Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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19th CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10416

Introduced by Hon. Charisse Anne Hernandez
Lone District of Calamba, Laguna

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Doctors, nurses, and allied health medical professionals play a focal role in nation-building as they serve as stewards of health and the well-being of its citizenry. Their role goes beyond curing illnesses afflicting individuals and communities. They serve as crucial educators, advocates, and indispensable frontliners at times when the welfare of the nation is inestimably threatened, as what we have witnessed from the recent pandemic that tormented our country. Thus, it is the responsibility of the government as well to ensure that we produce generations of competent health workers by ensuring that their education and training are supported and well-regulated.

Anywhere around the world, the long and arduous journey of producing doctors and allied health medical professionals begins with the most fundamental of all medical sciences, Anatomy - the study of the human body. Anatomical instructions all over the world would invariably utilize the study of human remains, where we visualize, feel, experience, and truly understand what we are made of. Cadavers would be revered as "Silent Teachers" for the wealth of knowledge that they will bequeath to future healers of man. In medicine, there is a highly regarded dictum: "Mortui Vivos Docent" - The dead teach the living. For even upon death, we study what has curtailed life to improve it or delay the inevitable for future patients whom healthcare providers will treat.

For as long as modern medicine exists, the scarcity of body donors remains a perpetual problem. This is further complicated by socio-cultural norms, religion, and ethical issues. Over the years, this scarcity challenged medical educators to use every possible

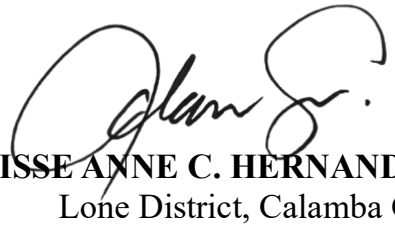
synthetic material to create models and mannequins to depict life-like renditions of the human body. In our modern digital age, augmented and virtual reality developers claim to have remedied the absence of human cadavers. And yet, studies have shown that most students of anatomy prefer the intricacies that a true "silent mentor" provides. At best, all other forms of anatomical instructions previously mentioned only supplement true dissections and the study of real anatomy provided by human remains. This is complicated by the fact that fully pledged physicians and specialists regularly go back to anatomy laboratories to simulate procedures and hone their skills as "silent teachers" to ensure patient safety.

Other countries have circumvented the scarcity of "silent teachers" by enacting laws regulating the donation of bodies for medical education and research. This allowed the creation of an organized body donation registry system that is ethical and transparent. Awareness campaigns are regularly done with government support to emphasize how the ultimate philanthropy of bequeathing one's body upon death will benefit the medical education and skills of their country's healthcare professionals. Universities and colleges that received donated bodies perform solemn ceremonies with the families of donors to commiserate the supreme sacrifice of their loved ones. Such practices create a culture of altruism that truly fosters the advancement of science of medicine that translates to patient safety and a healthy nation.

The recent pandemic saw the dire need to create more doctors for the Filipino citizenry. It took a scourge for us to address a long standing dilemma that six out of ten sick Filipinos die without seeing a doctor. Republic Act 11509, also known as "*Doktor Para sa Bayan Act*" was created as a long term solution to our healthcare poverty. Now we have to make sure that we produce competent and compassionate doctors. We need to start on the right foot. We need to provide existing medical schools and the new State Universities and Colleges of Medicine the best anatomical instructions for the most fundamental subject that all aspiring doctors will start with-Anatomy, and the same instructions from which they will hone and simulate their skills when they are full-fledged physicians- our "silent teachers."

The "*Silent Teachers Act*" would undoubtedly compliment if not assure the success of Republic Act 11509, and provide the Filipino nation with competent and skilled healthcare providers.

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



CHARISSE ANNE C. HERNANDEZ
Lone District, Calamba City

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives

19th CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10416

Introduced by Hon. Charisse Anne Hernandez
Lone District of Calamba, Laguna

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE LEGACY OR DONATION OF HUMAN BODIES AND BODY PARTS AFTER DEATH FOR HEALTH SCIENCES EDUCATION, TRAINING, RESEARCH AND SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

Section 1. ***Title.*** – This Act shall be known as the "***Silent Teachers Act***".

