



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

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

5202

HOUSE BILL NO. _____

Introduced by Honorable MARK A. VILLAR

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BREAST CARE CENTERS
IN EVERY REGION NATIONWIDE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Philippines has the highest incidence of breast cancer in the continent and an estimated 3 out of 100 Filipino women will contract the disease before age 75; 1 out of 100 will die before age 75, according to the Philippine Society of Medical Oncology in 2012. In other words, our country has the distinction of being number one for breast cancer in Asia. Furthermore, the country had the lowest survival rate of people with breast cancer among the 15 Asia countries.

Locally, breast cancer has overtaken lung cancer as the most prevalent form of cancer in the country.

With these staggering statistics, there is a need to address this alarming situation. Hence, this bill seeks to establish breast care centers where better education, care and preventive measures are given to women who avail of its services. By approving this act, the access to specialized care is made easier, more accessible, and more affordable to the more marginalized sectors of our society, and would be more in tune with the constitutional mandate that the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other services available to all the people at affordable cost.

As the famous saying goes, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. Meaning, early detection is still considered the best weapon in combating the disease.

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



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

SECTION 1. *Establishment of Breast Care Centers.* - A breast care center, known in this Act as "Center", shall be established in every region of the country to spearhead the fight against breast cancer. It shall be a new department in existing regional hospitals of the National Government. Should there be no regional hospital in the region, the Center shall be attached to any district hospital in the region, which is most accessible to the highest number of constituents.

SECTION 2. *Equipment and Personnel.* - The Centers shall be provided with such equipment, tools, implements, devices, apparatus and personnel as may be necessary for them to carry out multiple programs such as Breast Protection, Breast Surveillance, Breast Imaging, Breast Diagnostic and Surgery, Breast Cancer Chemotherapy and Breast Cancer Awareness and Protection.

SECTION 3. *Function.* - The Centers shall, in coordination with local government units, local health offices, the Philippine Information Agency and other government agencies, shall spearhead a sustained and extensive information and awareness campaign within their respective region to raise the level of awareness of the region's constituents especially the women sector on the ills, causes and symptoms of the disease for its early detection and prevention.

The centers shall coordinate with regional and local education officials to ensure that female high school students in both public and private schools are taught the pertinent information about the disease and are trained to habitually self-examine themselves as a part of the regular secondary curriculum.

SECTION 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Secretary of the Department of Health shall issue guidelines, orders or rules and regulations as may be necessary for the establishment of a Center in every regional hospital of the National Government or in a district hospital to be designated by the Secretary of Health for being the most accessible to the highest number of constituents in a region where there is no existing regional hospital; for the acquisition of the necessary equipment, tools, implements, devices and apparatus for the hiring of personnel, for the fixing of reasonable fees for the services of the Centers and to carry out the provisions and purposes of this Act.

SECTION 5. *Operationalization and Appropriations.* - To fully implement the provisions of the Act, the Secretary of Health shall immediately include in the Department's program the operationalization of the Centers, the funding for which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days upon its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,