

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 338



Introduced by Hon. Sol Aragon

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A major problem that we are facing today is that of pregnancy particularly among unmarried teenagers. This is generally prevalent among women aged 15-24 who are from low-income family groups. Since it is at this stage where they are supposed to be enjoying their lives, their pregnancies are often considered untimely or unwanted. Hence, the maturity and preparedness required of every parent are oftentimes wanting. The Department of Health has been trying to provide for free prenatal and postnatal consultations designed to reduce the incidence of maternal and infant mortality but the boost provided by a law can strengthen its efforts.

The Constitution, Article 11, Section 12, mandates the State to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this provision, the State must provide prenatal and postnatal maternity care services in the home of pregnant teenagers in order to protect their health as well as the future health and well-being of their newborn children.

This bill seeks to improve and expand the availability of, and access to, needed comprehensive maternity care services for women particularly low income pregnant adolescents.

Sol Aragon
SOL ARAGONES
Representative, 3rd District of Laguna

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 338

Introduced by Hon. Sol Aragon

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A MATERNAL AND
INFANT HEALTH HOME VISITING PROGRAM**

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

assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Maternal and Infant Health Home Visiting Program Act."

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the declared policy of the State to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this policy, the State must provide pre-natal and postnatal maternity care services in the home of pregnant women in order to protect their health as well as the future health and well-being of their newborn children.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* -For purposes of this Act, the term:

(A) "Secretary" refers to the Secretary of the Department of Health; and

(B) "Low income" means, with respect to an individual or family with an income determined to be below the income official poverty line defined by the Department of Budget and Management

SECTION 4. *Eligibility of Individuals.* - A pregnant woman who is below 21 years of age, or families with an infant up to the age of one (1), belonging to the low-income bracket, shall be eligible to receive maternal and infant care services provided under this Act.

SECTION 5. *Establishment of Maternal and Infant Health Home Visiting Program.* - The Secretary shall require health centers to designate an appropriate health professional or a qualified nonprofessional acting under the supervision of a health care professional who shall deliver maternal and child health services in the home of eligible individuals.

SECTION 6. *Maternal and Child Health Services.* - The maternal and child health services, which may be provided in the home to eligible individuals, shall include the following:

- (A) Instruction and counselling regarding future health care for the woman and her child;
- (B) Nutrition counselling;
- (C) Counselling and education concerning all aspects of prenatal care, childbirth and motherhood;
- (D) General family counselling, including child and family development counselling; and
- (E) Medical care or referral for medical care for the woman and her child.

SECTION 7. *Prohibition on Abortion.* - Any maternal and child health services which shall be made available under this Act shall not advocate, promote, or encourage abortion.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law of the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,