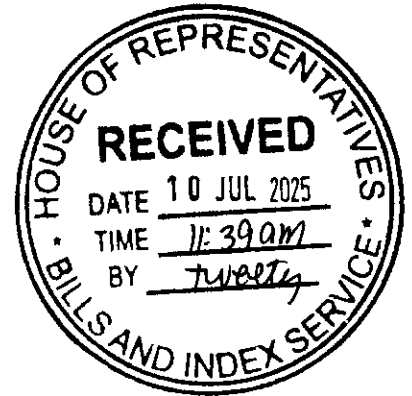


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **1754**



Introduced by **Hon. Janice V. Degamo**

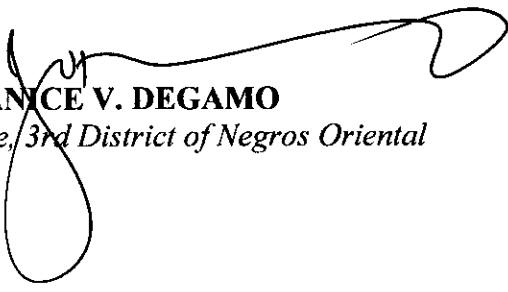
EXPLANATORY NOTE

Every Filipino child deserves a strong start in life. However, many families, particularly in rural and marginalized communities, struggle to afford even the most basic necessities for newborns. The "Head-Start Program" seeks to bridge this gap by providing free new born screening and essential supplies that promote infant health, hygiene, nutrition and cognitive development.

By easing the financial burden on new parents, we help ensure that no child is deprived of proper care during the most critical months of life. Beyond material support, the Program empowers parents with knowledge, building a foundation for healthier, stronger, and more resilient communities nationwide.

"Healthy Beginnings for Every Child" is not just an aspiration, it is a national commitment to protect the future of our children and of our country, one child at a time.

Approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


JANICE V. DEGAMO
Representative, 3rd District of Negros Oriental

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House Bill No. **1754**

Introduced by **Hon. JANICE V. DEGAMO**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE HEAD-START PROGRAM, PROVIDING FREE
ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES AND MEDICAL CARE TO PROMOTE EARLY
CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the "Head-Start Program of 2025."

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote early childhood development, health, and welfare by supporting newborns and their families during the most critical stages of a child's growth. The State shall ensure that every child in the Philippines receives a healthy and dignified start in life, regardless of social or economic background.

Section 3. *Creation of the Head-Start Program.* There is hereby established the "Head-Start Program" (hereinafter referred to as the "Program") to provide free essential supplies and medical support for newborns of indigent mothers.

Section 4. *Components of the Program.* The Program shall include:

- (a) Free access to newborn screening in coordination with local hospitals, birthing centers and barangay health stations;
- (b) Provision of "Newborn Starter Kits" to all newborns of indigent mothers registered within the country, containing, Milk powder or formula (as appropriate), Diapers, Basic infant vitamins and nutritional supplements, Educational materials for parents on early childhood care and development, Basic hygiene supplies for infants;
- (c) Health seminars and orientations for parents on newborn care and nutrition;
- (d) Special support programs for indigent families including priority access to supplemental nutrition and healthcare services.

Section 5. *Eligibility.* Every newborn child born to an indigent mother in the Philippines, regardless of the place of birth (hospital, birthing center or home delivery), shall be entitled to receive a Newborn Starter Kit and receive free newborn screening under this Program.

Section 6. *Lead Implementing Agencies.* The Department of Health (DOH), in close collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), shall be the lead agencies in implementing this Act.

Section 7. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the concerned agencies. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for its continued nationwide implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Section 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOH and DSWD, in consultation with the DILG, and relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

Section 9. *Monitoring and Reporting.* The implementing agencies shall submit an annual report to Congress detailing the distribution, outcomes, challenges encountered and recommendations for improving the Program.

Section 10. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

Section 11. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 12. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,