Section 2. ***Declaration of State Policy*** - Recognizing the paramount importance of advancing medical education, research, and training, it is hereby declared as a matter of state policy to uphold and facilitate the donation of human bodies and body parts for educational, scientific, and research purposes. This policy aims to foster a culture of altruism and voluntary service towards the betterment of health sciences and healthcare services, ensuring that such donations contribute significantly to the enhancement of knowledge, skills, and competencies of medical and allied health students and medical and allied health professionals.

Section 3. ***Objectives*** - In furtherance of this policy, the following are the objectives of this act:

a) Health Sciences Education and Training: Silent teachers provide invaluable opportunities for medical and allied health students, residents, and healthcare professionals to learn human anatomy, surgical techniques, and procedural skills in a hands-on manner.

b) Advancing Health Research: Bodies donated for educational purposes can also be used in health research, helping scientists and researchers to explore new treatments, understand diseases, and improve existing medical procedures.
c) Promoting Ethical Practices: The use of donated bodies emphasizes the importance of ethics in health sciences education and research. Students learn to respect the dignity and generosity of donors, fostering a sense of empathy, compassion, ethical conduct, and professionalism that they carry into their health care practices.
d) Enhancing Public Health Awareness: The act of body donation itself helps raise awareness about the importance of contributing to health sciences education and research. It can encourage discussions about public health, the need for medical advancements, and the altruistic impact of donation.
e) Alleviating the Scarcity of Donors: In many regions, there is a scarcity of willed-body donors available for health sciences education and research. Encouraging body donation helps address this gap, ensuring that educational institutions have the necessary resources and instructions to train future healthcare professionals.
f) Regulate and Standardize Procedures: Establish clear, transparent, and standardized procedures for the donation process, including consent, documentation, handling, preservation, memorial recognition of the silent teachers, and eventual burial, ensuring ethical practices and legal compliance.
g) Protect Donors and Families: Ensure the rights, privacy, and wishes of donors and their families are protected throughout the donation process. This includes providing comprehensive information about the donation process, ensuring informed consent, and respecting any conditions or limitations set forth by the donors.
h) Facilitate Access and Equity: Ensure equitable access to donated bodies and body parts for all educational and research institutions, prioritizing usage based on educational, research, and societal needs without discrimination.
i) Review and Oversight: Assign a regulatory body to oversee, review, and enforce the standards and procedures related to human bodies and body parts donations, ensuring compliance with this policy and addressing any issues or grievances that may arise.

Section 4. ***Definition of Terms*****.** – As used in this Act the following terms shall mean:

a) "*College Mortuary*" - a facility licensed, accredited or approved under the law for embalming, storage, preservation and maintenance of human bodies or parts thereof.
b) "*Death*" - the irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions or the irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain, including the brain stem. A person shall be medically and legally dead if either:
    (1) In the opinion of the attending physician, based on the acceptable standards of medical practice, there is an absence of natural respiratory and cardiac functions and, attempts at resuscitation would not be successful in restoring those functions. In this case, death shall be deemed to have occurred at the time these functions ceased; or

(2) In the opinion of the consulting physician, concurred in by the attending physician, that on the basis of acceptable standards of medical practice, there is an irreversible cessation of all brain functions; and considering the absence of such functions, further attempts at resuscitation or continued supportive maintenance would not be successful in resorting such natural functions. In this case, death shall be deemed to have occurred at the time when these conditions first appeared.

The death of the person shall be determined in accordance with the acceptable standards of medical practice and shall be diagnosed separately by the attending physician and another consulting physician, both of whom must be appropriately qualified and suitably experienced in the care of such parties. The death shall be recorded in the patient's medical record.

