissues and damaged or diseased organs.

Sec. 4. The Stem Cell Center of the Philippines – A Stem Cell Center of the Philippines is hereby established under the direct supervision and control of the Department of Health through the Secretary and headed by a Medical Director. The Center will conduct and

support basic and applied research to develop techniques for the isolation, derivation, production, testing and storing of stem cells that can be used for research and treatment of diseases and other adverse health conditions.

4a. Objectives, Duties and Functions -- The Center will have the following as its objectives, duties and functions:

1. Establish mechanisms for the dissemination and utilization of research in stem cell;
2. Make sure that techniques used in the research involving human cells is clearly consistent with the standards established under the law;
3. Ensure that health research and development activities are utilized to improve people's health and shall result to an improved understanding of the stem cell treatments for diseases and other health conditions;
4. Establish high moral and ethical standards in stem cell research while maintaining the highest respect for human life and human dignity.
5. Strengthen local and international foreign cooperation on stem cell research and development;
6. Receive and manage grants, aid, donation or any kind of assistance from foreign and local entities to be utilized for research and development;

Sec. 5. The Medical Director—The Center shall be headed by a Medical Director, who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines, from a list of qualified candidates recommended by the Secretary of Health.

Sec. 5a. Duties of Medical Director – The Medical Director shall have the following duties:

1. Supervise and direct the management, operation and administration of the Center;
2. Oversee the implementation of all research and development program of the Center;
3. Execute contracts, incur obligations, acquire and dispose of assets and deliver documents on behalf of the Center;
4. Approve the Center's organizational structure, staffing patterns, operating and capital expenditures and to recommend the officers and employees of the Center on the basis of standards of merit and fitness for public servants, subject to existing civil service regulations;
5. Implement and enforce policies, decisions, orders, rules and regulations issued by the Department of Health;
6. Exercise such other powers and functions and perform duties as may be authorized, delegated or assigned.

Sec. 6. Annual Report – The Executive Director shall submit to the President of the Philippines and Congress, through the Secretary of Health, an annual report detailing activities, accomplishments and other operation of the Center, together with an audit report on relevant accounts.

Sec. 7. Appropriations – The amount needed for the implementation of this Act shall be taken from the current appropriations of the Department of Health. Thereafter, the fund necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations – The Secretary of Health, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

Sec. 9: Separability clause – The declaration of unconstitutionality or invalidity of any provisions of this Act shall not affect the other provisions.

Sec. 19. Effectivity -- This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,