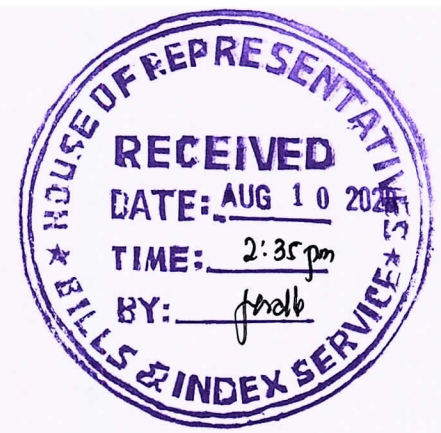


Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 7339



INTRODUCED BY
REP. ALFRED VARGAS

AN ACT
APPROPRIATING FIVE HUNDRED FIFTY MILLION PESOS
(P550,000,000.00) FOR THE CANCER ASSISTANCE FUND
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Cancer remains to be the third leading cause of morbidity and mortality in the Philippines, despite best efforts to fully implement Republic Act No. 11215 or the National Integrated Cancer Control Act (NICCA) and Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care (UHC) Law. Key to the proper implementation of these landmark health laws is sustainable funding.

Given the current COVID-19 situation, cancer patients and their families face unprecedented challenges during this very difficult time. Several patients have temporarily delayed or postponed their treatments and/or surgeries due to challenges in transportation brought by the lockdowns, and even due to the fear of contracting the virus if they proceed to hospitals. Cancer patients, according to the World Health Organization, are one of the most vulnerable groups at high risk of acquiring the virus. Both the NICCA and the UHC Law have yet to fulfill its promise of providing better health services to the Filipino people.

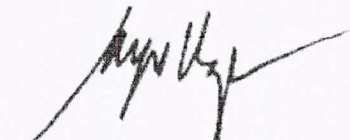
In 2018 alone, there were 141,021 new recorded cases of cancer – 86,337 of which are patients who have died due to the disease. In the same year, breast cancer ranked at the top spot in terms of new cases detected, while lung cancer is the leading cause of mortality. These patients, together

with their families, deserve only the proper health care support and treatment they need from the government.

In recent consultations with the cancer community organizations, and health policy experts, we were able to compute that the Cancer Assistance Fund needs additional and urgent funding for its proper implementation. Sustainable funding, through a stimulus appropriations bill can pave the way to realizing the promises of the Cancer Assistance Fund.

This bill seeks to appropriate Five Hundred Million Pesos (Php500,000,000.00) for the Cancer Assistance Fund in order to better assist Filipino cancer patients and their families, especially those who could not afford the costly expenses of cancer care and treatment in the country.

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



ALFRED VARGAS

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
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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 as the “Cancer Assistance Fund Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of all people. For this purpose, the State shall implement a system of providing premium care and assistance to indigent cancer patients and their families.

SECTION 3. Priority Assistance to Indigent Cancer Patients. – The Cancer Assistance Fund Program shall prioritize assistance to indigent and underprivileged cancer patient beneficiaries to be identified by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). This Program shall cater to cancer medicine and treatment assistance and shall be administered by the PhilHealth.

SECTION 4. Appropriations. – The amount of Five Hundred Fifty Million Pesos (Php550,000,000.00) shall be appropriated for the initial implementation of this Act to be sourced against any applicable appropriation items under the current General Appropriations Act.

For the succeeding years, the amount allocated for the Cancer Assistance Fund shall be in line with the National Integrated Cancer Control Program in the DOH budget and shall be based on strategic plan formulated by the National Integrated Cancer Control Council, in accordance with other stakeholders. The amount should be in the National Expenditures Program (NEP) as basis for the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the PhilHealth, in consultation with the DSWD, the DILG, and the representatives from hospital associations, medical practitioners and civil society representing peasant and/or the marginalized sector shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – Any portion or provision of this Act that is declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, other issuances or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,