c) "*Decedent*" - a deceased individual, and includes a still-born infant or fetus.
d) "*Donor*" - an individual authorized under this Act to donate all or part of the body of a decedent.
e) "*Physician" or "Surgeon*" - a physician or surgeon licensed or authorized to practice medicine under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines.
f) *"Reasonable Efforts"*- for the purpose of this Act, refers to looking for the immediate family or relatives of a deceased. It refers to the diligence of a good father of a family that a responsible party, such as a hospital, morgue, or government agency, is expected to exert to locate and inform next of kin about the death. The following actions are generally accepted as part of making reasonable efforts:
    (1) Use of Available Information: Utilizing any contact information or personal details available from the deceased's possessions, records, or documents to reach out to potential family members or relatives.
    (2) Public Records and Databases: Searching through public records, online databases, social media, or other digital platforms that might help in identifying and locating the next of kin.
    (3) Notices and Announcements: Placing notices conspicuously in public places, announcements, or advertisements in local newspapers, online, or in other media outlets that could reach family members who are unaware of the death.
    (4) Law Enforcement and Public Agencies: Contacting local law enforcement, social services, or other relevant public agencies that might assist in identifying or locating the deceased's relatives.
    (5) Community and Social Networks: Inquiring within the deceased's known community, workplace, or social network that might provide leads on relatives' whereabouts.
    (6) Time and Persistence: Reasonable efforts also imply a certain level of persistence over time, meaning that a single attempt may not be sufficient, especially if initial attempts are unsuccessful.

(7) Documentation: Keeping detailed records of all attempts and actions taken to locate the next of kin, including dates, methods of communication, and responses received.

The term "reasonable" acknowledges that while exhaustive measures may not always be feasible, the efforts should be meaningful and proactive, reflecting a genuine attempt to fulfill the obligation of notifying the next of kin within the constraints of the situation.

g) "*Registry*" - Human Body Donation Registry established by the Department of Health (DOH) in conjunction with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) which shall serve as the official repository for all records of human bodies and body parts donations across the nation.
h) "*Testator*" - an individual who makes a legacy of all or part of his body.

Section 5. ***Person Who May Execute A Legacy*****.** – Any individual, at least eighteen (18) years of age and of sound mind, may give by way of legacy, to take effect after his death, all or part of his body for any purpose specified in this Act.

Section 6. ***Person Who May Execute a Donation*****.** – Any of the following, person, in the order stated hereunder, in the absence of actual notice of contrary intentions by the decedent or actual notice of opposition by a member of the immediate family of the decedent, may donate all or any part of the decedent's body for any purpose specified in this Act:

a) The spouse;
b) The descendants of the nearest degree and of legal age;
c) The ascendants, also of the nearest degree in the absence of any qualified descendant; and
d) The brothers and sisters of legal age, with the older of the said siblings being preferred.
e) Legal guardian or institution taking care or custody of the person of the decedent at the time of his death in the absence of the preceding relatives in letters a to d of this section after exhausting all reasonable efforts to locate the family.

The persons authorized by under this section may make the donation after or immediately before death.

Section 7. ***Persons Who May Become Legatees or Donees*****.** – Only state universities and colleges that host a college mortuary duly approved and accredited by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) are eligible to receive human bodies or parts thereof as legatees or donees in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

It is the responsibility of both the Department of Health (DOH) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to ensure equitable distribution to different educational institutions of donated human bodies or parts thereof across the Philippine archipelago, specifically targeting the regions of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. This distribution

must be thoughtfully aligned with the demand and needs of educational and research institutions within these regions, ensuring a fair and proportionate allocation based on the requirements for health sciences education, research, and scientific exploration.

Furthermore, the state universities and colleges designated under this section shall also assume the role of a central distributor tasked with the equitable distribution of human bodies and parts thereof to other educational institutions. This role encompasses ensuring that the donations are utilized effectively for health sciences education, research, and scientific purposes, thereby maximizing the benefit of these valuable resources for the advancement of health sciences and education across the country.

Section 8. ***Transfer and Preservation of Unclaimed Bodies*** - Unclaimed bodies located at hospitals, funeral homes, government institutions, or private organizations are mandated to be transferred to designated state universities and colleges as stipulated in Section 7 of this Act. This transfer should occur after a period specified by the Department of Health (DOH), provided that due diligence and reasonable efforts have been made to locate or notify the deceased's next of kin or relatives, yet the body remains unclaimed. Comprehensive details of the deceased must be duly recorded in the registry provided in Section 9 of this Act.

