

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2890



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

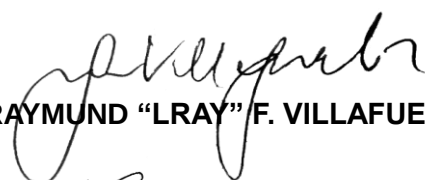
Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides:

"The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health and consciousness among them."

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) is a severe auto-immune connective tissue disease in which antibodies are generated to a range of autoantigens. It triggers inflammation in the different tissues of the body particularly when the immune system attacks its own tissue. There is no cure for SLE however medical interventions and lifestyle changes can help control it.

The proposed bill seeks to promote awareness and information for the public regarding SLE and to strengthen research and development to support and manage treatment of this disease. The increased awareness will encourage understanding, early detection and intervention which are critical in alleviating symptoms.

Upon these considerations, the prompt 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
INSTITUTING A NATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM TO COMBAT SYSTEMIC LUPUS
ERYTHEMATOSUS (SLE) DISEASE 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 "*Comprehensive Lupus Prevention Act*."

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people. As such, the State shall promote awareness of the health programs focusing on Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) to empower citizens suffering therefrom to become, to the best of their potential, independent, self-reliant, and productive members of society.

Sec. 3. Definition of terms. – For the purpose of this Act. "Systemic Lupus Erythematosus" (SLE) or "Lupus" shall be construed to mean a chronic autoimmune disease where the immune system attacks the body's cells and tissue, resulting in inflammation and tissue damage in different parts of the body, but most often affecting the heart, joints, skin, lungs, blood vessels, liver, kidneys, and nervous system, as diagnosed by a competent medical practitioner.

Sec. 4. *National Survey and Research.* – The National Institute of Health (NIH) of the Department of Health (DOH) shall conduct an annual survey to determine the extent and total incidence and prevalence of persons with SLE in the country for the government to provide the necessary health interventions to address the needs faced by persons with lupus.

Sec. 5. *Integrated Approach to Research in Cooperation with Concerned Research Agencies.* – Within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DOH shall ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the NIH's research agenda and that of pharmaceutical corporations or other government agencies addressing the issue of lupus.

Sec. 6. *National Program for Lupus Prevention and Treatment.* – The DOH shall implement a comprehensive and nationwide program on lupus prevention and treatment with the following objectives:

- a) to promote and provide mechanisms for early identification, screening, and diagnosis of persons suffering from lupus;
- b) to promote public awareness, education, and information on issues concerning lupus;
- c) to establish sustainable support network for families of persons diagnosed with lupus;
- d) to provide referral services to patients for appropriate educational and medical expertise and to identify appropriate education or medical facilities suited to the needs of patients;
- e) to undertake research and collaborate with other institutions for the conduct of research activities pertaining to the disease;
- f) to promote an advocacy discouraging bias against and stereotyping of afflicted persons;
- g) to provide an avenue for the sharing of best practices on issues relating to early detection, prevention, cure, treatment, and rehabilitation of persons

- diagnosed with lupus; and
- h) to network with other organizations, institutions, and professionals working on public programs for persons diagnosed with lupus;

Sec. 7. *Programs and Service for Lupus Prevention.* – The programs and services that will be provided by the DOH shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) orientation and counseling services for families of newly diagnosed persons;
- b) establishment of national and regional referral services where the DOH shall maintain an updated list of health care institutions and practitioners concerned with the treatment of lupus;
- c) publish a newsletter on current developments and research on lupus, as well as other reading materials on the early detection, prevention, and treatment of lupus, and best practices for the care of diagnosed persons;
- d) conduct of continuing education and training programs on the proper care of diagnosed persons; and
- e) establishment of a databank and an information and monitoring system on country-specific statistics pertaining to lupus.

Sec. 8. *Lupus Early Detection and Screening Fees.* – The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation shall include the cost of early detection and screening programs for lupus as one of the available benefits to its members. The early detection and screening test fees shall be applied to, among others, testing cost, education, follow-up, and readable overhead expenses.

Sec. 9. *Donations and Grants.* – The DOH, NIH, and other departments of the DOH that may thereafter be tasked with the implementation of this Act shall have the power to receive donations and grants from local and international donor institutions, foundations, and foreign donor agencies, provided that pertinent laws and rules on the receipt, accounting, and disbursement thereof shall be complied with.

Sec. 10. *National Lupus Awareness Week.* – In order to grow national interest and

participation in the issues and concerns of lupus patients, the first week of May shall annually be celebrated as "Lupus Awareness Week." This week-long activity will be spearheaded by the DOH, in coordination with other concerned agencies, institutions, and stakeholders.

Sec. 11. Continuing Education and Training of Health Personnel and Service Providers on Lupus Prevention and Treatment. – All DOH staff and health providers providing health services to persons diagnosed with lupus shall undergo a mandatory continuing education and training program to ensure the delivery of up-to-date and relevant services.

Sec. 12. Protection Against Forcible Administration of Medical Treatment or Enrollment in Programs. – All persons administering treatment, counseling, or medication as well as all persons involved in the implementation of the DOH programs as mandated in this Act shall respect the right of each patient to determine for himself or herself the medical treatment to be administered as well as the programs wherein he or she will participate, if any.

Sec. 13. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included and incorporated in the annual general appropriations of the DOH.

Sec. 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – Within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DOH shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 15. Repealing Clause. – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 16. Separability Clause. – If any provision or part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected shall

remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 17. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,