

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

House of Representatives
Quezon City

16th Congress
3rd Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6294



Introduced by Congressman Alfredo D. Vargas III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

As part of the country's Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), the Philippines aims to reduce child mortality and improve maternal health.

According to the 5th Philippine Progress Report on the MDGs, the Philippines has a high probability of achieving the 2015 target of reducing the mortality rate of children. In 2011, the Philippines recorded a child mortality rate of 30 out of 1,000 live births which is not far from the 2015 target of 26.7. Moreover, infant mortality rate also decreased from 57 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 22 per 1,000 live births in 2011. The 2015 target is 19.

However, it is feared that the Philippines will not meet its MDG target on maternal health as the maternal mortality ratio increased from 209 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 221 deaths in 2011, a far cry from the 2015 target of 52.

With 2015 nearing its end, the State must exhaust all efforts to ensure that the country will meet the targets set forth by the United Nations.

Recent studies show that extending paid maternity leave for new mothers reduces infant mortality. The cause is yet to be known but it may be linked to longer periods of breast feeding and better health care. Extended paid maternity leave may also improve maternal health as it lessens the likelihood of miscarriage and complications.

Recognizing that maternity is a vital function played solely by women, this bill seeks to increase the maternity leave of working women from sixty days to 120 days.

To protect the working mothers and their infants' right to proper health care, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.

ALFREDO D. VARGAS III

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AN ACT

INCREASING MATERNITY LEAVE BENEFITS FROM SIXTY (60) DAYS TO ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120) DAYS OR FOUR MONTHS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7322

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

SECTION 1. Article 133 of Presidential Decree No. (P.D.) 442, as amended by R.A. 7322, is hereby amended to read as follows:

"ART. 133. Maternity Leave Benefits.

(a) Every employer shall grant to any pregnant woman employee, who has rendered an aggregate service of at least six (6) months for the last twelve (12) months, maternity leave of at least two (2) weeks prior to the expected date of delivery and another [four (4)] **FOURTEEN WEEKS** after normal OR CEASARIAN DELIVERY, with full pay based on her regular or average weekly wages."

SEC. 2. All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,