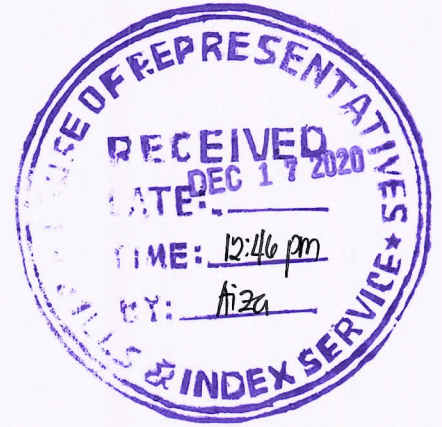




Republic of the Philippines

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8278

Introduced by Magsasaka Party-List Representative
ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

A study of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) shows that in the years 2014 to 2018, the agricultural sector accounts for 24.3 percent of the labor force in the Philippines, totaling about 10 million Filipinos. They have, lamentably, the highest incidence of poverty among the basic sectors in the country in the 2015 and 2018 survey of PSA. They live in rural communities that are remote and prone to natural disasters, with some areas lacking in emergency health care services.

Furthermore, due to the nature and location of their work, farmers are continuously exposed to various physical hazards: weather, terrain, machinery, exposure to toxic substances such as pesticides, fertilizers, fuels, and organic dust, among others. These lead to associated health problems, in particular, cancer, respiratory diseases, injuries, stress, and even behavioral hazards. However, due to poverty and limited access to social services, most ailments of our agricultural workers persist without proper medical intervention.

This bill proposes the establishment of a specialty hospital that will cater specifically to the medical conditions of our farmers and other agricultural workers. With a focus on the agricultural workers' ailments, the health facility shall have the necessary tools, equipment, and health care professionals that will specialize in their treatment and care. The primary medical facility shall be located in Nueva Ecija but shall also serve the medical needs of our farmers in the provinces across the nation.

In view of the foregoing reasons, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT
Magsasaka Partylist



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AN ACT

**ESTABLISHING A PHILIPPINE FARMERS' HOSPITAL IN NUEVA ECIJA,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Philippine Farmers’*
2 *Hospital Act.*”

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State shall uphold the protection and
4 promotion of the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among
5 them. For this purpose, the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach
6 to health development, and shall give priority for the needs of the under-privileged.

7 The State recognizes the primary role of agriculture in the development of a self-
8 reliant and independent economy. Towards this end, the State shall protect and ensure
9 the well-being of its farmers, farmworkers, and all agricultural workers in recognition of
10 their importance and contribution to nation building.

11 SEC. 3. *Establishment of the Philippine Farmers’ Hospital.* – There shall be
12 established a specialty hospital in Nueva Ecija, with at least tertiary level of care, to be
13 known as the Philippine Farmers’ Hospital, and herein referred to as the Hospital. The
14 Hospital shall be developed consistent with the health care needs of farmers and their
15 dependents. The Hospital shall be under the full administrative and technical
16 supervision of the Department of Health (DOH).

1 SEC. 4. *Objectives.* – To ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of
2 quality health care, the Hospital shall have the following main objectives:

- 3 a) Provide comprehensive and total health care services to all farmers and
4 their legal dependents;
5 b) Serve as primary referral hospital for farmers and their dependents
6 needing medical assistance and support;
7 c) Set up systems that will effectively monitor condition of patients and to
8 generate relevant health information and data for policy formulation; and
9 d) Participate in the health care provider networks and arrangements
10 relative to the implementation of Republic Act No. 11223, or the
11 “Universal Health Care Act.”

12 SEC. 5. *Medical Assistance.* – The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA)
13 shall ensure that existing health benefits and medical assistance programs are
14 strengthened to include, among others, subsidies on hospitalization and medical
15 procedures for farmers and qualified dependents.

16 SEC. 6. *Review and Assessment.* – The DOH and DA shall conduct a mandatory
17 review and assessment every five (5) years from the effectivity of this Act to ensure its
18 proper implementation and assess the performance of the Hospital.

19 A report shall be submitted to the Committee on Health and Committee on
20 Agriculture on both houses of Congress within thirty (30) days from the termination of
21 the period of review and assessment.

22 SEC. 7. *Tax Exemption.* – All grants, bequests, endowments, donations, and
23 contributions made to the Philippine Farmers’ Hospital to be used actually, directly and
24 exclusively by The Hospital shall be exempt from donor’s tax and the same shall be
25 considered as allowable deduction from the gross income of the donor, in accordance
26 with the provisions of the National Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

27 The importation of equipment, machinery and spare parts which are used solely
28 and exclusively for the operation of the Philippine Farmers’ Hospital and are not
29 available locally shall be exempt from value-added tax and customs duty.

30 SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
31 the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current year’s appropriations of
32 the DOH. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continued implementation of this Act
33 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

34 SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the
35 approval of this Act, the DOH, in coordination with the DA and other relevant
36 stakeholders, shall formulate and issue the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) to
37 fully implement the provisions of this Act.

1 SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If for any reason or reasons, any portion or
2 provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions
3 not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

4 SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations,
5 rules, regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the
6 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

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

9 *Approved,*