Further, the state universities and colleges, in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, are hereby mandated to diligently ensure that all reasonable efforts are undertaken to locate and duly inform the next of kin regarding the demise of an individual.

Furthermore, hospitals, funeral homes, and government institutions are required to undertake necessary measures to ensure the preservation of the body, maintaining its condition for educational or research purposes.

Lastly, for unclaimed human bodies, the receiving educational institution is mandated that a burial mass or equivalent ceremonial service be conducted to duly honor and respect the deceased. This ceremony should be performed in accordance with the general religious or cultural practices prevalent in the area where the body was found or in a manner deemed respectful and dignified, taking into account the potential beliefs of the deceased to the extent they can be reasonably inferred. This requirement underscores the commitment to treat all individuals with reverence in death, recognizing the inherent dignity of every person.

Section 9. ***Silent Teachers Registry*** – A Silent Teachers Registry shall be established by the Department of Health (DOH) in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). The Registry shall serve as the official repository for all records of human body donations across the nation. This includes, but is not limited to, donations made by individuals, next of kin, or legal representatives, expressly for the purposes of health sciences education, research, and scientific advancement.

Furthermore, all bodies that remain unclaimed within hospitals and various institutions, and are subsequently designated for use in health sciences education, research, or for

scientific purposes, must be duly registered within the Registry. The inclusion of such unclaimed bodies in the Registry is imperative to ensure transparency, accountability, and the ethical use of human remains within the medical and scientific communities.

The Registry's creation and maintenance shall be guided by stringent protocols to safeguard the dignity and privacy of the donors and the sanctity of the donations, ensuring all procedures are in strict compliance with prevailing legal and ethical standards. The Department of Health (DOH) shall oversee the operation of the Registry, ensuring its integrity, accuracy, and accessibility to authorized entities, in accordance with the laws and regulations governing human body donation and utilization in the Philippines.

Section 10. ***Contents of the Registry*****.** - The Human Body Donation Registry, serves as a critical tool for organizing and overseeing the donation of human bodies for educational and research purposes. To fulfill its role effectively, the registry must contain comprehensive and detailed information that ensures transparency, accountability, and respect for the donors and their contributions. The Department of Health (DOH) reserves the right to append additional pertinent information as deemed necessary. Nonetheless, the subsequent details are deemed indispensable for inclusion in the Body Donation Registry:

a) Donor Identification Information
    a. Full name of the donor
    b. Date of birth
    c. Gender
    d. National identification number (if applicable)
    e. Contact information (prior to death, if self-registered)
b) Donor Consent Details:
    a. A copy of the signed consent form for the donation
    b. Specific conditions or restrictions placed by the donor on the use of their body or body parts based on the donor’s preference, religious, cultural beliefs
    c. Date of consent
c) Legal Next-of-Kin or Authorized Representative Information (if the donation was made posthumously):
d) Medical History:
    a. Relevant medical history of the donor that may impact the educational or research use of the donation
    b. Known diseases or conditions, especially those that could pose a risk to handlers (e.g., infectious diseases)
e) Death Details:
    a. Date and time of death
    b. Cause of death (if known)
    c. Location of death
f) Donation Details:
    a. Type of donation (whole body or specific parts)

    b. Intended purpose of donation (educational, research, etc.)
    c. Date of donation
g) Receipt and Handling:
    a. Date of receipt by the educational or research institution
    b. Method of body preservation and storage details
    c. Inventory number or other identification used internally by the institution
h) Utilization Record:
    a. Details of how and when the body or body parts were used
    b. Names of educational or research programs that utilized the donation
    c. Duration of use
i) Final Disposition:
    a. Method of final disposition (cremation, burial, etc.)
    b. Date and location of final disposition
    c. If returned to the family, details of the recipient
j) Institutional Information:
    a. Name and contact details of the institution receiving the donation
    b. Name(s) of the responsible personnel overseeing the donation
k) Memorial Recognition - An option shall be provided for the testator or donor to specify their preferences regarding the recognition of their body or the memorial recognition post-donation. This option will allow the testator or donor to detail any beliefs, customs, or traditions they wish to be observed in association with their donation. Such preferences may include, but are not limited to, specific ceremonial rites, religious practices, cultural rituals, or any form of acknowledgment that aligns with their personal beliefs and values. The responsible institution will make reasonable efforts to honor these wishes, insofar as they comply with legal, ethical, and practical considerations. This provision ensures that the dignity of the donor is maintained and that their final wishes are respected, reflecting a personalized approach to the donation process.

