

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH (19th) CONGRESS
1st Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1841



Introduced by **Hon. WILTER YAP PALMA**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

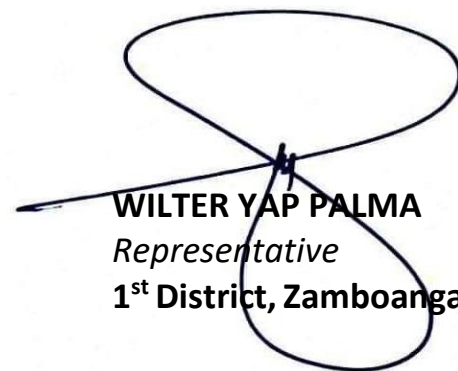
This bill seeks to strengthen the capabilities of Barangay Health and Nutrition Workers by setting the appropriate amount to be received as their honoraria, providing for additional benefits and facilitating capacity building programs for our Barangay Health and Nutrition Workers.

In reality, the Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) and Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNSs) are critical to the country's community-based health system. In fact, these barangay volunteers serve as the frontline providers for various health services and programs to all households within the barangay level. Moreover, aside from offering direct health services, they also act as the community pillars who are in charge of educating our households and in extreme cases, our dear volunteers are even the first responders in far-flung barangays where little to no medical practitioners could regularly visit and address the medical concerns of its residents.

Given the amount of work and sacrifice that our Barangay Health and Nutrition Workers have dedicated unto their respective communities, it is but right that we prescribe a fixed monthly compensation for them to enjoy. In addition, the capacity building programs as mandated by this measure would ensure that our volunteers are well equipped with the necessary sets of skills that would be beneficial to their communities. They are the forefront of our delivery of government services, as such, it is imperative that we ensure that our Barangay

Health Workers and Barangay Nutrition Specialists are well equipped and adequately compensated.

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



WILTER YAP PALMA
Representative
1st District, Zamboanga Sibugay

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NINETEENTH (19th) CONGRESS
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Introduced by **HON. WILTER YAP PALMA**

AN ACT

**PROVIDING ADDITIONAL BENEFITS TO BARANGAY HEALTH AND NUTRITION
WORKERS, AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1569 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO.
7883, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title*** – This Act shall be known as the “Barangay Health and
2 Nutrition Workers’ Benefits Act.”

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policies and Principles*** – Sec 9, Article II of the 1987
4 Philippine Constitution provides that the state shall create policies for the provision
5 of adequate social services, promotion of full employment, a rising of standard of
6 living, and an improved quality of life for all. It is thus hereby declared the policy of
7 the state to empower and strengthen our barangay health and nutrition workers
8 as the frontliners in the provision of government services at the barangay level. The
9 state shall adopt measures and incentive schemes to ensure that our Barangay
10 Health and Nutrition Workers are adequately compensated to perform their official
11 duties and functions.

12 **SEC. 3. *Coverage*** – Every Barangay Health Worker (BHW) and Barangay
13 Nutrition Scholar (BNS) shall be covered by the provisions of this Act.

14 **SEC. 4. Definition of Terms** – As used in this Act:

- 15 a. **Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS)** refers to one (1) Barangay based
16 volunteer worker in every barangay. They are responsible for
17 delivering nutrition services and other related activities such as
18 community health, backyard food production, environmental
19 sanitation, culture, mental feeding, and family planning to the
20 barangay, as defined in P.D. No. 1569;
- 21 b. **Barangay Health Worker (BHW)** shall refer to a person who has
22 undergone training programs under any accredited government
23 and non-government organization and who voluntarily renders
24 primary healthcare services in the community after having been
25 accredited to function as such by the local health board in
26 accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the Department of
27 Health (DOH), as defined in Republic Act No. 7883 also known as
28 the Barangay Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995.

