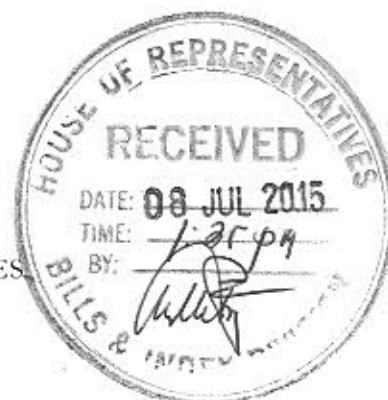




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Sixteenth Congress
2nd Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5914**



Introduced by Hon. Sharon S. Garin

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Diet and nutrition play a crucial role in the overall development of a child. The Philippines is ranked 9th in the world contributing to the global stunting burden according to the UNICEF. Moreover, the organization estimates that there are 6 million Filipino children who suffer from severe malnutrition. Of all the issues of malnutrition in the country, stunting malnutrition or being too short for one's age is one of the most critical and serious impediments to human development potential. (UNICEF) Long term effects such as reduced schooling, grade failure, and lower per capita household income in adulthood are just some of the results of malnutrition during the first years of a child's life.

According to a number of studies prepared by economists and health professionals, eliminating malnutrition in young children has multiple benefits. (Haddad, 2013) These benefits include:

- 1) an increase in gross national product (GNP) by 11 %,
- 2) prevention of more than 33% of child deaths per year,
- 3) increase in wages by 5-50%,
- 4) empowerment of women to be 10% more likely to run their own business, and
- 5) break inter-generational cycle of poverty.

The UNICEF reiterated the importance of the first 1000 days of children from conception until 2 years of age. According to scientific literature, the right nutrition during the first 1,000 day window can have an enormous impact on a child's ability to grow, learn, and rise out of poverty.

In line with this, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UNICEF are encouraging mothers to do exclusive breastfeeding (feeding with no food, water, or any milk substitutes) during the first six months of the baby's life as this highly ensures that infants have a better chance of survival, growth, and development. In this regard, maternity leaves are equally crucial in encouraging mothers to do exclusive breast-feeding. In the Philippines, mothers are only given 60 days (2 months) of maternity leave after delivery.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) stated that only 56% of mothers receive assistance from health professionals during child delivery. It has also been noted that the country posed a high maternal mortality rate of about 200 deaths per 100,000 live births. One of the major causes of these deaths is anaemia among women. The World Health Organization stated that in 2011, 29% of non-pregnant women and 38% of pregnant women aged 15-49 years old were anaemic. This affects half a billion women of reproductive age worldwide.

It is the primary responsibility of the State to ensure proper development among infants and ensure proper healthcare among their mothers especially pregnant women. With all these figures being cited, a measure that seeks to augment their nutritional needs must be enacted.

Hence, an act which institutionalizes the promotion of exclusive breast feeding, and counseling for all pregnant and lactating mothers on proper nutrition for their children during the first 1,000 days of the child's life is hereby proposed.

For us to be able to have a physically and mentally fit children, the approval of this measure is highly and earnestly sought.



Hon. Sharon S. Garin
AAMBIS-Owa Partylist



Republic of the Philippines

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Sixteenth Congress
2nd Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5914**

Introduced by Hon. Sharon S. Garin

AN ACT PROMOTING EXCLUSIVE BREAST FEEDING, ESTABLISHING A
REGULAR PROVISION OF VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS, MANDATING PREGNANCY
& ANTE-NATAL COUNSELING AMONG PREGNANT AND LACTATING
MOTHERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. Title - This Act shall be known as the "The First 1000 Days Program."

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. It is a declared policy of the State that it shall ensure the promotion of nutrition among its citizens especially the infants and their mothers. This Act aims to address the issue of child stunting and undernourished mothers.

Section 3. The First 1000 Days Program. Pursuant to the policies declared under Section 2 of this Act, the "First 1000 Days Program" shall be created, specifically to decrease the number of stunted and wasted children and to improve the welfare of pregnant and lactating mothers nationwide. The First 1,000 day window can have an enormous impact on a child's ability to grow, learn, and develop their full potential.

