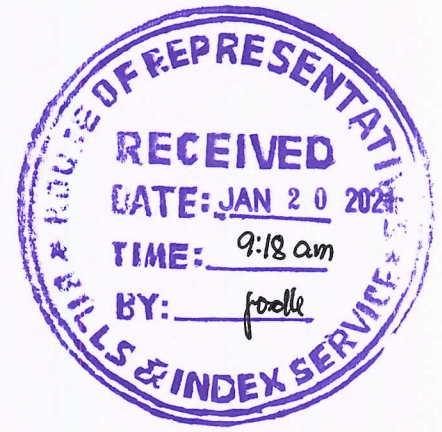


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8429

Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.**

**AN ACT ALLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND THE PRIVATE
SECTOR TO PROCURE AND ADMINISTER COVID-19 VACCINES AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

People from all over the world have been prayerful and eager in waiting for the development of a COVID-19 vaccine. It is seen as the most effective tool in eradicating the pandemic. Now that vaccines are already available, various nations across the globe are lining up to purchase.

Our expectation is to administer the vaccine to as many and as quickly as possible to enough members of the population. This is to dramatically slow down and reduce the risk of infection. The humble intention of this bill is to aid reach the goal of procuring and administering the vaccine as early as possible by outrightly authorizing the Local Government Units and the private sector to procure the vaccine.

This is a way of supporting the national government in the efficient and effective administration of the vaccine. Moreover, this proposal shall provide the enabling legislation, to remove any doubts, in support of the local government units who have already made deals and are making deals with various pharmaceuticals.

Data shows that the Philippines have severely suffered from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – GDP fell by 16.9% and unemployment by around 17.7% during the height of the lockdown. We have already lost billions of pesos as a result. Hence, we deem it of utmost importance to support our economy by prioritizing the health of our people through efficient administration of the COVID-19 vaccine.

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


LUIS RAYMUND "LRAY" F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.

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Section 1. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect the health and safety of the public and to promote a just and dynamic social order that will prosper and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty. Towards this end, and acknowledging the adverse economic and societal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State shall allow Local Government Units (LGU) and the private sector to engage in the procurement and administration of COVID-19 vaccines for the immediate and efficient vaccination for all Filipinos.

Section 2. LGU and Private Sector Authorization. - Local Government Units and duly registered businesses with the Securities and Exchange Commission or Department of Trade and Industry are hereby authorized to procure and administer COVID-19 vaccines and other supplies necessary for its effective storage, transportation and administration; Provided, That the vaccines as authorized herein shall be exclusively for the residents of the Local Government Unit or for the individuals, or their dependents, in the employment of a private business entity.

Section 3. Exception from Universal Health Care Law. - The requirement of Phase IV trials for COVID-19 vaccines stated in the Universal Healthcare Law is hereby waived to expedite the procurement and administration of the said vaccines; Provided, That the following minimum safeguards are in place:

- a. The vaccine is approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other internationally recognized agencies or international medical community;
- b. Conduct of safety and effectiveness surveillance, aligned with surveillance reporting systems from other countries' regulatory authorities;
- c. Risk communication on the benefits and risks of the vaccine;

- d. Informed consent and assent to vaccine recipients; and
- e. Conduct of community engagement activities.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other relevant agencies shall also expedite authorizations for vaccines or which trials have been conducted successfully.

Section 4. Tax Exemption. The importation of COVID-19 vaccines under this act shall be exempt from customs duties, value added taxes, excise taxes and other fees.

Section 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The Committee on the Rightsizing of the National Government shall formulate the necessary IRR within fifteen (15) days after effectivity of this act.

Section 6. Separability Clause. - If any of provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other provisions hereof.

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

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

Approved,