29 **SEC. 5. Honorarium** – All Barangay Volunteer Workers covered under this Act
30 shall be entitled to a fixed monthly Honoraria of Six Thousand Pesos (P6,000.00).
31 Said amount shall be shouldered equally by the National Government, Province and
32 City/Municipality where the barangay is located. For Highly Urbanized Cities, an
33 amount of Four Thousand Pesos (P4,000.00) shall be shouldered by the City and an
34 amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) shall be shouldered by the National
35 Government. Said amount shall be part of the budget of the Department of Health
36 (DOH).

37 **SEC. 6. Additional Benefits** – All Barangay Volunteer Workers under this Act
38 shall be provided with the following benefits and incentives:

- 39 1. Free legal services from government lawyers or private lawyers
40 pursuant to R.A. No. 9999 and Bar Matter No. 2012, for cases
41 arising from acts committed in the performance of duty: *Provided,*
42 that such legal services shall continue, even after the expiration of
43 the term of the Barangay Volunteer, until its final disposition;

2. No Barangay Health and Nutrition Worker may be wrongfully terminated nor replaced unless with just cause. Just causes of termination or replacement shall include cases of serious misconduct, willful disobedience or insubordination, gross and habitual neglect of duties, fraud or willful breach of trust, commission of crime or offense and analogous causes. Anyone who is in violation hereof shall be subjected to proper administrative proceedings.

SEC. 7. Education and Training Programs – The appropriate government agencies shall develop a competency-based education and training curricula for the following:

- a. Barangay Health Worker – The Department of Health shall create a curriculum that will train the community health workers as healthcare providers, community organizers and health service managers. It shall include basic orientation and training on health programs and institutionalized health service delivery system, primary healthcare, basic community organization, local health research, program planning and development and mobilization. Courses on basic life support, reproductive health, basic dental care, physical therapy, nutrition, traditional and herbal medicine and reflexology shall also be offered. Such program shall be credited as units earned in higher education institutions with stepladder curricula that will entitle BHWs to upgrade their skills and knowledge for community work.
- b. Barangay Nutrition Scholar – Pursuant to P.D. 1569, the Department of Health, through the National Nutrition Council, shall adopt a training program on selected topics such as nutrition, health, food production and environmental sanitation, based on defined task expectations before the BNS does actual barangay service. Basic orientation on nutrition counseling, organization of mother's classes and breastfeeding classes, managing community-based feeding programs, and promotion of home or community

76 food gardens shall also be offered. The BNS shall be granted a civil
77 service eligibility equivalent to second grade after completing at
78 least two years of continuous and satisfactory service in the
79 barangay, as provided by P.D. 1569.

80 **SEC. 8. Program Cost and Cost Sharing for Local Government Units** – The
81 training program shall be offered free of charge. Local Government Units shall
82 adopt a cost-sharing scheme with the National Government through the
83 Department of Health for the implementation of the training programs in
84 accordance to the income level of the desired LGU.

85 **SEC. 9. Funding Source** – An initial allocation of Fifty Million Pesos
86 (P50,000,000.00) shall be included in the General Appropriations of the
87 Department of Health to support the policies under this Act. Thereafter, Congress
88 shall provide subsequent appropriations in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

89 **SEC. 10. Non-diminution of Benefits** – Nothing in this law shall be construed
90 to eliminate or in any way diminish the entitlements or other benefits being
91 provided to or enjoyed by Barangay Health Workers under Republic Act No. 7883
92 and Barangay Nutrition Scholars under Presidential Decree No. 1569, or other laws
93 and issuances, at the time of the promulgation of this Act.

94 **SEC. 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations** – The Department of Health,
95 National Nutrition Council, Local Government Units and other appropriate
96 government agencies shall issue the rules and regulations necessary to carry out
97 the provisions of this Act within Ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

98 **SEC. 12. Separability Clause** – Should any provision of this Act be declared
99 unconstitutional, the remaining parts not affected thereby shall remain valid and
100 operational.

101 **SEC. 13. Repealing Clause** – R.A. No. 7883 otherwise known as the Barangay
102 Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995 and Presidential Decree No.
103 1569 which provides for a Nutrition Scholar in every Barangay, are hereby amended
104 accordingly. All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof

inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 14. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

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