

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1785



Introduced by **HON. LUIS RAYMUND “LRAY” F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.,
HON. MIGUEL LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE, HON. TSUYOSHI ANTHONY G.
HORIBATA AND HON. NICOLAS ENCISO VIII**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to ensure that each Filipino shall have the chance to access annual medical check-up that is free of charge in any government hospital and institution to promote their right to quality health care services and prevent disease, disability, and death.

Health is a basic human right guaranteed by the 1987 Constitution. It is indicated in Article II, Section 15: “The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill consciousness among them. Further, Article XIII, Section 11 adds: “The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health, and other services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children.”

Over the years, health policies in the Philippines have evolved in response to increasing health demands. However, many problems besetting our country’s health care system remain. According to DOH, many Filipinos still die from diseases that are preventable and treatable with cost-effective interventions, including heart diseases, diseases of the vascular system, pneumonia, malignant neoplasms/cancers, all forms of tuberculosis, COPD and allied conditions, diabetes, mellitus, nephritis/nephritic syndrome and other diseases of the respiratory system.¹ Six out of ten Filipinos die without being medically attended to by a physician.²

The Universal Healthcare Law recognizes the importance of primary healthcare, including preventive care, to which medical checkups fall under. However, it does not guarantee that every single health expense will be made free. As published on a news website (2019)³, a study conducted by PhilCare found that nearly half of the Filipinos were “not sure if

¹ <https://doh.gov.ph/node/1058>

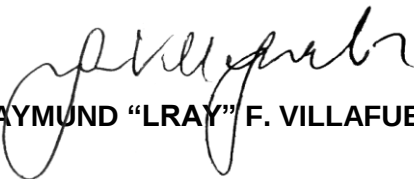
² <https://phmovement.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PHM-Philippines-case-study-for-PHM-Health-Systems-circle-Oct-16-2020.pdf>

³ <https://www.philstar.com/business/2019/07/05/1932014/philippines-healthcare-unaffordable>

they can afford the cost of regular medical check-ups.” It added that the Philippines is the second most expensive country in terms of medical expenses in Southeast Asia as concluded by the Mercer Marsh Benefits 2019 Medical Trends Around the World report.

Significant disparities in access to quality healthcare services among socio-economic groups exist. Hence, this bill aims to ensure that every Filipino is given access to promotive and preventive health services by reducing their out-of-pocket health care costs.

Considering the foregoing reasons, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



LUIS RAYMUND “LRAY” F. VILLAFUERTE, JR.



TSUYOSHI ANTHONY G. HORIBATA



MIGUEL LUIS R. VILLAFUERTE



NICOLAS ENCISO VIII

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR FREE ANNUAL MEDICAL CHECK-UP FOR FILIPINOS AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 "*Free Annual Medical Check-Up Act.*"

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Principle.* – It is the policy of the State to support and promote the right to health by enhancing programs which focus on preventive and curative medicine that advance the health and well-being of Filipinos and prevent disease, disability, and death. Pursuant thereto, Filipinos shall be entitled to an annual medical check-up that is free of charge in any government hospital and institution.

SECTION 3. *Coverage.* – All Filipino Citizens, by virtue of their membership in the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) mandated under Republic Act No. 11223, or the "Universal Health Care Law", shall be entitled to the applicable benefits under the Philippine Health Insurance Program.

Members shall be entitled to a free annual medical check-up that shall include blood sugar and cholesterol tests. Laboratory and diagnostic tests shall be expanded, subject to the availability of PhilHealth funds.

SECTION 4. *Schedule of Free Medical Check-Up.* – To promote health, identify risks, and ensure early diagnosis, PhilHealth shall establish a system that allows access to a free annual medical check-up and ensure that Filipinos shall be accorded the quality health care services that they deserve.

SECTION 5. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged against the PhilHealth funds.

SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Health shall, in coordination with PhilHealth, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act not later than ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, issuances, rules and regulations, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,