



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2302

Introduced by: Hon. Ma. Victoria Co – Pilar

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Reproductive health is a cornerstone of public health, essential not only for individual well-being but also for the social and economic progress of the nation. In the Philippines, however, reproductive health challenges persist at alarming levels, especially among women, adolescents, and marginalized communities.

Reproductive health-related diseases and conditions – ranging from maternal complications, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, and cervical cancer – remain significant public health concerns. According to the Department of Health and the 2022 National Demographic and Health Survey, maternal mortality remains unacceptably high, with thousands of women dying each year due to preventable causes such as hemorrhage, infection, and hypertensive disorders.

In addition, sexually transmitted infections, including syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes simplex virus (HSV), and human papillomavirus (HPV), continue to affect millions, particularly the youth. Alarming, the Philippines has the fastest-growing HIV epidemic in the Asia-Pacific region, with over 57 new HIV cases reported daily as of 2025.

Cervical cancer, caused by persistent HPV infection, is one of the most common cancers among Filipino women, yet vaccination and screening rates remain critically low. Adolescent pregnancy, another urgent concern, leads to poor maternal and neonatal outcomes and limits the opportunities of young women.

Beyond these, many reproductive tract infections (RTIs) go undiagnosed and untreated, contributing to infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease, and increased risk of HIV transmission. Women with poor access to reproductive healthcare are more likely to suffer long-term health and economic consequences.

These challenges are exacerbated by low awareness, poor access to reproductive health services, socio-cultural stigma, and unequal healthcare distribution, especially in remote and impoverished regions. There is a pressing need to strengthen reproductive health education, expand access to preventive services such as contraception and STI screening, and enhance maternal and adolescent healthcare systems.

This measure aims to draw national attention and foster a renewed commitment to comprehensive reproductive healthcare. By addressing not only fertility-related concerns but also the broad spectrum of reproductive health diseases, the policy affirms the state's duty to protect the rights, dignity, and health of all Filipinos—especially the most vulnerable.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Gandhi", with a large, stylized "V" or checkmark at the end.



Republic of the Philippines
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House Bill No. **2302**

Introduced by Representative Ma. Victoria Co – Pilar

AN ACT
CREATING THE NATIONAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RESEARCH AND
TREATMENT INSTITUTE OF THE PHILIPPINES

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 “National Reproductive Health Research Institute of the Philippines Act”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy* - The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them, in accordance with Article II, Section 15 and Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which mandate the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development and give priority to the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children.

To this end, the State shall ensure that essential goods, health, and other social services are available, accessible, and affordable to all, especially those in marginalized sectors. In recognition of the unique health needs of women, the State affirms its commitment to protecting women’s right to health, particularly in the area

of reproductive health, by ensuring access to preventive, curative, and promotive health services throughout their life cycle. This includes addressing maternal health, reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS, cervical and breast cancer, and other gender-specific health concerns.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines* – There is hereby established a Level III hospital to be known as the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines (NRHRTIP), which shall operate under the supervision and control of the Department of Health (DOH).

The Institute shall serve as a specialized medical facility for comprehensive reproductive health care, research, training, and treatment services, in accordance with national health priorities and in support of the implementation of reproductive health policies and programs.

The Medical Chief of the NRHRTIP, in coordination with the Department of Health (DOH), shall prepare a comprehensive Hospital Development Plan, which shall outline the strategic direction of the Institute, including its authorized bed capacity, service capability, research agenda, and institutional partnerships.

Requests for staffing complement, capital outlay, and annual operational budgets shall be anchored on the Hospital Development Plan and submitted to the appropriate government agencies for evaluation and approval.