This comprehensive dataset not only facilitates the ethical and legal use of donated bodies but also ensures that the wishes of the donors and their families are respected throughout the process. Furthermore, it aids in the administrative and educational planning of institutions, ensuring that donations are used effectively and responsibly for the advancement of health sciences and education.

Section 11. ***Documentation and Declaration of Intent for Body Donation in Death Certificates.*** **–** Should the donation of a human body or any of its parts be effectuated through legacy, donation or transfer pursuant to Sections 5, 6 and 8 of this Act, such donation shall be unequivocally indicated on the Death Certificate of the decedent.

It shall be incumbent upon the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) to ensure that the death certificate specifies whether the decedent's body, or any part thereof, is designated for use in health education, research, or scientific purposes, or if any organ or part of the body is intended for organ transplantation in accordance with Republic Act No. 7170, also known as the "*Organ Donation Act of 1991*".

Furthermore, it is the explicit responsibility of the attending physician, who is to sign the death certificate, to ascertain and communicate to the decedent's relatives or family the decedent's or the relatives' expressed intent for the body, or any part thereof, to be donated for medical education, research, or scientific purposes, or for any organ or part of the body to be utilized for organ transplantation under the auspices of Republic Act No. 7170, known as the "*Organ Donation Act of 1991*".

Section 12. ***Examination of Human Body or Part Thereof .*** – A donation of all or part of a human body provided in Sections 5, 6 and 8 of this Act authorizes any examination necessary to assure medical acceptability of the legacy or donation for the purpose(s) intended.

Section 13. ***Duty of the Receiving State Universities and Colleges.*** – Hospitals and educational institutions that receive body donations carry a profound responsibility to uphold these duties, recognizing the invaluable gift made by donors to the advancement of medical science and education.

The hospital or educational institution mentioned in Section 7 who shall receive the body shall assume a range of duties to ensure ethical handling, respect for the donor and their family, and compliance with legal and regulatory standards. These responsibilities encompass both the technical aspects of handling the body and the ethical obligations to the donor's memory and intentions.

a) Compliance with Legal and Regulatory Requirements: Ensure all actions are in strict compliance with national and local laws and regulations governing body donation, including obtaining necessary permissions and ensuring the body is suitable for donation based on health and legal criteria.
b) Informed Consent Verification: Confirm that informed consent was properly obtained from the donor or their legal next-of-kin, including documentation that the donor willingly consented to the donation of their body for educational or research purposes.
c) Dignity and Respect: Treat the donated body with the utmost respect and dignity throughout its use. This includes careful embalming, handling, storage, disposition and final burial of the body in accordance with the wishes of the donor and ethical practices.
d) Proper Handling and Preservation: The educational institution authorized in Section 7 to receive human bodies or parts thereof shall train or employ qualified personnel to handle the task of preserving the bodies or parts thereof in a humane and delicate manner. The authorized state college or university under Section 7 and the receiving educational institution must employ appropriate techniques for the preservation, storage, and handling of the body to maintain its suitability for educational or research purposes.
e) Confidentiality: Protect the privacy and confidentiality of the donor's personal and medical information, sharing details only as necessary and within the bounds of legal and ethical guidelines

f) Use for Intended Purpose: Ensure that the body is used solely for health sciences education, surgical training, or research. The use of the body for any other purpose should be strictly prohibited unless explicit consent has been obtained.
g) Record Keeping: Maintain accurate and detailed records regarding the receipt, use, and final disposition of the donated body. This includes tracking its utilization in educational or research activities and any findings or advancements facilitated by the donation.
h) Communication with Families: Provide clear and compassionate communication with the donor's family, offering information about the use and significance of the donation, and respecting any requests for information or updates within the bounds of confidentiality agreements.
i) Ethical Use: Ensure that the use of the body in educational and research settings adheres to the highest ethical standards, including respect for the body during dissection or study, and avoidance of any actions that would demean the donor's gift.
j) Proper Disposition: After the body has served its educational or research purpose, ensure it is disposed of in a respectful and dignified manner, in accordance with the wishes of the donor and their family, and in compliance with legal and ethical guidelines. This may include cremation and returning the ashes to the family, or burial in a designated location.
k) Acknowledgment and Gratitude: Acknowledge the generous contribution of the donor (and their family) towards advancing medical education and research, which may include ceremonies, memorials, or other forms of recognition to honor the donors.

Section 14. ***Enhancement of Embalming Competency for Educational and Research Purposes.*** – The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in collaboration with DOH, shall guarantee the provision of accredited training programs for Licensed Embalmers. This initiative aims to ensure an adequate supply of skilled professionals capable of employing the requisite techniques for the preservation, storage, and handling of cadavers, thereby maintaining their suitability for educational and research purposes across all college mortuaries and recipient educational institutions.

Section 15. ***Manner of Executing a Legacy*****.** – Legacy of all or part of the human body under Section 5 hereof may be made by will. The legacy becomes effective upon the death of the testator without waiting for probate of the will. If the will is not probated, or if it is declared invalid for testamentary purposes, the legacy, to the extent that it was executed in good faith, is nevertheless valid and effective.

A legacy of all or part of the human body under Section 5 hereof may also be made in any document other than a will. The legacy becomes effective upon death of the testator and shall be respected by and binding upon his executor or administrator, heirs, assigns, successors-in-interest and all members of the family. The testator must register his intent under Section 9 of this Act. The document, which may be a card or any paper designed to be carried on a person, must be signed by the testator in the presence of two

witnesses who must sign the document in his presence. If the testator cannot sign, the document may be signed for him at his discretion and in his presence, in the presence of two witnesses who must, likewise, sign the document in the presence of the testator. Delivery of the document of legacy during the testator's lifetime is not necessary to make the legacy valid.

The testator may designate in his will, registry, card or other document, the state college or university or educational institution which will benefit from the legacy. In the absence of a designation, or if the designee is not available, the human body or parts thereof shall be assigned to the state college or university in the region where he resides.

Section 16. ***Manner of Executing a Donation*****.** – Any donation by a person authorized under Section 6 hereof shall be sufficient if it complies with the formalities of a donation of a movable property.

In the absence of any of the persons specified under Section 6 hereof and in the absence of any document of human body or organ donation, the physician in charge of the patient, the head of the hospital or a designated officer of the hospital who has custody of the body of the deceased classified as accident, trauma, or other medico-legal cases, may authorize in a public document the transfer of the body provided in Section 8 hereof. Provided, that the physician, head of hospital or officer designated by the hospital for this purpose has exerted reasonable efforts, within a period provided by the DOH, to locate the nearest relative listed in Section 6 hereof at the time of death.

In all donations, the death of a person whose body will be transferred to state colleges or universities under Section 7 hereof for the purposes provided in this Act must comply with the requirements set forth in Section 9 of this Act.

Section 17. ***Amendment or Revocation of Legacy or Donation*****.** – The testator or donor may amend or revoke the legacy or donation either by:

a) The execution and delivery to the legatee or donee of a signed statement to that effect;
b) Cancelling his or her record from the registry;
c) An oral statement to that effect made in the presence of two other persons and communicated to the legatee or donee;
d) A statement to that effect during a terminal illness or injury addressed to an attending physician and communicated to the legatee or donee;
e) A signed card or document to that effect found on the person or effects of the testator or donor; or
f) Any legacy made by a will may also be amended or revoked in the manner provided for amendment or revocation of wills in accordance with our Laws on Succession.

Section 18. ***Provision for Allocation of Cemetery Space for Unclaimed Bodies.*** **-** It is hereby mandated that all public cemeteries in coordination with the receiving state universities and colleges, designate and allocate a specific section solely for the burial

of unclaimed bodies. The designated area shall be maintained in a manner that respects the dignity of the deceased, with appropriate markers or memorials that honor the memory of those interred within.

The management of public cemeteries shall work in coordination with local government units and relevant agencies to facilitate the burial process, ensuring that each unclaimed body is afforded a dignified final resting place. This provision aims to uphold the principle of respect for the deceased, irrespective of their status in life or circumstances in death, and to address the public health and social responsibility towards unclaimed bodies.

All public cemeteries, upon the burial of unclaimed bodies, are required to meticulously record detailed burial information in the designated national or local registry. This information must include, but is not limited to, the identification (if known) or a detailed description of the deceased, the date of burial, the specific location of the grave within the cemetery and any ceremonies or rites performed in accordance with this provision.

Section 19. ***Exemption of Burial Charges for State Universities or Colleges.*** **-** In recognition of the invaluable contribution made by Silent Teachers to state universities or colleges for the advancement of health sciences education, local government units shall waive all burial fees for the interment of such unclaimed bodies. This waiver is a gesture of gratitude towards the deceased for their noble act of heroism and selflessness in offering their bodies to further medical science and education.

The exemption of burial charges applies to all public cemeteries under the jurisdiction of local government units and is intended to alleviate financial burdens on educational institutions, thereby encouraging the continuation and support of programs that rely on anatomical donations.

Local government units, in collaboration with state universities and colleges, shall establish procedures to facilitate this exemption, ensuring that the process is conducted smoothly and with respect for the donors' contributions to society. This provision underscores the collective responsibility to honor and recognize the significant impact of body donors on the development of medical science and healthcare education.

Section 20. ***Immunity from Liability for Good Faith Donation*****.** – Any person who acts in good faith in accordance with the terms of this Act shall not be liable for damages in any civil action or subject to prosecution in any criminal proceeding of this Act.

Section 21. ***Public Awareness and Education Campaign.*** – To maximize the societal benefits of this Act, the Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with relevant government agencies, funeral homes, public and private educational institutions and hospitals, is hereby mandated to implement a nationwide public information campaign.

The Health Secretary shall engage and encourage health professionals from both the public and private sectors to actively promote the donation of human bodies, as

stipulated by this Act, for the advancement of health sciences education, research, and scientific study.

The Land Transportation Office (LTO) is designated to lead an educational campaign targeting all individuals engaged in the application or renewal of driver's licenses. This program is intended to educate them about the option to voluntarily consent to the donation of their bodies, in whole or in part, for the purposes of medical education, research, or scientific study, or to permit organ donation in accordance with Republic Act No. 7170, also known as the "Organ Donation Act of 1991." The LTO shall ensure that such consensual agreements are conspicuously recorded on the individual's driver's license card. Moreover, it is imperative that these consents are accurately entered into the registry under Section 9 of this Act to maintain up-to-date and comprehensive records.

Insurance companies, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), and entities offering memorial plans are similarly obligated to conduct informational campaigns to inform policyholders about the options for body or organ donation in line with Republic Act No. 7170. Such preferences must be systematically documented in the registry under Section 9 of this Act, ensuring the registry's accuracy and the timely update of records, thus upholding the integrity and functional efficacy of the system.

Section 22. ***Prohibition on the Sale of Human Cadavers.*** – The sale, trade, or any form of commercial transaction involving human cadavers is unequivocally prohibited and shall be deemed a criminal offense. This prohibition extends to all persons, entities, and circumstances, without exception.

To enforce this provision, the Philippine National Police (PNP) is hereby expressly mandated to diligently investigate, apprehend, and facilitate the prosecution of any individual or group found to be engaging in or facilitating the sale of human cadavers. The PNP shall deploy all necessary resources and employ a proactive approach in identifying, monitoring, and dismantling networks or operations that violate this prohibition.

Furthermore, the PNP is tasked with collaborating with other relevant agencies and entities to ensure comprehensive enforcement of this provision, including but not limited to, conducting awareness campaigns to inform the public of the legal implications of such activities and establishing mechanisms for the public to report suspected violations.

