

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2126



INTRODUCED BY REP. MARCELINO "MARCY" R. TEODORO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This proposal hopes to improve and expand the availability of and access to required comprehensive maternity care services that enable pregnant young girls to obtain proper care and to help pregnant adolescents and their parents to become productive independent contributors to family and community life.

Presently, the Department of Health extends free prenatal and postnatal consultations geared towards reducing maternal and infant mortality. However, it seems that there is a need for improvement on the existing institutional set-up because as of now, pregnancy among unmarried teenagers remains one of the most difficult and far-reaching social problems of our country.

Therefore, in keeping with Article II, Section 12 of the 1987 Constitution, which declared in essence that the State is mandated to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception, this measure directs the government to provide prenatal and postnatal maternity services in the home of pregnant teenagers in order to protect their health as well as the future well-being of their newborns.

Hence, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

MARCELINO "MARCY" R. TEODORO
Representative
1st District, City of Marikina

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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 Care Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to equally protect the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this policy, the State must provide prenatal 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.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby defined:

- (a) *Secretary* refers to the Secretary of the Department of Health;
- (b) *Low income* refers 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.

SEC. 4. *Eligibility of Individuals.* – A pregnant woman, not more than twenty-one (21) years old, 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.

SEC. 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.

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

- (a) Instruction and counseling regarding future health care for the woman and her child;
- (b) Nutrition counseling;
- (c) Counseling and education concerning all aspect of prenatal care, childbirth and motherhood; and
- (d) General family counseling, including child and family development.

SEC. 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.

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

SEC. 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 are hereby modified, repealed, or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,