

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 540



Introduced by **Representative Jaime R. Fresnedi**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to provide an across-the-board allowance for all physicians and nurses in rural health units.

Rural health units are the backbone of healthcare in far-flung communities, bringing essential services to areas that often lack access to hospitals or clinics. While the need in these areas is great, the distribution of healthcare professionals remains uneven—most choose to work in cities where resources and facilities are more readily available, leaving rural health units overstretched and underserved.

This bill aims to change that by providing an additional allowance to physicians and nurses as an incentive to serve in rural health units. This allowance is a cost-effective way to bring key personnel to rural communities and to keep their residents healthy.

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


JAIME R. FRESNEDI
Representative
Lone District, Muntinlupa City

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AN ACT
GRANTING AN ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCE TO DOCTORS AND NURSES IN
RURAL AREAS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be referred to as the "*Rural Health Worker Allowance Act*".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* –The State shall protect and promote the right to health of people and instill health consciousness among them by giving each individual unimpaired access to health and information services. Towards this end, incentives and benefits shall be provided to rural health workers to recruit and retain these personnel and promote health and health consciousness in rural areas.

SEC. 3. *Rural Health Worker Allowance.* – All licensed physicians and registered nurses working in rural health units shall be provided with a Rural Health Worker Allowance (RHWA) that shall, within three years from the implementation of this Act, amount to thirty thousand pesos (P30,000) per month for physicians and twenty thousand pesos (P20,000) per month for nurses.

SEC. 4. *Coverage.* – All physicians and nurses employed in rural health units operated by Government or its political subdivisions with original charters and shall include medical, allied health professional, administrative and support personnel employed regardless of their employment status: *Provided*, That the allowance shall be subject to prevailing laws, rules, and regulations concerning taxation: *Provided, further*, That the allowance shall not be included in the computation of contributions and pensions as provided for under relevant laws: *Provided, furthermore*, That the allowance shall apply only to 12 months per year: *Provided, finally*, That rural health workers employed by local government units (LGUs) may have their allowance pro-rated according to the income classification of the LGU as provided for in relevant laws.

SEC. 5. *Schedule of Implementation.* – The allowance shall be implemented starting January 1 of the year after the enactment of this Act, and every January 1 thereafter, and given in three tranches under the following schedule:

Year 1 - ₱15,000.00 for physicians and ₱10,000.00 for nurses

Year 2 - ₱9,000.00 for physicians and ₱6,000.00 for nurses

Year 3 - ₱6,000.00 for physicians and ₱4,000.00 for nurses

SEC. 6. *Review and Adjustment of the RHWA.* – The RHWA shall be reviewed by the Department of Health (DOH), with inputs from relevant government agencies, and adjusted alongside the implementation of a new Salary Standardization Act to account for the purchasing power of the peso.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Budget and Management (DBM), in consultation with the DOH, shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act shall be deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected there shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All Acts, Presidential Decrees, Executive Orders and Administrative Orders, Rules and Regulations and other such issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,