

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES
House Bill No. **3866**

Introduced by: HON. MA. THERESA B. BONOAN
4th District, City of Manila

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution Article 13, Section 11 mandates the States to give priority to the needs of women. To carry out this mandate, the State should undertake appropriate research focusing on women's health which shall be responsible to their needs and responsibilities.

Women have peculiar needs and responsibilities. Women are more exposed to diseases and danger as they get pregnant and give birth. Studies show that women who give birth are more susceptible to pregnancy-related and childbirth-related complications, especially if the women are either too young or too old, or if the pregnancies and child bearing have been too many or closely spaced.

Because of the responsibilities of women in this society, they have heavier and more tiring workloads. Women, aside from doing income-generating work, also have to perform such other responsibilities as child rearing, community work and housework, which often fall solely on them. Hence, there is probability that they get tired more and so may have lower resistance to infections.

Taking into account the needs of women arising from the role that they play in this society, this bill seeks to establish the Office of Research on Women's Health which shall conduct research on women's health and shall provide the appropriate and quality care to women.

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

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "T. Bonoan", written over the printed name of the sponsor.

HON. MA. THERESA B. BONOAN
4th District, City of Manila

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4th District, City of Manila

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH ON
WOMEN'S HEALTH**

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "*Research on Women's Health Act.*"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to give priority to needs of women. Taking into account the inherent disparity between men and women, the State shall undertake a research focusing on women's health which shall be responsive to the needs of every women.

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

- (A) "Secretary" shall refer to the Secretary of the Department of Health;
- (B) "Women's health conditions" shall refer to all diseases, disorders, and conditions –
 - i. unique to serious, or more prevalent in women;
 - ii. for which the factors of medical risk or types of medical intervention are different for women, or which it is unknown whether such factors or types are different for women; or
 - iii. with respect to which there has been insufficient clinical research involving women as subjects or insufficient clinical data on women.
- (C) "Research on women's health" shall mean research on women's health conditions, including research on preventing such conditions; and
- (D) "Committee" shall refer to the Advisory Committee on Women's Health.

SECTION 4. Establishment of the Office of Research on Women's Health. - There shall be established an office to be known as the Office of Research on Women's Health which shall be headed by the Secretary. The Secretary shall have the following functions:

- (A) To identify projects of research on women's health that should be conducted or supported by both the government and non-government agencies;
- (B) To promote coordination and collaboration among entities conducting research identified under paragraph A;
- (C) To recommend an agenda for conducting and supporting such research; and
- (D) To encourage the conduct of such research.

SECTION 5. Advisory Committee on Women's Health. - In carrying out the provisions of Section 4, the Secretary shall establish a Committee to be known as the "Advisory Committee on Womens' Health."

SECTION 6. Composition. - The Committee shall be composed of nine (9) members which shall include the following:

- a) Two (2) representatives from the Department;
- b) Four (4) physicians, practitioners and other health personnel;
- c) Two (2) representatives from a non-governmental organization which conducts research on women;
- d) One (1) representatives from the general public.
- e) A majority of the members of the Committee shall be women.

SECTION 7. Meetings. - The Advisory Committee shall determine the number, time, place and conduct of meetings, except that it shall hold at least one (1) public meeting each year at which the general public is given an opportunity to express views concerning the conduct of research on women's health by the Office.

SECTION 8. Term of Office. - Members shall be appointed by the Secretary for a term of three (3) years. Of those first appointed, three (3) members shall serve for three (3) years, three (3) members for two (2) years, and last three (3) members for one (1) year.

Any vacancy in the membership of the committee shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. Any member of the Committee may be removed for cause in accordance with procedures established by the Committee.

SECTION 9. Funtions. - The Committee shall have the following functions:

- (A) Advise the Secretary on appropriate research activities to be undertaken by the Office with respect to –
 - i. research on women's health;
 - ii. research on gender differences in clinical drugs trials, including responses

- iii. research to gender differences in disease etiology, course and treatment;
- iv. research on obstetrical gynecological health conditions, diseases and treatment; and
- v. research on women's health conditions which require a multi-disciplinary approach.

(B) Report to the Secretary on such research;

(C) Provide recommendations to the Secretary regarding activities of the Office; and

(D) Prepare a report regarding the activities of the Committee.

SECTION 10. Appropriations. - To carry out the provisions of this Act, such amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation of the Office of the Research on Women's Health shall be included in the annual appropriations of the Department of Health.

SECTION 11. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. Separability Clause. - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 13. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication either in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved.