

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6309



Introduced by **Victor J. Yu, 1st District, Zamboanga del Sur**

With the world population expected to reach 10 billion by 2050 and that of the Philippines reaching 157,117,000, the pressure on food production is expected to intensify. It is estimated that 60 percent of all human infectious diseases and 75 percent of emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic in nature, that is, diseases that originate from animals. Numerous zoonotic threats have been traced to globalized and industrial production of food. As of January 2015, the Philippines' cattle inventory reached 2.5 million heads with 93.44 percent raised in backyard farms while the total swine inventory reached 12 million heads with 65 percent raised in backyard farms. The frequent contact of humans with these backyard animals makes the former prone to diseases emanating from the latter.

Our primary challenge is to find ways to strengthen Philippine veterinary institutions and provide veterinary professionals with tools to diagnose diseases and develop vaccines for them. This bill seeks to establish a Center that will acquire, multiply, characterize and store mammalian and insect cell lines and isolate, multiply, characterize and store disease-causing pathogens, primarily viruses. With these cell lines locally available, disease-causing pathogens isolated from clinical cases can now be used in the production of analytical reagents, antigens, and antibodies that will eventually lead to the development of a local diagnostic device as well as cure. As a result, there will be no need to import foreign counterpart, thus considerably cutting on cost and time required by importation. Additionally, the proposed Center which will be housed in the Central Luzon State University (CLSU) shall serve as the national source of these biological materials for research and teaching purposes as well as a learning resource for all food production and food safety stakeholders. In the final analysis, the use of local rather than foreign isolates of disease-causing pathogens in the local production of vaccines will result to vaccines that are more suited and therefore, more potent and effective for Filipinos. .

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


VICTOR J. YU

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

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 6309

Introduced by HONORABLE VICTOR J. YU

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A CENTER FOR MAMMALIAN CELL LINES AND
ANIMAL VIRUS REPOSITORY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known and cited as the "Mammalian and Animal Virus Repository Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the people's right to life and health. Toward this end, the State shall intensify research on medicinal interventions that are evidence-based. This policy is pursuant to provisions of the 1987 Constitution as follows:

Article II, Section 15, the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;

Article XIII, Section 12, the State shall establish and maintain an effective food and drug regulatory system and undertake appropriate health manpower development and research responsive to the country's health needs and problems.

Article XIV, Section 10, science and technology are essential for national development and progress. The State shall give priority to research and development, invention, innovation and their utilization.

SEC. 3. Creation and Establishment of the Center for Mammalian Cell Lines and Animal Virus Repository. There shall be established herein referred to as the “Center” in an area within the College of Veterinary Medicine of the Central Luzon State University under the supervision of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) through the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD).

SEC. 4. Objectives of the Center. The Center aims to:

- a.) Acquire reference mammalian cell lines and reference animal viruses from reliable sources and/or reference laboratories, within and outside the borders of our homeland, and to locally develop and produce primary or continuous cell lines of animal origin.
- b.) Produce monoclonal and/or polyclonal antibodies against these pathogens in one or more of the following: goats, chicken, duck, rabbits, sheep or horses for their detections and diagnostics applications.
- c.) Store these same monoclonal and/or polyclonal antibodies in bulk for instruction, research and commercial purposes.
- d.) Produce and characterize these pathogens and their protective antigens, which may be either of viral or bacterial in nature, for the purpose of diagnostic reagent development and production.
- e.) Isolate, produce and preserve pure cultures of animal disease pathogens which are known to impact immensely the production of animals.
- f.) Develop science-based, practical and verifiable diagnostic methodologies, tools or devices for the diagnosis of economically-important pathogens, which may be food-borne, blood-borne and water-borne pathogens, non-biological toxicants, toxins and various chemical additives that are harmful to animal and human health.
- g.) Validate the use of the diagnostic analytical reagents (antigens and antibodies) in accredited regional laboratories and/or, in certain cases at their point-of-use applications.
- h.) Provide accurate documentation for the analytical reagents, whether antibody or antigen as analyte or calibrator for the purpose of proprietary rights and technology transfer in their commercial applications.

- i.) Develop print information on the proper use of analytes in instruction, research, vaccine, diagnostics development.
- j.) Provide technical support on the proper use of the analytical reagents in trouble shooting.
- k.) Promote technology transfer of all diagnostic techniques, tools and/or devices.

SEC. 5. Executive Director. The Center shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines with management skills in health research development as well as a specialist physician/veterinarian actively involved in research programs and whose overall leadership in both technical and human resource management can effectively carry out the objectives of the Center. He shall be recommended by the Secretary of the DOST in consultation with the PCAARRD.

SEC. 6. Duties and Functions of the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall have the following duties and functions:

- 1.) Exercise over-all supervision and direction over the implementation of all research and development programs of the Center and in general to supervise and direct the management, operation and administration of the Center;
- 2.) Execute contracts, incur obligations, acquire and dispose of assets on behalf of the Center;
- 3.) Approve the Center's organizational structure, staffing patterns, operating and capital expenditures;
- 4.) Recommend the officers and employees of the Center on the basis of the highest possible standards of merit and fitness for public servants subject to the civil service laws, rules and regulations;
- 5.) Implement and enforce policies, decisions, orders, rules and regulations issued by the Department of Health; and
- 6.) Exercise such other powers and functions and perform such other duties as may be authorized, delegated, or assigned.
- 7.) Oversee strict confidentiality regarding the documentation, or whatever information and/or activities performed in the laboratory.

SEC. 7. Staffing Pattern. The Center shall be provided with the most competent and qualified personnel duly appointed by the Center Director subject to Civil Service Rules and Regulation.

SEC. 8. Appropriations. The amount of P50,000,000.00 for the initial operation of the Center shall be charged to the DOST. The Secretary of the DOST shall immediately include in the Department's program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The Center, in consultation with the PCAARRD and DOST, shall issue the rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, orders, proclamation, rules and regulation or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. Separability Clause. If any provision or part of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 12. Effectivity Clause. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,