

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5387**



INTRODUCED BY HONORABLE LIANDA B. BOLILIA

AN ACT
MANDATING THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION TO
PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR THE DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES FOR BREAST,
CERVICAL, AND PROSTATE CANCER, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 15 of the Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. In pursuit of this policy, it is the objective of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) to continuously endeavor to improve its benefit package to meet the needs of its members. It is in this light that this bill seeks to provide coverage for the diagnostic services for breast, cervical cancer, and prostate cancer.

The Philippines has the highest incidence of breast cancer and breast cancer mortality rate in Asia.¹ 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 2012.² This complements the Department of Health and Philippine Cancer Society, Inc. report, which states that breast cancer is the most common cancer in the country, comprising 16 percent of the 80,000 new cancer cases in 2010.

Cervical cancer is the second leading cause of death among Filipino women. Approximately 12 Filipino women die of cervical cancer every day. About 6,000 women are diagnosed with the disease every year and about 4,349 die of the disease

¹ http://www.pfizer.com/files/products/cancer_in_asia.pdf (March 8, 2017).

² <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/329126/cbb/phl--has-highest-breast-cancer-rate-in-asia#sthash.k76Yyrl4.dpuf> (March 8, 2017).

annually.³ Yet cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers. In most cases, cervical cancer can be prevented through early detection tests such as Pap Smear.

Among the Asian countries, the Philippines has the highest mortality rate for prostate cancer (13 per 100,000), a rate slightly less than that in the United States (16 per 100,000).⁴ When patients are diagnosed, it is already in the late stage, more commonly at stages 3 or 4 prostate cancer. For early detection, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the use of prostate-specific-antigen (PSA) in cancer screening.⁵ The Philippine Urological Association, meanwhile, recommended annual screening with digital rectal exam (DRE) and PSA.⁶ However, due to economic challenges and lack of awareness, Filipino males have low early detection rate.

Based on the above data, there is a correlation between the time of detection and the odds of survival for individuals afflicted with this dreaded disease. Cancer that is diagnosed at an early stage and before it spreads, is more likely to be treated successfully. It is but urgent to include diagnostic services for breast, cervical, and prostate cancer under PhilHealth's benefit package program. This bill aims to save lives and improve survival of cancer patients.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate enactment and approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



LIANDA B. BOLILIA
Representative
4th District, Batangas

³ <http://www.pchrd.dost.gov.ph/index.php/news/library-health-news/1771-cervical-cancer-incidence-in-the-country-still-high> (March 9, 2017).

⁴ http://www.pfizer.com/files/products/cancer_in_asia.pdf (March 8, 2017).

⁵ <http://www.pchrd.dost.gov.ph/index.php/news/r-d-updates/3208-study-reveals-increasing-incidence-of-prostate-cancer-in-developing-countries> (March 9, 2017).

⁶ Ibid.

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1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress*
2 *Assembled:*

3

4 **SECTION 1.** *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Breast, Cervical, and
5 Prostate Cancer Protection Act”.

6

7 **SECTION 2.** *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared as the policy of the State to
8 adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall
9 endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to
10 everyone at an affordable cost. Priority for the needs of the underprivileged sick,
11 elderly, disabled, women and children, shall be recognized.

12

13 **SECTION 3.** *Breast, Cervical, and Prostate Cancer Diagnostic Coverage.* – The National
14 Health Insurance Corporation (hereinafter referred to as PhilHealth) is hereby
15 directed to include diagnostic services for breast cancer, cervical cancer, and prostate
16 cancer in its benefits package. The expenses for the diagnostic services shall be covered
17 by PhilHealth.

1 The diagnostic services shall include but are not limited to Clinical Breast Exam
2 (CBE), Ultrasound, and Thermal Breast Imaging for breast cancer, Pap Smear Testing
3 for cervical cancer, and Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test and Digital Rectal
4 Exam (DRE) for prostate cancer, whichever is applicable as determined by the
5 physician.
6

7 **SECTION 4. *Funding.*** - The amount necessary for the effective implementation of this
8 Act shall be based on the evaluated and adjusted cost-sharing schedule and cost
9 containment features of the PhilHealth, as determined by the same on the basis of
10 applicable actuarial studies.
11

12 **SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules.*** - The PhilHealth shall promulgate the rules and
13 regulations necessary for the effective enforcement of the provisions of this Act.
14

15 **SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision or part thereof is held invalid or
16 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or provision not otherwise affected shall
17 remain valid and subsisting.
18

19 **SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or portions
20 thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed,
21 amended or modified accordingly.
22

23 **SECTION 3. *Effectivity Clause.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after 5 its
24 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.
25
26

27 Approved,