PENALTIES

Section 23. ***Unauthorized Sale or Purchase.*** – The unauthorized sale or purchase of human bodies or parts thereof for the purpose of this act and engaging in the sale or purchase of human bodies or body parts for profit, contrary to the non-commercialization principle of organ and body donation shall be penalized by imprisonment of 17 years 4 months and 1 day to 20 years, with accessory penalty of

civil interdiction during the period of the sentence as the case may be, and perpetual absolute disqualification and a fine of Five hundred thousand pesos (Php500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (Php2,000,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 24. ***Misrepresentation or Fraud.*** - Falsely representing oneself as authorized to consent to the donation of another person's body or body parts, or providing false information regarding the donor's medical or social history shall be penalized by imprisonment of 17 years 4 months and 1 day to 20 years, with accessory penalty of civil interdiction during the period of the sentence as the case may be, and perpetual absolute disqualification and a fine of Five hundred thousand pesos (Php500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (Php2,000,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 25. ***Forgery.*** - Forging consent documents or altering or fabricating medical records to facilitate unauthorized body or organ donation shall be penalized by imprisonment of 17 years 4 months and 1 day to 20 years, with accessory penalty of civil interdiction during the period of the sentence as the case may be, and perpetual absolute disqualification and a fine of Five hundred thousand pesos (Php500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (Php2,000,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 26. ***Improper Handling or Disposal.*** - Mishandling, improper storage, or disposal of donated bodies or body parts, leading to desecration or disrespect of donor remains shall be penalized by imprisonment of 4 years, 2 months and 1 day to 6 years and a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (Php100,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (Php 500,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 27. ***Violation of Donor Intent.*** - Utilizing donated bodies or body parts for purposes other than those explicitly consented to by the donor or the donor's legal representatives shall be penalized by imprisonment of 17 years 4 months and 1 day to 20 years, with accessory penalty of civil interdiction during the period of the sentence as the case may be, and perpetual absolute disqualification and a fine of Five hundred thousand pesos (Php500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (Php2,000,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 28. ***Interference with Donor Registration.*** - Intentionally altering, destroying, or falsifying donor registration records or consent forms shall be penalized by imprisonment of 17 years 4 months and 1 day to 20 years, with accessory penalty of civil interdiction during the period of the sentence as the case may be, and perpetual absolute disqualification and a fine of Five hundred thousand pesos (Php500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (Php2,000,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 29. ***Disclosure of Confidential Information.*** - Unauthorized disclosure of personal or medical information of donors and potential donors, breaching confidentiality agreements shall be penalized by imprisonment of 4 years, 2 months and 1 day to 6 years and a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (Php100,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (Php 500,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 30. ***Unlawful Acquisition***. - Acquiring human bodies or body parts from unauthorized sources or without proper consent shall be penalized by imprisonment of 17 years 4 months and 1 day to 20 years, with accessory penalty of civil interdiction during the period of the sentence as the case may be, and perpetual absolute disqualification and a fine of Five hundred thousand pesos (Php500,000.00) but not more than Two million pesos (Php2,000,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 31. ***Failure to Maintain Registry Integrity***. - Neglecting or failing to accurately maintain, update, or secure the body donation registry, leading to misuse or misallocation of donated bodies or organs shall be penalized by imprisonment of 4 years, 2 months and 1 day to 6 years and a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (Php100,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (Php 500,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 32. ***Non-compliance with Reporting Requirements.*** - Failing to report donations, transplants, or other relevant activities as required by law, leading to a lack of transparency and accountability organs shall be penalized by imprisonment of 4 years, 2 months and 1 day to 6 years and a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (Php100,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (Php 500,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 33. ***Failure to observe reasonable efforts to locate immediate family.*** – Failure to observe diligence and reasonable effort to locate the immediate family or relatives of a deceased person shall be penalized by imprisonment of 4 years, 2 months and 1 day to 6 years and a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (Php100,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (Php 500,000.00) without prejudice to damages that may be awarded to the bereaved family.

Section 34. ***Rules and Regulations.*** – The Secretary of Health, after consultation with all health professionals, both government and private, and non-government health organizations shall promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary or proper to implement this Act.

Section 35. ***Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, ordinances, rules and regulations, executive or administrative orders, and other presidential issuance inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 36. ***Separability Clause*****.** – The provisions of this Act are hereby deemed separable. If any provision hereof should be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 27. ***Effectivity*****.** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.