

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. _____



Introduced by **REP. ALFREDO "ALBEE" B. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution guarantees the protection and promotion of the health of its citizens and declares that the State shall endeavor to make health services available to everyone. As such, the role of health workers for the country is crucial in the delivery of health services,

The health sector in the Philippines is beset by the exodus of nurses and doctors seeking higher-paying jobs abroad leading to poor delivery of health services in the country, especially in the rural areas. In 2009 alone, a total of 13,465 nurses were hired abroad (POEA, 2009). Nurse to patient ratio in the country is now at 1:40 up to 1:80 as oppose to the mandated 1:20 ratio.

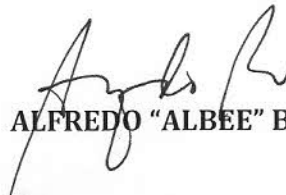
Thus, Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) are being utilized increasingly in the delivery of health services especially in the remote and rural areas because of the existing health sector's human resource crisis.

The crucial and heroic role that BHWs play makes them deserving of much more than what they are receiving today.

This proposed measure aims to provide a reasonable set of incentives to BHWs to compensate them for the work that they perform in making health services accessible to all. This bill will enhance the benefits provided to BHWs by virtue of Republic Act 7883 by providing among others, a fixed honoraria, and health and insurance coverage under Philhealth and GSIS.

The passage of this proposed measure will not only grant due recognition to the valuable services that BHWs render, but will hopefully encourage more people to serve as BHWs in their localities. Such increase in the number of BHWs would contribute positively to the goal of government for a more effective delivery of health services and make health care accessible to all.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


ALFREDO "ALBEE" B. BENITEZ

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HOUSE BILL NO. _____

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Introduced by **REP. ALFREDO "ALBEE" B. BENITEZ**

AN ACT GRANTING FIXED HONORARIA AND ADDITIONAL INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS TO BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPUBLIC ACT 7883 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS ACT OF 1995

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

SECTION 1. Section 6 of the Republic Act 7883 otherwise known as the Barangay Health Workers' benefits and Incentives Act of 1995," is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 6. Incentives and Benefits – In recognition of their services, all accredited barangay health workers who are actively and regularly performing their duties shall be entitled to the following incentives and benefits:

- a) **HONORARIA – ALL ACCREDITED BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS SHALL BE ENTITLED TO A MONTHLY HONORARIA OF THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P 3,000.00)**
- b) Hazard Allowance. – Volunteer barangay health workers in rural and urban areas, exposed to situations, conditions, or factors in the work environment or place where foreseeable but unavoidable danger or risks exist which adversely endanger his health or life and/or increase the risk of producing adverse effect on his person in the exercise of his duties, to be validated by the proper authorities, shall be entitled to hazard allowance in an amount to be determined by the local health board and the local peace and order council of the local government unit concerned **BUT IN NO CASE LESS THAN ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00);**
- c) Subsistence Allowance Barangay Health Workers who rendered services within the premises of isolated health stations in order to make their services available at any and all times shall be entitled to a monthly subsistence allowance, which shall be computed in accordance with the prevailing circumstances as determined by the local government unit concerned **BUT IN NO CASE LESS THAN ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00);**

- d) **COMPULSORY PHILHEALTH COVERAGE. - ALL BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS, WHO HAVE RENDERED AT LEAST SIX (6) MONTHS OF SERVICE, SHALL BE ENROLLED IN THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM TO RECEIVE AND AVAIL OF AN ADEQUATE PACKAGE OF PERSONAL HEALTH SERVICES THAT MUST INCLUDE IN-PATIENT HOSPITAL CARE, OUT-PATIENT CARE, EMERGENCY AND TRANSFER SERVICES, AND ALSO OTHER SUPPLEMENTARY HEALTH BENEFITS AS MAY BE DEFINED BY THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION (PHIC) AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT (LGU) WHERE THEY RENDER SERVICES;**
- e) **INSURANCE COVERAGE - ALL BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS, WHO HAVE RENDERED AT LEAST SIX (6) MONTHS OF SERVICE, SHALL BE GRANTED INSURANCE COVERAGE BY THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS) OR ANY ACCREDITED INSURANCE COMPANY IN AN AMOUNT NOT LESS THAN TEN THOUSAND PESOS (P10,000.00);**
- f) Training Education and Career Enrichment Programs x x x
- g) Civil service Eligibility x x x
- h) Free Legal Services - Legal representation and consultation services for barangay health workers shall be immediately provided by the Public Attorney's office (PAO) in cases of coercion, interference and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against barangay health workers arising out of or in connection with the performance of their duties as such. **THE DOH SHALL ALSO ENDEAVOR TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA) WITH THE INTEGRATED BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (IBP) TO ALLOW LAWYERS WHO WILL PROVIDE FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO BHWs BE GRANTED MANDATORY CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION (MCLE) CREDITS;**
- i) **SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO DEPENDENTS OF BHWs. - COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS TO ANY STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OR TESDA SCHOLARSHIPS SHALL BE GRANTED TO A MAXIMUM OF TWO (2) CHILDREN TO ALL BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS, WHO HAVE RENDERED AT LEAST ONE (1) YEAR OF SERVICE.**
- j) Preferential Access to Loans - x x x "

SEC. 2. There shall be additional sections after Section 7 of the Republic Act 7883 shall be added to read as follows:

"SEC. 8. RETIREMENT AGE - THE MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE FOR BHWs SHALL BE 65 YEARS OLD. HOWEVER, AN OPTIONAL RETIREMENT SHALL ALSO BE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE REACHED 60 TO 64 YEARS OF AGE. ACCREDITED BHWs QUALIFIED UNDER THIS PROVISION CAN AVAIL OF THE RETIREMENT BENEFITS UNDER GSIS.

SEC. 9. BHW REGISTRY - THE CHDS SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE IN COLLECTING INFORMATION AND UPDATING THE BHW REGISTRY IN THEIR RESPECTIVE REGIONS AND SHALL SUBMIT AN UPDATED COPY TO THE DOH CENTRAL OFFICE EVERY YEAR. THE CENTRAL OFFICE SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE IN MAINTAINING THE NATIONAL BHW REGISTRY, WHICH SHALL BE THE REFERENCE OF AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE PROVISION OF INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS TO THE BHWs.

SEC. 10. COMMON PROVISIONS -

- A. PREMIUM PAYMENTS FOR THE BENEFITS OF BHWS SHALL BE BORNE BY THE LGU CONCERNED: *PROVIDED*, THAT THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SHALL SUBSIDIZE FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF FOURTH, FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASS MUNICIPALITIES.**
- B. ANY EXPENDITURE BY LGUS FOR THE BENEFITS OF BHWS SHALL BE EXEMPTED FROM THE FORTY FIVE PERCENT (45%) LIMIT ON THE ALLOCATION FOR PERSONAL SERVICES OF LGUS."**

SEC. 3. Implementing Rules and Regulations - The Department of Health, in consultation with the Department of Interior and Local Government, Civil Service Commission, CHED, TESDA, GSIS and the National Confederation of Barangay Health Workers, shall prepare within one hundred and eighty (180) days the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act. Rules and regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

SEC. 4. Separability Clause - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder or any of this provision hereof not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 5. Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential issuances and other administrative rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. Effectivity - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.