SEC. 4. *Purpose and Objective* – The National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines. shall have the following purpose and objectives:

- (a) To construct, establish, equip, maintain, administer, and operate such integrated medical institution or institutions that shall specialize in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care, rehabilitation, and/or relief of HIV, AIDS, and STIs in all its kinds and forms;
- (b) To promote medical and scientific research relative to the prevention and treatment of HIV, AIDS, and STIs;
- (c) To assist universities, colleges, hospitals, and research institutions in their studies of HIV, AIDS, and to encourage advanced training and

specialization in matters of or affecting HIV, AIDS, and STIs;

- (d) To conduct fact-finding investigations on cancer-related fields throughout the country or elsewhere, and to report, publish, and disseminate information on the prevention and treatment of all forms of HIV, AIDS, and STIs;
- (e) To finance, sponsor, hold, or participate in congresses, conventions, conferences, seminars, workshops, and training programs on cancer and/or related fields in the Philippines or abroad;
- (f) To encourage and assist in the education and training of physicians, nurses, health officers, social workers, and medical and technical personnel in the practical and scientific implementation of services to HIV/AIDS patients;
- (g) To assist universities, hospitals, and research institutions in their studies on cancer, oncology, and other related fields, to encourage and grant scholarships for advanced training and specialization in oncology and related fields, and to support educational programs of value to general public health;
- (h) To provide psychosocial support services and counseling to the patient and family members;
- (i) To simulate the formation of other organizations on the national, provincial, city, and/or local levels, and to coordinate the various efforts and activities of such organizations for the purpose of achieving a more effective approach to the common problem relative to the purposes and objectives enumerated herein; and
- (j) To be the national center for excellence in obstetrics-gynecology and the treatment of HIV, AIDS, and STIs in the Philippines.

SEC. 5. Powers – For the attainment and furtherance of its purposes and objectives, the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines (NRHRTIP), acting through its Board of Trustees, shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) To acquire, own, lease, hold, manage, or dispose of property of any kind or nature—real or personal, tangible or intangible—through any mode of acquisition, encumbrance, or conveyance as may be necessary for its operations and institutional development;
- (b) To enter into contracts and agreements, and to be contracted with, for the provision of medical, educational, research, financial, administrative, or technical services, in pursuit of its mandate;
- (c) To levy, assess, and collect reasonable fees, charges, and assessments, in accordance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations, for the support, maintenance, and continuous improvement of its facilities, services, and

- programs;
- (d) To mortgage, lease, sell, transfer, convey, or otherwise dispose of its properties, subject to existing government accounting and procurement regulations;
 - (e) To invest in or acquire real and personal properties, including but not limited to shares of stock, bonds, notes, or other financial instruments issued by government or private entities, as part of its financial and institutional sustainability initiatives;
 - (f) To solicit, receive, and manage donations, endowments, grants, and contributions, whether in cash or in kind, from domestic or international, public or private sources, subject to existing government budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules, and regulations;
 - (g) To open bank accounts and other financial instruments, and to disburse or invest funds in accordance with its objectives and with the approval of the Department of Health, as authorized by its Board;
 - (h) To invite foreign and local medical experts, consultants, and specialists, in fields relevant to reproductive health care and research, to train its personnel, fellows, residents, and other affiliated health professionals;
 - (i) To send personnel to international or regional research institutes, medical centers, and universities for training, exposure, collaborative research, or participation in conventions, congresses, and scientific events, subject to applicable laws and with the approval of the DOH Secretary;
 - (j) To adopt and implement by-laws, rules, and internal regulations consistent with the law for the proper governance, administration, and operation of the Institute;
 - (k) To obtain loans, borrow funds, and secure credit facilities from lawful sources, whether public or private, domestic or foreign, and to mortgage or pledge its assets when necessary, to further its institutional goals and programs;
 - (l) To perform such other acts and exercise such other powers as may be necessary, proper, or incidental to carry out the functions, achieve the objectives, and ensure the effective and efficient operation of the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines.

SEC. 6. Governing Board of the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines - The National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines (NRHRTIP) shall be governed, and its activities and properties directed, controlled, and managed by a Board of Trustees, which shall be composed of a Chairperson and eight (8) members, to be appointed by the President of the Philippines upon the joint recommendation of the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

The Board of Trustees shall include the following as ex officio members:

- The Secretary of the Department of Health;
- The Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology;

- The Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography;
- The Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee on Health.