A. The First 1,000 Days Program shall be divided into three stages:

1. Pregnancy until birth.

Pregnant mothers' nutrition is crucial to the development of infants. Mothers who are not in good health could result to premature delivery, unhealthy infants, or even death. During the first to third trimester, supplements, and regular check-ups shall be given to pregnant women to prevent pre-mature delivery and to ensure health of both mothers and babies. Pre-natal counseling shall also be administered by the barangay health workers to mothers.

2. 1st day to 6 months

During this period, exclusive breast feeding shall be promoted as it supports healthy development of the brain, improves cognitive performance, and is associated with better educational achievement at the age of 5 years old.

Check-ups and provision of supplements for both mothers and infants shall be provided free of charge in all barangay health centers to ensure the proper health of lactating mothers and their infants. Moreover, counseling shall be done by lactation consultants and health practitioners to lactating mothers.

3. 6 months to 2 years

Complementary feeding shall be encouraged in this period. Solid and liquid foods as accompanied by breastfeeding protect children against many forms of diseases and allow them to develop their full potential.

Counseling, provision of seminars on healthy eating and right feeding, free supplements for both mothers and infants, check-ups, and necessary vaccinations shall be done by the DOH with the help of barangay health centers.

B. The Components of the First 1000 Days Program. The First 1000 Days Program aims to address the issues of undernourished kids aged 0-2 years old and unhealthy nursing mothers nationwide through the provision of the following:

- 1. Nutritional Supplements.** The nutritional supplements shall be provided free by the Department of Health.
- 2. Check-ups.** Regular check-ups during and after pregnancy for the mother and child shall be mandated and administered by the Barangay Health Centers.
- 3. Vaccinations.** Necessary vaccinations shall also be given to infants for free.
- 4. Counseling.** Pre-natal and Ante-natal counseling shall be administered by the Department of Health and the LGUs. These shall include topics on a.) sanitation, b.) nutrition, c.) pre-natal & ante-natal care, and d.) the importance of exclusive breast feeding.

5. **Public Information Drive.** Information on nutrition, pregnancy, pre-natal & post-natal care, breast feeding, and proper sanitation shall be disseminated in schools and through different types of media.
6. **Monitoring.** A National Monitoring System shall be implemented to monitor the overall status of infants and their mothers and to know the success and areas of improvement of the program.
7. **Breast Feeding Stations.** All hospitals and workplaces nationwide shall establish lactation stations pursuant to RA 10028 or "Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009." In workplaces, breastfeeding breaks shall be provided for working breastfeeding mothers. Moreover, human milk banks shall be established in health institutions.

C. Program Implementation

The DOH and NNC shall establish a framework to monitor the status of women during and after their pregnancy and the status of their children.

The monitoring of the overall implementation of the program shall be done by the DOH.

The DOH shall also lead the distribution of supplements, administration of check-ups and vaccinations in the different barangays nationwide.

Section 4. The Department of Health and the National Nutrition Council as the lead agencies. The Department of Health (DOH) and the National Nutrition Council shall lead the implementation of the program with the help of the following agencies: Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the local government units (LGUs).

Section 5. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The DSWD in furtherance of any of its programs shall help and coordinate in the implementation and monitoring of the program in all barangays nationwide

Section 6. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The DILG through the LGUs and their respective Barangay Health Workers (BHWs), Rural Health Workers (RHWs), and Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS) shall assist the DOH in the implementation of the program.

Section 7. Appropriation. - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year of its enactment into law. Thereafter, the expenses for its continued implementation shall be included in the subsequent General Appropriations Act.

The funds shall be administered by the Department of Health.

Section. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The Department of Health shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations implementing the provisions of this Act, within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act. Each of the member national government agencies and

instrumentalities shall likewise promulgate the necessary internal memoranda, circulars, and other order to institutionalize the program within their respective offices, not later than the date to be determined by the DOH.

Section. 9. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decreed and orders or parts thereof which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly. Nothing in this Act shall affect the existing milk feeding programs being implemented by other government agencies.

Section. 10. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect thirty (30) days following its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, or whichever comes earlier.

APPROVED,