

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. **10694**



Introduced by Representative Camille A. Villar

**AN ACT MANDATING THE PROVISION OF MATERNITY PACKAGES TO
PREGNANT FILIPINO WOMEN BELONGING TO THE LOW-INCOME GROUP,
PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution is clear in declaring the importance of health especially among the vulnerable sectors like women:

“The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social 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. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers.”¹

The State likewise recognizes the role of women in nation-building such that the following declaration by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the Philippines resonates with urgency:

*“No woman should die giving life. Yet every year 2,400 women and girls die in the Philippines from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Eradicating preventable maternal deaths is a human rights imperative...”*²

According to a report quoting the UNFPA Philippines, in 2021, a total of 2,478 women died due to childbirth in the Philippines - more than double the 2019 figure of 1,458 women due to pregnancy-related complications or childbirth. UNFPA Philippines also noted that 14% of pregnant women in the country do not receive necessary medical care, including regular checkups during their pregnancy. One in 10 women is also unable to access health facilities nor assistance from skilled healthcare personnel during childbirth.³

It is the objective of this bill to improve such condition by establishing a Maternity Kit for Pregnant Filipino Women Program that will advance prenatal care for poor or near-poor Filipino women thereby reducing child mortality and empowering women to perform their role in nation-building.

Hence, the passage of this bill is respectfully sought.


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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 "*Maternity Kit for Pregnant Filipino Women Act of 2024*."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. — The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building. Further, the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social 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. Finally, the State shall endeavor to provide medical care to paupers.

SEC. 3. Maternity Kit for Pregnant Filipino Women Program. — This Act hereby establishes the Maternity Kit for Pregnant Filipino Women Program which may be availed of by expectant mothers who have already been identified as poor or near-poor based on the Standardized Targeting System under Republic Act No. 11310, otherwise known as the "Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) Act." In order to qualify, pregnant women must avail of pre-natal services, give birth in a health facility attended by a skilled health professional, and receive post-partum care and postnatal care for her newborn.

The maternity kit, to be distributed once to qualified beneficiaries free of charge, shall contain necessary items such as blanket, diapers, gauze, towels, nappies, bedding, cloth or fabric, which could be used to make clothing for the baby, and child care products. The contents of the package shall be updated by the implementing agency every two (2) years.

- (a) Improve prenatal care for poor or near-poor pregnant Filipino women;
- (b) Reduce child mortality, especially for those belonging to families in the low-income group; and
- (c) Empower women to perform their role, more meaningfully, in nation-building.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Agency.* - The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall serve as the central planning, implementing and monitoring body of the Program.

SEC. 6. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against those authorized in the current and subsequent General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The DSWD, Department of Health, and relevant agencies, in coordination with the relevant stakeholders, shall formulate the implementing rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act within thirty (30) from its effectivity.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - Any portion or provisions of this Act that may be declared unconstitutional or invalid 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.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, memoranda, circulars, and other issuances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,