



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Sixteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3627

Introduced by Honorable Herminia B. Roman

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to establish a floating general hospital designed to function as a medical treatment facility to serve the immediate medical needs of the people affected by a natural or man-made calamity and as transport ship to conduct medical missions in normal times.

Almost every year, our country is visited with typhoons and earthquakes. After a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit Bohol and Cebu, these provinces became inaccessible by land that many of the survivors had to be brought to hospitals using small boats with so much difficulty.

The process was rigorous and time-consuming. If only we had a hospital ship, the rescued victims could have been given immediate medical attention, including surgeries and other medical procedures. We could have saved time, resources and a lot of peoples' lives.

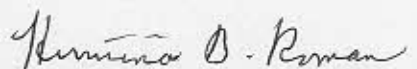
After the onslaught of super typhoon Yolanda which battered the Visayas Region, many hospitals and clinics could no longer operate so patients had to be evacuated to other areas. Tragic deaths and injuries caused by calamities became even more lamentable because of the absence of adequate, safe and well-equipped medical facilities which could have been otherwise avoided if there were a hospital ship deployed in the calamity areas.

As a response to the sad plight of disaster victims, to mitigate their suffering, there is a need for the government to purchase at least one modern and well-equipped hospital ship which could be used as medical evacuation facility during calamities, conduct emergency surgeries, and serve as storage

for medicines, medical equipment and supplies. During normal times, hospital ships can also be used for medical missions in remote islands and barangays, most of which do not even have a doctor or nurse to attend to the medical needs of the residents. Finally, the hospital ship can enhance the government's health care program even in the most isolated islands.

The proposed floating general hospital shall be jointly maintained and operated by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) within the territorial jurisdiction of the Philippines.

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


HERMINIA B. ROMAN



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila
Sixteenth Congress
First Regular Session
HOUSE BILL NO. **3627**

Introduced by Honorable Herminia B. Roman

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A FLOATING GENERAL HOSPITAL TO BE
KNOWN AS THE PHILIPPINE FLOATING GENERAL HOSPITAL
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. There shall be established, under the direct supervision of the Department of Health, a floating general hospital to be known as the Philippine Floating General Hospital (PFGH).

The Department of Health shall, in coordination with the Department of Transportation and Communications and the Philippine Coast Guard, provide the most modern and well-equipped ship for the PFGH.

SEC. 2. The PFGH shall have the following objectives:

a) Extend medical and surgical services to the general public, prevent, relieve and alleviate the incurable diseases, afflictions and maladies of the people especially the poor in faraway coastal communities;

b) Provide full hospital services to support the government disaster relief and humanitarian operations in areas affected by natural or man-made calamities;

c) Provide emergency on-site care for combatant forces deployed in military or police operations; and

d) Conduct a shore outreach program in local villages providing a wide array of services to increase health and well-being which include but are not limited to medical consultations, dental clinics, medical clinics, community health education, HIV-AIDS intervention, and water and sanitation projects.

SEC. 3. The Philippine Coast Guard and the Department of Health shall jointly maintain and operate the PFGH within the territorial jurisdiction of the Republic of the Philippines. The PFGH shall have the right to dock in any part of the Philippines where ships, vessels or boats are authorized to dock under existing customs and maritime laws.

The medical specialists and staff of the PFGH shall provide medical services on board the PFGH. They may also conduct medical consultations, surgical operations and outreach mission in local hospitals or clinics within the vicinity of the pier or harbor where the PFGH is moored.

SEC. 4. The PFGH shall be headed by a medical director who is a duly licensed physician. The medical director shall be appointed by the Secretary of Health.

The medical specialists, nurses, administrative personnel and other relevant medical personnel shall also be appointed by the Secretary of Health in accordance with the civil service rules and regulations. The officers and crew of the hospital ship shall be filled-up by the Commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard in accordance with its internal rules and regulations.

SEC. 5. The Secretary of Health shall, in coordination with the Commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard, be authorized to fix, or revise the itinerary and schedule of the PFGH's medical visits to the different provinces, cities and municipalities throughout the country. Provinces classified by the National Economic and Development Authority as the most depressed, disadvantaged and underserved, shall be given top priority. The PFGH may be rerouted from the scheduled route to localities declared as calamity areas by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

SEC. 6. The PFGH may call upon any department, bureau, office, agency or instrumentality of the government including government-owned or -controlled corporations for such assistance as it may need in the pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

All government entities and institutions are hereby enjoined to render full assistance and cooperation to the PFGH in the accomplishment of its objectives and activities.

SEC. 7. The Secretary of Health shall endeavor to negotiate and accept donations or grants which shall be exempted from income and gift taxes from any person, natural or juridical, domestic or foreign, for the establishment of the PFGH and its subsequent improvement or modernization. The Secretary of Health shall coordinate with medical groups, domestic or foreign, for support and assistance in the form of medical supplies and equipment and special medical missions.

The PFGH shall be exempt from the payment of all taxes, charges and fees imposed by the government or any political subdivisions or instrumentalities thereof.

SEC. 8. The Secretary of Health shall, in coordination with the Secretary of Transportation and Communications and the Commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard, issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 9. The amount of One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated for the establishment of the PFGH to be charged to the current appropriations of the Office of the President. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation and maintenance of the PFGH shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,