The remaining members shall include:

- Two (2) licensed physicians with recognized expertise in reproductive health, infectious disease, obstetrics-gynecology, or public health;
- The Medical Director of the NRHRTIP;
Two (2) professionals from the health sciences, medical research, or public health sectors who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields.

All appointed members of the Board shall serve for a term of six (6) years, unless sooner removed for cause, or until their successors shall have been duly appointed and qualified. In the event of a vacancy due to death, resignation, or removal, the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall serve only the unexpired portion of the term.

The Board shall elect a Chairperson from among themselves, who shall preside over all meetings and represent the Board in official functions.

A quorum shall consist of five (5) members, and the vote of at least five (5) members shall be required for the adoption of any resolution or decision. Any act duly approved by a quorum of the Board shall constitute a valid and binding act of the Institute.

SEC. 7. *Medical Center Chief* - The Medical Center Chief of the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines (NRHRTIP) shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines, upon the recommendation of the Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH).

The Medical Center Chief shall serve as the chief executive officer of the NRHRTIP and shall have the following powers, duties, and responsibilities:

1. Provide overall direction and strategic leadership to the Institute toward the delivery of high-quality, accessible, and specialized reproductive health

services;

2. Oversee all administrative, clinical, and operational functions of the Institute's departments, units, and services;
3. Supervise the daily activities and programs of all functional units of the Institute;
4. Ensure high standards in clinical and academic training for medical, allied health, and research personnel, consistent with the Institute's mandate as a national center of excellence;
5. Implement and execute, on behalf of the Institute, all contracts and agreements entered into by the NRHRTIP and to sign and deliver documents relative to such contracts and agreements, subject to the approval of the DOH Secretary;
6. Represent the Institute in all dealings with other government agencies, private organizations, international bodies, and other stakeholders, both domestic and foreign; and
7. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned or delegated by the Board of Trustees or as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Health.

SEC. 8. Support from Other Government Agencies. - All government agencies, departments, bureaus, offices, and instrumentalities, including government-owned or -controlled corporations (GOCCs), are hereby directed to render full support and assistance to the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines (NRHRTIP) to ensure the effective implementation of this Act.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish or reduce the health benefits and entitlements provided under Republic Act No. 11223, otherwise known as the "Universal Health Care Act," or any other existing health and medical assistance program extended to Filipino citizens.

SEC. 9. Tax Exemption on Donations - All donations, contributions, or endowments which may be made by individuals or entities to the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines (NRHRTIP) shall be exempt from income tax, donor's tax, and gift tax, and shall be considered allowable deductions from the gross income of the donor in accordance with the

provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

The NRHRTIP, its assets, income, and operations, shall also be exempt from all forms of taxes, fees, customs duties, assessments, and other charges imposed by the national government or any of its political subdivisions, agencies, or instrumentalities.

SEC. 10. Congressional Oversight Committee. – There is hereby created a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee, which shall be jointly chaired by the Chairpersons of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography and the House of Representatives Committee on Health. It shall be composed of five (5) members from the Senate and five (5) members from the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively: *Provided, That at least one (1) member from each house shall come from the Minority.*

SEC. 11. Appropriations – The amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (₱500,000,000) is hereby appropriated for the initial implementation, establishment, and operation of the National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines (NRHRTIP). This amount shall be charged against the appropriations of the Department of Health (DOH) under the current General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued operation, maintenance, personnel services, and capital outlay requirements of the NRHRTIP shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act, under the budget of the Department of Health.

SEC. 12. Annual Report – The National Reproductive Health Research and Treatment Institute of the Philippines shall submit an annual report on its operations and accomplishments to the Department of Health (DOH), the House of Representatives, and the Senate of the Philippines.

SEC. 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations - Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the **Department of Health (DOH)**, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 16. Separability Clause – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or

unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause* – All laws, decrees, orders, and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 18. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved.