

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. _____



Introduced by Reps. NERI J. COLMENARES and CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill aims to upgrade the minimum salary grade level of public doctors to encourage more medical professionals to work in government hospitals instead of going abroad.

According to the International Labor Organization, health professionals leave the country because of "colonial mentality, economic needs, career development and better standard of living abroad." The Alliance of Health Workers (AHW) said that the most common reasons for doctor migration are low salaries and inhumane working conditions.

The Philippines is said to be the number one exporter of nurses and the number two exporter of doctors in the world. Yet, 7 out of 10 Filipinos die without seeing a health professional.

According to AHW, in Quirino Province district hospitals, two 24-hour shift doctors serve alternately. They also reported that in August last year, the Aglipay District Hospital administration sent home all inpatients because their two doctors were on leave.

Data from IBON Foundation showed that in 2007, there were only seven (7) government doctors for every 200,000 Filipinos, way below the World Health Organization standard ratio of 1 doctor to 5,000 patients.

According to AHW, "resident doctors in government hospitals (salary grade 18) earn P26,259/month, while doctors in the private sector get P20,135/month." The group says resident doctors average more than 110 hours a week, more than the mandated hours of work per week under the Labor Code while Municipal Health Officers are on call 24 hours a day. They are not given overtime pay and on-call pay. This does not even take into account the situation of contractual resident doctors in government hospitals.

The poor situation of doctors in the country does not only push doctors to leave for abroad (with some even studying nursing), it also discourages students from pursuing a career in medicine.

Because of this, health groups suggest an increase in the pay of government doctors. According to them, a minimum of P50,000 per month will be sufficient, though still far from the salaries abroad. The nearest approximation in the Salary Standardization Law 3 is Salary Grade 24 equivalent to P49,750/month (SSL3 full implementation).

Increasing the salaries of doctors is one important step that may help mitigate the outmigration of doctors and ensure quality healthcare for our people.

In this light, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Approved,



NERI J. COLMENARES
Bayan Muna Party-list



CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Party-list

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HOUSE BILL No. 177

Introduced by Reps. NERI J. COLMENARES and CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE

AN ACT
UPGRADING THE MINIMUM SALARY GRADE OF GOVERNMENT DOCTORS
FROM SALARY GRADE 16 TO 24

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as "The Government Doctors' Salary Upgrading Act of 2013."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the Government's concern and responsibility to provide adequate remuneration for public hospital doctors to attract and retain its rightful share of talents with the end in view of fulfilling the state policy of providing essential health services to all Filipinos.

SECTION 3. *Raising of the Minimum Salary Grade Level.* The present minimum salary grade of government doctors (Medical Officer I) shall be upgraded from Salary Grade 16 to Salary Grade 24. Salary grade levels of those occupying higher positions shall be adjusted accordingly.

SECTION 4. *Coverage.* This Act shall cover all resident doctors in public hospitals, whether nationally or locally funded.

SECTION 5. *Rules and Regulations.* The Department of Health and the Department of Budget and Management shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations of the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Appropriation.* The Government shall appropriate such amount as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act. Initial funds required for the implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the savings of the Executive Branch of the government and other possible sources that may be determined by the Office of the President. The subsequent funds needed shall be included in the General Appropriations Act for the year following the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 7. *Constitutionality.* Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity or constitutionality of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, letters of instructions, resolutions, orders, ordinances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,