

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

**Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1883



Introduced by Hon. Alexandria P. Gonzales

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Parents and caregivers are the first line of support for millions of Filipinos, especially children, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and those suffering from chronic illnesses and mental health conditions. They carry the immense responsibility of nurturing, providing, and protecting—often at the expense of their own well-being.

Studies show that the mental health of caregivers directly affects the quality of care they give and the development of those they care for. Prolonged caregiving without adequate support leads to burnout, anxiety, depression, and other psychological burdens that go unrecognized and untreated.

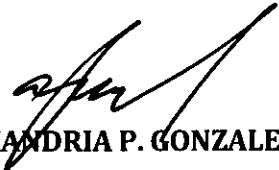
Despite the Mental Health Act (RA 11036), there remains a policy gap in ensuring targeted mental health assistance and social protection for parents and caregivers. This proposed legislation seeks to institutionalize comprehensive mental health support services specifically for them.

This bill seeks to:

1. Establish community-based mental health programs for parents and caregivers.
2. Mandate public and private hospitals and local health units to provide psychological first aid and referral systems for caregivers.
3. Promote workplace policies that recognize the caregiving burden and support mental wellness.
4. Provide psychoeducation and training for stress management, emotional regulation, and coping skills.
5. Integrate caregiver mental health in national and local development plans and budgets.

This is an investment not just in health, but in the future of families and communities. A mentally well caregiver is a cornerstone of a mentally healthy society.

Approval of this bill is urgently recommended.


ALEXANDRIA P. GONZALES

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**AN ACT
PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

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 “Mental Health Support for Parents and Caregivers Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to recognize and promote the mental well-being of all citizens. In particular, the State acknowledges the unique psychological burdens of parents and caregivers and commits to providing them with comprehensive and sustainable mental health support services.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act:

- a) Caregiver – refers to any individual, paid or unpaid, who provides care to a dependent individual (child, elderly, person with disability, or person with mental health condition or chronic illness).
- b) Parent – refers to any biological, adoptive, or legal guardian raising a child or dependent.
- c) Mental Health Support Services – refer to interventions, programs, and structures that promote psychological well-being and prevent or address mental health conditions.

SEC. 4. *National Mental Health Program for Caregivers.* - The Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the National Center for Mental Health (NCMH), shall establish and implement a National Caregiver Mental Health Program which shall include:

- a) Free or subsidized mental health consultations and counseling services;
- b) Training in stress management, mindfulness, and resilience building;
- c) Peer support groups and community psychoeducation;
- d) Mental health hotlines and crisis response centers accessible to caregivers.

SEC. 5. *Institutional Support.* –

- a) Hospitals and Health Facilities – All government hospitals and health centers shall establish referral systems and provide psychological first aid to caregivers showing signs of mental distress.
- b) Workplace Mental Health – The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shall develop guidelines encouraging employers to provide flexibility and support mechanisms for employed caregivers.

SEC. 6. *Local Government Unit (LGU) Responsibilities.* - LGUs shall incorporate caregiver mental health programs into their Local Health and Social Welfare Development Plans, including the designation of Barangay Mental Health Officers or advocates.

SEC. 7. *Funding.* - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged to the current appropriations of the DOH and DSWD. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* - Within 90 days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOH, in coordination with the DSWD, DOLE, NCMH, and relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary IRR.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any part of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,