

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3178



Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

According to the World Health Organization Global Tuberculosis Report 2012, the Philippines is on the top 22 high-burden tuberculosis (TB) countries in the world. It ranks the country at number nine out of 196 countries.

TB, an infection caused by mycobacterium tuberculosis that can be passed on to another person through tiny droplets spread by coughing and sneezing, is the number six leading cause of death in the country with 73 Filipinos dying everyday.

TB disease is highly contagious as each person with active TB can spread the disease to 10 other Filipinos each year. Presently, an estimated 200,000 to 600,000 Filipinos have active TB aside from the fact that an estimated 80 percent of them have latent TB.

Despite the efforts of government to improve the early detection and treatment of TB, the country's benchmark figure on the case detection rate, treatment success rate and cure rate are declining mainly because of various systemic and social factors, such as widespread poverty.

Consistent with the UN Millennium Development Goals, this measure aims to eliminate the scourge of TB in the country by providing free hospitalization and treatment benefits to all TB patients in any public and private hospital, which will be chargeable against the National Health Insurance Fund under the National Health Insurance Program of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation.

Although the treatment of new cases of pulmonary and extra-pulmonary tuberculosis in children and adults are covered under the Special Benefit Packages of Philhealth through the Directly Observed Treatment Shortcourse or DOTS, the same only covers new cases of TB and excludes failure cases, relapse cases, and return-after-default (RAD) cases, including additional services rendered or extension of treatment.

It is hoped that through this measure, the country will not only be able to achieve but surpass its objective under the Global Plan on TB which seeks to reduce the prevalence and mortality of TB in the country.

In view of the foregoing, early passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.
4th District, Quezon

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

AN ACT

PROMOTING THE TREATMENT AND ERADICATION OF TUBERCULOSIS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 12 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7875, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10606, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT INSTITUTING A NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM FOR ALL FILIPINOS AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION FOR THE PURPOSE

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "*Tuberculosis Elimination Act of 2013.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared to be a policy of the State to support and expand efforts to eliminate tuberculosis in the country by increasing investment in tuberculosis control program and providing free hospitalization and treatment benefits to all tuberculosis patients in any public and private hospital.

SEC. 3. Section 12 of Republic Act No. 7875, as amended by Republic Act No. 10606, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 12. *Entitlement to Benefits* - A member whose premium contributions for at least three (3) months have been paid within the six (6) months prior to the first day of his or his dependents' availment, shall be entitled to the benefits of the Program: *Provided*, That such member can show that he contributes thereto with sufficient regularity, as evidenced in their health insurance ID card; and *Provided further*, That he is not currently subject to legal penalties as provided for in Section 44 of this Act.

"The following need not pay the monthly contributions to be entitled to the Program's benefits:

- a) Retirees and pensioners of the SSS and GSIS prior to the effectivity of this Act; [and]
- b) Lifetime members[.]; AND

"C) ANY FILIPINO WHO IS AFFLICTED WITH TUBERCULOSIS: *PROVIDED*, THAT ALL EXPENSES INCURRED FOR THE TREATMENT/CONFINEMENT OF THE SAID DISEASE SHALL BE CHARGED AGAINST THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE FUND."

SEC. 3. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 4. This Act shall take effect fifteen days (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,