

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5984



Introduced by Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Philippine authorities said the poison in a batch of candy that sent nearly 2,000 children to hospital was likely a common germ from dirty hands. Health Secretary Janette Garin appealed for better hygiene standards the food industry, as she announced test results indicating a bacterium found in human skin and hair likely contaminated the sweets. "This could be they did not wash their hands, or their sweat dripped into the candy, or the candy touched their armpits, or they didn't wash up after going to the bathroom," Garin said in a statement.

At least 1,925 people, mostly children in the Southern Philippines were hospitalized earlier in July, with stomach cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea, and other illnesses after eating fruit-flavored candy. Poor enforcement of food safety regulations has been blamed for past cases of food poisoning in the Philippines. The health secretary acknowledged that the government has had a tough time enforcing food safety rules in small towns, where businesses prepare candy, rice cakes and other sweets in their home kitchens. "These backyard industries are not regulated by the FDA," she said.

Hence, this measure seeks to create the food safety administration in order to laser-focus on the food safety issues and stave off the occurrence of food poisoning in the future.

The immediate passage of this bill is thus earnestly prayed for.

WINNIE CASTELO

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AN ACT
CREATING THE OFFICE OF FOOD SAFETY ADMINISTRATION AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Food Safety Administration Act of 2015."

SEC. 2. There is hereby created the Food Safety Administration under the Office of the Department of Health to ensure food safety throughout the Philippines.

SEC. 3. The creation of such office shall be determined and undertaken by the Department of Health, which is hereby authorized to delineate its specific functions from those of the Food and Drugs Administration.

SEC. 4. The amount needed to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the 2015 appropriations of the Department of Health. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the effective implementation of this measure shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,