

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 548



Introduced by **Representative Jaime R. Fresnedi**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The proposed *National Integrated Obesity Management Act* aims to address the pressing issue of obesity in the Philippines through the establishment of a comprehensive prevention and management program, otherwise known as the *National Integrated Obesity Management Program*. This proposed bill, through the program that shall be established, will encompass a range of activities which include awareness and prevention programs, accessible health consultation and an extensive campaign on obesity prevention and management.

Obesity poses a great burden on the Philippine healthcare system as there are increased cases of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and other obesity-associated illnesses. Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly threatened those living with these comorbidities as they were more likely to be hospitalized if tested positive for the said virus. According to recent data, the prevalence of obesity in the country has shown a concerning upward trend as a significant number of the population has exceeded the recommended body mass index (BMI) of 18.5 to 24.9. This is considerably alarming as BMI is defined as the measurement of body fat based on the height and weight of an individual.

Around 27 million of our fellow Filipinos are overweight and obese based on the Department of Science and Technology's Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI). The statistics have also doubled from 20.2% in 1998 to 36.6% in 2019 of overweight and obese adults. Among adolescents, prevalence rates were 4.9% in 2003 and 11.6% in 2018. Furthermore, the economic impact of obesity on healthcare costs, productivity and overall well-being of our citizens highlights the need for a targeted and strategic approach to address this escalating public health issue.

The urgency of this matter cannot be overstated as the long-term well-being of the nation is at stake. Through the enactment of this law, we commit to forging a path towards a healthier nation where the right to health is not just protected but actively promoted for the benefit of generations to come.


JAIME R. FRESNEDI
Representative
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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF OBESITY, AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 known as the “*Anti-Obesity Act of 2023.*”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people. Towards this end, a system for the control and prevention of obesity among citizens shall be provided and the need for a responsible diet is established.

SEC. 3. *Obesity.* – For the purpose of this Act, obesity shall refer to an excess proportion of total body fat usually diagnosed when a person’s weight is at least twenty percent (20%) more than his or her normal or ideal weight. It is usually measured in body mass index (BMI), and is affected by, but not limited to age, gender, genetics, environmental factors, physical activity, psychological factors, illness and medication.

SEC. 4. *National Anti-Obesity Campaign.* – It is hereby mandated that there shall be a National Anti-Obesity Prevention and Control Program to be implemented by a multi-agency or multi-sectoral committee chaired by the Department of Health. The program shall be a multi-agency effort in controlling and preventing obesity in the country. Among its component activities include:

- 1) Awareness and prevention programs;
- 2) Provisions for consultation at the nearest health centers; and
- 3) Conduct of information and education campaign on the prevention and control of obesity.

The program shall be implemented by the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Education (DepEd), as well as Local Government Units (LGUs) with the assistance of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and People’s Organizations (POs).

SEC. 5. *Responsibilities of Government Agencies.* – The following government agencies, which shall jointly implement the National Anti-Obesity Prevention and Control Program, shall be tasked to:

A) Department of Health;

- a. Stimulate the development, improvement and implementation of new strategies and interventions to improve our understanding of obesity, its causes and its effects;
- b. Design projects and studies to help identify ways to better describe the impact of obesity and reduce medical complications;
- c. Coordinate with the DepEd in the development of appropriate health education strategy to inform the public on obesity prevention and control; and
- d. Encourage collaborative activities with the DOST, DepEd, NGOs, POs and other concerned sectors.

B) Barangay and other LGUs. – All Local Government Units shall be required to:

- a. Allocate funds to support the implementation of the National Anti-Obesity, Prevention and Control Program within their locality; and
- b. Enact additional local ordinances that will support the National Anti-Obesity, Prevention and Control Program and initiate programs in which should include awareness campaign and other preventive measures.

C) Department of Education;

- a. Strengthen anti-obesity education programs through school health teaching/curriculum;
- b. Encourage collaborative activities and information-sharing with the DOH, DILG, DepEd, NGOs, POs and other concerned sectors;
- c. Integrate proper information and education in the relevant subjects in the Elementary and High School level; and
- d. Implement other preventive actions that the DOH may provide.

SEC. 6. *Assistance of NGOs and the Academe.* – The agencies tasked to implement the anti-obesity program shall seek the assistance and participation of NGOs in any of the following activities;

- 1) Community mobilization;
- 2) Health education/information dissemination;
- 3) Mass anti-obesity campaign;
- 4) Promotion of the anti-obesity campaign;
- 5) Surveillance/reporting of obesity cases; and
- 6) Any other activities geared towards the prevention of obesity.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Health, in coordination with the DILG, DepEd, NGOs and POs shall issue the necessary rules and regulations within sixty (60) days from effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be initially charged against the appropriations of the DOH, DILG and DepEd under the General Appropriations Act. For the LGUs, the requirement shall be taken from the Internal Revenue Allotment and other local funds. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – In case any provisions of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the other provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *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, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,