

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Bill No. **10981**



Introduced by Honorable Ma. Alana Samanta Taliño Santos

AN ACT GRANTING A MATERNITY BENEFIT TO WOMEN WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11210, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Informal employment is an increasing problem in the Philippines. Around 38 percent of the total working population fall under this sector, according to the 2018 Philippine Statistics Authority Informal Sector Survey. While there is a lack of updated and gender disaggregated data of the sector due to its informal and undocumented nature, recent estimates put this sector's contribution at around one third of the country's total gross domestic product.

In particular, women workers under this arrangement earn substandard wages in substandard working conditions, with little to no savings. Estimated to be at 6.6 million Filipinas according to the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, this number is expected to rise. With the absence of social protection, these women are highly vulnerable to negative external shocks that adversely affect their income.

Informal economy, as defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO), is "all economic activities by workers and economic units that are - in law or practice - not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements." Driven by survival, women working in the informal economy have barriers that prevent them from earning a living wage.

Section 11 of Republic Act (RA) No. 11210 or 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law states that Social Security System (SSS) unregistered informal workers can avail of the Maternity Care Package under PhilHealth Circular 022-2014. The circular asserts that non-registered pregnant women can only avail of the package if they were able to register and pay the PhilHealth premium *for the whole year*. This makes the application process difficult for women who already earn substandard wages.

Instead, this measure proposes a one time maternity cash benefit of a minimum wage rate times forty-four (44) days. It is about time the national government recognizes their service and contribution to the country. As such, the immediate approval of this bill is earnestly requested.

MA. ALANA SAMANTHA TALIÑO SANTOS

Representative

3rd District, Cotabato Province

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*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 “Maternity Benefit for Women in the Informal Economy Act”

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the declared policy of the State to protect the rights and welfare of women workers in the informal economy, to ensure optimal maternal health consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals, and to encourage and support the practice of breastfeeding in furtherance of its obligation to ensure the survival and development of Filipino children.

Sec. 3. *Maternity Benefit for Women Workers in the Informal Economy.* - Section 11 of Republic Act No. 11210 is hereby deleted and replaced with a new Section 11, which will read as follows:

SECTION 11. MATERNITY BENEFITS FOR FEMALE WORKERS WHO ARE NON-MEMBERS OF THE SSS. - FEMALE WORKERS WHO ARE NEITHER VOLUNTARY NOR REGULAR MEMBERS OF THE SSS SHALL RECEIVE, THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD), A ONE-TIME DIRECT MATERNITY CASH BENEFIT PER DELIVERY EQUIVALENT TO THE PREVAILING DAILY MINIMUM WAGE RATE IN HER REGION OF RESIDENCE MULTIPLIED BY FORTY FOUR (44) DAYS.

Sec. 4. *Funding Source.* — The amounts necessary to fund this maternity benefit shall be taken from revenues from excise taxes on sweetened beverages, alcohol, tobacco products, heated tobacco products, and vapor products, and may be augmented under the General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 5. *Separability Clause*. - Should any provision of this Act be declared unconstitutional, the remaining parts not affected thereby shall remain valid and operational.

Sec. 6. *Repealing Clause*. - All laws, decrees, orders, circulars. Issuances, rules and regulations and parts thereof which are inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 7. *Effectivity*. - This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication In the Official Gazette or In any two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Approved,