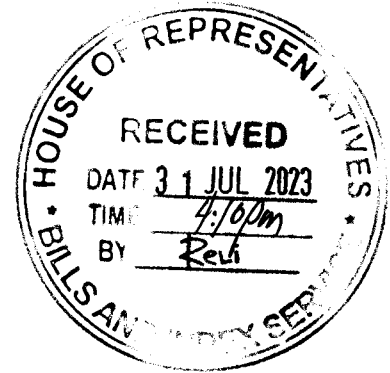


Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS**  
Second Regular Session  
**HOUSE BILL NO. 8658**



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Introduced by **HON. ANGELICA NATASHA CO**

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING THE WASTE WORKERS' HEALTH AND WELFARE PROGRAM,**  
**AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Waste workers play an indispensable role in our society as they diligently contribute to maintaining the cleanliness and orderliness of our communities. Their vital work in the waste management system ensures the proper disposal and recycling of waste, which is essential for the overall health and well-being of our citizens. Despite their significant contribution, waste workers often face challenging and hazardous conditions in the course of their duties.

This bill recognizes the crucial importance of waste workers and aims to address the pressing issues they encounter in their profession. Notably, waste workers are exposed to dirt, pollutants, and potentially harmful substances regularly, putting their health and well-being at risk. Moreover, the nature of their work also exposes them to the possibility of contracting communicable diseases.

In light of these challenges, this bill seeks to mandate the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to establish and administer the Waste Worker's Health and Welfare Program. This comprehensive program aims to provide holistic support to waste workers, ensuring their health, safety, and overall well-being.

The proposed Waste Worker's Health and Welfare Program will encompass several essential components:

1. **Health Coverage and Benefits:** The program will ensure that waste workers have access to adequate healthcare services, including regular medical check-ups and treatments. Additionally, it will provide them with health insurance coverage, enabling them to receive timely and necessary medical attention.
2. **Occupational Safety Training:** To enhance workplace safety, the program will institute mandatory occupational safety training for waste workers. This training will equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate their work environment safely, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries.

3. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Waste workers will be supplied with high-quality personal protective equipment, such as gloves, masks, and safety gear. By providing these essential items, the program aims to minimize their exposure to hazardous materials and safeguard their health.
4. **Educational Assistance:** The program will extend educational assistance to waste workers and their dependents. This initiative aims to support waste workers in pursuing further education and career development opportunities, enabling them to secure better livelihoods and brighter futures for their families.
5. **Financial Assistance:** Recognizing the economic challenges faced by waste workers, the program will provide financial aid during times of need. This assistance may include support for emergencies, medical expenses, and other unforeseen circumstances, ensuring that waste workers receive the necessary aid to cope with life's uncertainties.

Through the establishment of the Waste Worker's Health and Welfare Program, we express our deep appreciation for the dedicated service of waste workers and our commitment to their well-being. By prioritizing their health and safety, we acknowledge their vital role in maintaining the cleanliness and hygiene of our communities.

As legislators, we earnestly seek the approval of this bill, recognizing that a comprehensive and supportive program for waste workers will not only improve their lives but also contribute to a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable environment for all. Together, let us take this significant step towards ensuring the welfare of our waste workers and building a more inclusive and caring society for everyone.

  
**REP. ANGELICA NATASHA A. CO**  
BNW PARTYLIST

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**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 “*Waste Workers' Health and Welfare Act*”.

**SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy*** – It is the policy of the State to promote the health, safety, and welfare of waste workers in the Philippines through the establishment of a comprehensive program that provides benefits, education, and training, and ensures access to proper equipment and facilities, in recognition of the critical role they play in maintaining the country's cleanliness and sustainability.

**SEC. 3. *Definition of Waste Worker*** – For the purpose of this Act, “Waste worker” refers to any person engaged in the collection, transportation, processing, and disposal of solid waste, and includes, but is not limited to, garbage collectors, waste pickers, recyclers, and landfill and dumpsite workers.

**SEC. 4. *Waste Workers' Health and Welfare Program***. – The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall establish and administer the Waste Workers' Health and Welfare Program, designed to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of waste workers in the Philippines, which shall include the following components:

- a) **Registration and Monitoring System** – A system for the registration of waste workers, necessary for them to be covered under this Program,
- b) **Health Coverage and Benefits** – A package of healthcare benefits, including free annual check-ups, vaccinations, and hospitalization assistance, in partnership with the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth),
- c) **Occupational Safety Training** – The provision of regular training programs on methods, techniques, and the proper use of personal protective equipment to

minimize the risks associated with waste handling,

- d) Personal Protective Equipment – The mandatory provision to waste workers of suitable and adequate personal protective equipment free of charge by their employers or agencies,
- e) Educational Assistance – The facilitation of access to educational assistance programs and scholarship grants for waste workers and their dependents,
- f) Financial Assistance – The institution of a loan program under the auspices of the Department, in collaboration with qualified financial institutions, to provide waste workers with low-interest loans for housing, emergency situations, or the establishment of sustainable livelihood businesses.

**SEC. 5 Funding.** – The necessary funding for the implementation of the Waste Workers' Health and Welfare Program shall be allocated from the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). The DOLE may also accept and utilize grants, donations, contributions, or other forms of assistance, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.

**SEC. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – The DOLE, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and other government agencies, shall promulgate and publish the necessary implementing rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this law.

**SEC. 7. Separability Clause.** – Any portion or provisions of this Act that may be declared unconstitutional or invalid and shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions or provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions or provisions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

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

**SEC. 9. Effectivity Clause.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in any newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*