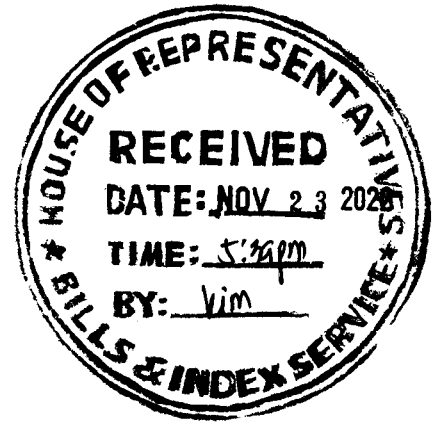


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6335



Introduced by **Representative Wilbert T. Lee**

**AN ACT DECLARING MARCH 22 AS A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO
HONOR THE HEROISM OF THE COVID-19 FILIPINO HEALTH CARE
WORKERS AROUND THE WORLD**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Last 8 March 2020, former President Rodrigo Duterte issued Proclamation Order No. 922, which recognized the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) crisis and placed our country in a State of Public Health Emergency. On 12 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared COVID-19 as a pandemic.

It was during this time when the COVID-19 pandemic was spreading to our population and uncertainty and despair were the mood around the world, that our medical frontliners stepped up to keep the world moving forward.

Our health care workers fought to save as many lives as they could working with whatever information and medical intervention they know and the supplies and equipment they have. The roles that they played have been key to us weathering the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic as a country, many among them losing their lives in the line of duty.

On 22 March 2020, anesthesiologist Dr. Romeo “Greg” Macasaet became the first health care worker to die of COVID-19. As of January 2022, 29,368 health care workers contracted COVID-19, from which 117 died.

The Philippines is one of the world’s biggest suppliers of nurses with around 195,000 deployed to work overseas before COVID-19.¹ As such, Filipino health care workers represent a significant number on the frontlines of the war against the pandemic.

¹ Asean Briefing (26 October 2021) How COVID-19 Has Impacted Philippine Medical Worker Recruitment. Accessed last 22 October 2022 from: <https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/how-covid-19-has-impacted-philippine-medical-worker-recruitment/>

Yet, despite the dangers and the racism our COVID-19 heroes occasionally experience, they soldiered on to do their jobs and saved lives while risking their own.

Now that our country is transitioning back to pre-pandemic conditions, we must never forget the lessons of the past and remember those who served our country during the darkest days of this generation.

It is thus proper that our COVID-19 medical frontliners take their place in our country's, and the world's history and their heroism be memorialized to serve as inspiration to future generations of Filipinos.

This bill designates March 22 of every year as a special working holiday to be known as Filipino COVID-19 Health Care Heroes Remembrance Day (Remembrance Day). It tasks the Department of Health to commission a design of the Health Care Heroes Remembrance Logo (Logo) which shall be used throughout all the events, and promotional materials, commemorating the Remembrance Day each year. Pins bearing the Logo design shall be produced and distributed to government health care facilities to be worn for at least a week prior to, and during the, National COVID-19 Health care Heroes Remembrance Day. The Logo may be licensed for free to other government offices and private organizations supporting the commemorative events.

The DOH shall serve as the lead agency in the preparation and implementation of the annual program of activities for the observance of the National COVID-19 Health Care Heroes Remembrance Day.

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


HON. WILBERT T. LEE
Representative
AGRI PARTYLIST

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

1 **Sec. 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be known as the “Filipino COVID-19 Health Care
2 Heroes Remembrance Act”.

3 **Sec. 2. Filipino COVID-19 Health Care Heroes Remembrance Day.** In remembrance
4 of the heroism of the frontliners during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines and around
5 the world, the twenty-second (22nd) day of March of every year is hereby declared a special
6 working holiday to be known as the National COVID-19 Health Care Heroes Remembrance
7 Day.

8 **Sec. 3. Healthcare Heroes Remembrance Logo.** In honor of our COVID-19 medical
9 frontliners, the Department of Health (DOH) shall commission the design of a Health Care
10 Heroes Remembrance Logo (Logo) which shall be approved by the President prior to its use.
11 The Logo shall be used throughout all the events, and promotional materials, commemorating
12 the Remembrance Day each year. Pins bearing the Logo design shall be produced and
13 distributed to government health care facilities to be worn for at least a week prior to, and
14 during the, Filipino COVID-19 Health care Heroes Remembrance Day. The Logo may be

1 licensed for free to other government offices and private organizations supporting the
2 commemorative events as provided in this Act.

3 **Sec. 4. Filipino COVID-19 Health Care Heroes Remembrance Day Events.** The
4 DOH shall serve as the lead agency in the preparation and implementation of the annual
5 program of activities for the observance of the Filipino COVID-19 Health Care Heroes
6 Remembrance Day. The Department of Migrant Workers shall also hold events around the
7 world for Overseas Filipino Health Care Workers and their families. To ensure the meaningful
8 observance and celebration of this day, the heads of national government agencies,
9 government-owned and controlled corporations involved in health and education, local
10 government units, state universities and colleges, and employers in the private sector involved
11 in health and education, are encouraged to allow their respective personnel to participate in any
12 related activity to be held within the premises of their respective offices or establishments.

13 **Sec. 5. Appropriations.** The amount necessary to implement the provision of this Act shall
14 be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

15 **Sec. 6. Separability Clause.** If any part or provision of this Act shall be declared
16 unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall
17 continue to be in full force and effect.

18 **Sec. 7. Repealing Clause.** All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and
19 regulations, other issuances, and parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of
20 this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

21 **Sec. 8. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in
22 three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

23
24 Approved,