

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1849



Introduced by Congresswoman Lorna Quinto Velasco

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution in its declaration of State Policies, provides:

"Section 12. The State recognizes the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception."

"Section 14. The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men."

Pursuant to these policies, laws have been enacted recognizing the special needs of women both as workers and mothers. However, while these laws grant women maternity leaves and benefits, and other financial support after they have given birth, their failure to aid women during the course of their pregnancy is glaringly obvious.

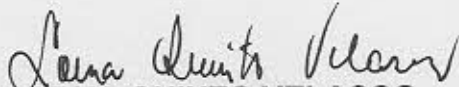
During pregnancy, women suffer great disability with regard their mobility. Pregnancy causes changes in a woman's body, which temporarily compromise their usual physical mobility. Such changes drastically affect a pregnant woman's physical and mental constitution, which makes her situation comparable to that of a person who suffers from a disability. Therefore, as a result thereof, the quality of life of these women is greatly diminished. Moreover, their participation in social life and the development of societies in which they live during this period is also adversely affected.

Until now, there is no law conferring rights to pregnant women similar to those given to the disabled embodied in B.P. 344 entitled, "An Act To Enhance the Mobility of Disabled Persons by Requiring Certain Buildings, Institutions, Establishments, and Other Public Utilities To Install Facilities and Other Devices." It is high time that we confer these rights to pregnant women as well since their

situation is comparable to disabled persons, albeit temporarily, during the duration of their pregnancy.

It is in this light that this bill seeks to amend B.P. 344 by also conferring to pregnant women, during the course of their pregnancy, the rights and privileges given to the disabled.

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


LORNA QUINTO VELASCO

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AN ACT AMENDING BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 344 ENTITLED, "AN ACT TO ENHANCE THE MOBILITY OF DISABLED PERSONS BY REQUIRING CERTAIN BUILDINGS, INSTITUTIONS, ESTABLISHMENTS, AND OTHER PUBLIC UTILITIES TO INSTALL FACILITIES AND OTHER DEVICES," BY CONFERRING TO PREGNANT WOMEN IN THEIR THIRD TRIMESTER THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES THEREIN GIVEN TO THE DISABLED.

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

SECTION 1. Section 5 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 344 is hereby amended to read as follows."

"Section 5. All the rights and privileges provided herein for the disabled are hereby deemed applicable also to pregnant women during the duration of the pregnancy. Provided, that a pregnant woman who wants to avail of the benefits under this law shall secure a certification from the Department of Health stating that she is diagnosed as pregnant."

SECTION 2. Section 6 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 344 is hereby amended to read as follows."

"Section 6. All laws, executive and administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with the foregoing provisions are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 3. *Section 7 of Batas Pambansa Bilang 344* is hereby amended to read as follows."

"Section 7. This Act shall take effect upon its approval."

SECTION. 4. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, rules, regulations, orders, memoranda or circulars inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 5. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,