

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. 8052



Introduced by HONORABLE SCOTT DAVIES S. LANETE, M.D.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article II, Section 14 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution recognizes the role of women in nation-building. Section 15 of the same Article declared a State policy to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

A disturbing number of Filipinas are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year.

Cervical cancer is a type of cancer that occurs in the cells of the cervix — the lower part of the uterus that connects to the vagina. Various strains of the human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted infection, play a role in causing most cervical cancer. When exposed to HPV, a woman's immune system typically prevents the virus from doing harm. In a small group of women, however, the virus survives for years, contributing to the process that causes some cells on the surface of the cervix to become cancer cells.¹

Among the known factors that increase the risk of contracting cervical cancer on women are numerous sexual partners, early sexual activity, sexually transmitted diseases, weak immune system and smoking.²

Despite these risk factors, cervical cancer can be prevented. Among the recognized methods of prevention are vaccines, routine tests, safe sex and cessation of smoking.³

In the Philippines, the problem on cervical cancer lies mainly with lack of educational awareness on cervical cancer, specifically the risk factors, prevention and treatment. Only a small number of the women population are aware that cervical cancer can be prevented by vaccines and a lesser number are aware that they need regular check up for early diagnosis and treatment. In most cases, cervical cancer among Filipinas is detected at late stages, making treatment difficult, if not impossible.

In order for the State to fully and effectively produce women who are nation-builders, it first needs to look after their health. Thus, it is imperative that the State adopts a public awareness

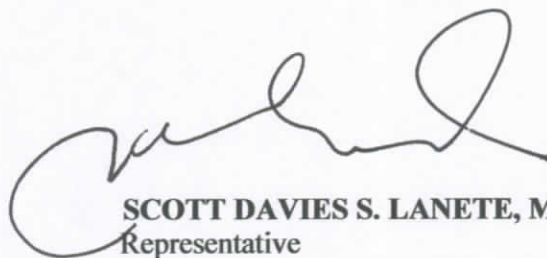
¹ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/cervical-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20352501>

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

campaign on cervical cancer that would educate Filipinas about cervical cancer prevention, detection and treatment.

Hence, the passage of this bill is urgently sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Lanete', with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

SCOTT DAVIES S. LANETE, M.D.

Representative

Third District, Province of Masbate

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**AN ACT DECLARING THE 23rd DAY OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR AS "VISUAL
INSPECTION WITH ACETIC ACID DAY" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

Sec. 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as "Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid Day Act."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building and their right to health. The State likewise recognizes its vital role in instilling health consciousness among women.

Sec. 3. Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid. The 23rd Day of May of every year shall be known as "Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid" throughout the Philippines.

Sec. 4. Public Awareness Program. Pursuant to the observance of Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid, a thorough and effective public education and awareness campaign shall be conducted on cervical cancer, its detection and treatment, with emphasis on early diagnosis. The State shall conduct free screening of cervical cancer using visual inspection with acetic acid.

Sec. 5. Implementing Agencies. The Department of Health, in coordination with all local government units, including cities and municipalities, together with non-government and civic organizations, shall lead the implementation of the public education and awareness campaign.

Sec. 6. Appropriation. The amount necessary to defray the cost of the Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid Day shall be appropriated from the General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 7. Repealing Clause. – All laws, issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Sec. 8. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.