

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. **10936**



Introduced by Representative CAMILLE A. VILLAR

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A BREASTFEEDING CENTER IN EVERY
BARANGAY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY**

Explanatory Note

The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that the State shall defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development.¹

According to the World Health Organization², breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival. However, contrary to its recommendations, fewer than half of infants under six (6) months old are exclusively breastfed.

Breastmilk is the ideal food for infants. It is safe, clean and contains antibodies which help protect against many common childhood illnesses. Breastmilk provides all the energy and nutrients that the infant needs for the first months of life, and it continues to provide up to half or more of a child's nutritional needs during the second half of the first year, and up to one third during the second year of life.

Breastfed children perform better on intelligence tests, are less likely to be overweight or obese and less prone to diabetes later in life. In sum, breastfeeding is most infants. As an infant grows, breast milk changes to meet the infant's nutritional good for both infants and mothers. Breast milk is the best source of nutrition for

¹ Article XV, Section 3, (2) of the 1987 Philippine Constitution

² https://www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding#tab=tab_1

needs. Breastfeeding can also help protect the infant and mother against certain illnesses and diseases. Women who breastfeed have a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers.³

This proposed legislation seeks to improve on the gains of Republic Act No. 7600, otherwise known as "The Rooming-in and Breastfeeding Act of 1992", as amended by Republic Act No. 10028, otherwise known as the "Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009". It aims to promote breastfeeding as the best possible source of safe and adequate food and nutrition for infants and young children, and strengthen the rights and protection of breastfeeding mothers by establishing more accessible breastfeeding centers in barangays.

In view thereof, this Representation joins her colleagues in humbly calling for the swift passage of this bill.


CAMILLE A. VILLAR

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/faq/index.htm#benefits>

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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 "*Barangay Breastfeeding Centers Act*".

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the policy of the State to promote the general welfare of the people. Pursuant to this policy, it shall promote breastfeeding as a means to provide protection against major illnesses in children such as respiratory infections, diarrhea and malnutrition. The State shall likewise promote breastfeeding as a means to ensure maternal health by protecting against hemorrhage, anemia, certain cancers as well as facilitating the recovery of mothers from the rigors of pregnancy and childbirth and helping prevent closely-spaced pregnancies.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the term:

- a) "Breastfeeding" means feeding of the child directly from the breast or the expression on milk from the breast of a lactating mother;
- b) "Barangay breastfeeding centers" means breastfeeding centers situated in every barangay which provide breastfeeding services such as information on proper breastfeeding method and proper use of breast-feeding materials;

- c) "Barangay breastfeeding personnel" means authorized health workers assigned by the municipal health office to supervise the healthcare facilities in each barangay; and
- d) "Breastfeeding materials" means materials used to aid lactating mothers in breastfeeding which include medicines, vitamins, breast pumps and other useful paraphernalia; materials shall also include breastfeeding milk supplements to be supplied by the barangay breastfeeding centers.

SECTION 4. *Establishing of Barangay Breastfeeding Centers.* – If the barangay health center in a particular barangay already has sufficient space and equipment to facilitate the barangay breastfeeding program, the barangay breastfeeding center shall be integrated within the barangay health center. If the barangay health center is not sufficiently equipped to facilitate the breastfeeding centers, a separate breastfeeding center shall be built.

SECTION 5. *Campaign for Breastfeeding and its Importance to the Health of Infants and Mothers.* – The barangay breastfeeding personnel shall also conduct periodical campaigns involving information dissemination on the importance of breast feeding for the health of mothers and infants.

SECTION 6. *Breastfeeding Equipment and Supplements.* – Constituents of every barangay shall avail of the services and facilities of barangay breastfeeding centers for free. No payment in any form shall be accepted by the personnel of the breastfeeding centers. They shall, however, be allowed to receive donations in the form of breastfeeding materials and supplements.

SECTION 7. *Beneficiaries of the Services and Facilities of Breastfeeding Centers.* – All residents of the respective barangays shall be entitled to avail of the services of the barangay breastfeeding centers.

SECTION 8. *Monitoring and Inspection of Barangay Breastfeeding Centers.* – The municipal or city health office having jurisdiction over the respective barangay shall monitor and inspect the services and facilities of every barangay breastfeeding center at least once every two months. The municipal/city health office shall ensure that every breastfeeding center has sufficient equipment and able to efficiently service the needs of constituents.

SECTION 9. *Trainings and Seminars.* – The barangay breastfeeding personnel should undergo trainings and seminars to improve and update their skills in providing breastfeeding services. The municipal or city health offices, in

coordination with the barangay officials of every barangay, shall schedule breastfeeding trainings and seminars at least once every six months.

SECTION 10. *Funding for Barangay Breastfeeding Centers.* - The funds to be used for the establishment of barangay breastfeeding centers shall be allocated from the budget of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). The city or municipality shall allocate the budget for the maintenance of the breastfeeding centers in their respective jurisdictions.

SECTION 11. *Implementing Agencies.* - The DILG and Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with the local government units, shall be responsible for the implementation of the provisions of this Act. They shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations for this Act within sixty (60) days upon its effectivity.

SECTION 12. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 13. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, issuances, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 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,