

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1731



Introduced by **Representative Ryan S. Recto**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This legislative measure seeks to create one Regional Heart Center in each administrative region across the country to ensure that every Filipino has equitable access to specialized cardiac care.

According to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the three major causes of death in the country from January to August 2023 include ischemic heart diseases, neoplasms and cerebrovascular diseases. From this period, a total of 76,901 cases of death were reported, which represents 19.1% of the total deaths in the country. This underscores the urgent need for advanced heart care that is currently disproportionately met by the highly centralized Philippine Heart Center (PHC) in Quezon City.

The PHC is a Level 4 Government-owned and controlled corporate (GOCC) specialty hospital accredited by the Department of Health and other regulatory agencies. The specialty center is a 426-bed-state run hospital specializing in the treatment of cardiovascular ailments. As the premier cardiac referral center in the country, it has 14,953 admissions per year and 33,000 new patients by 2014. A staggering 55% come from the Greater Manila Area, while the rest (45%) come from various regions across the country.

It can be inferred from the above data that patients who reside in the Metropolis have better access to specialized healthcare. The absence of advanced cardiac facilities outside the National Capital Region (NCR) effectively compels patients from other regions to seek medical consultation from PHC. This situation forces them to endure additional travel costs, logistical challenges and even life-threatening delays.

Through this measure, we will be able to directly address the critical need for advanced cardiac care beyond that of Metro Manila. It shall serve as a comprehensive public healthcare solution to the overwhelming patient load that PHC serves. Most importantly, it shall significantly address the maldistribution of highly specialized medical professionals by providing state-of-the-art facilities to other regions.

Ultimately, the measure will not only aspire to alleviate patient travel and significant financial strain, but also aim to improve health outcomes, reduce mortality rates from cardiovascular diseases and establish a responsive and accessible healthcare system for all Filipinos, regardless of where they reside.

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

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Recto', positioned above the printed name.

Ryan S. Recto
Representative
6th District, Batangas

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AN ACT
CREATING ONE REGIONAL HEART CENTER IN EACH OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE
REGIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR 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 known as the "Regional Heart Centers Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to secure the well-being of its people by providing them with specialized health services and to address the increasing incidences of deadly diseases like cardiovascular illness in the country. It is also the policy of the State to ensure that every region in the country shall have an equal opportunity to benefit from public specialty healthcare services. Towards this end, the State shall create regional heart centers throughout the country.

SEC. 3. *Regional Heart Centers.* – There is hereby created one (1) Regional Heart Center in each of the administrative regions in the country. The Regional Heart Centers shall provide specialized cardiac care services for Filipinos suffering from cardiovascular diseases with special consideration for the marginalized members of the society: *Provided, That the Regional Heart Centers shall pursue excellence in developing and establishing the highest level of cardiovascular-related training and research for physician and paramedical personnel: Provided, further, That the operation and maintenance of the Regional Heart Centers shall be under the Department of Health (DOH): Provided, even further, That the Regional Heart Centers may be created within the existing DOH Regional Hospitals and Medical Centers as deemed feasible by the DOH: Provided, finally, That the Regional Heart Centers shall provide comparable quality of cardiac care as that of the Philippine Heart Center.*

SEC. 4. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act and the initial operation and maintenance of the Regional Heart Centers shall be charged against the Contingent Fund. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the subsequent annual General Appropriations Act under the budget of the DOH.

SEC. 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety days (90) after the effectivity of this Act, the DOH and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 6. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,