



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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2466**



Introduced by **Representative GIRLIE E. VELOSO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The right to health is an internationally recognized and constitutionally protected right. Article II, Section 15, and Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution mandate the State to promote and protect this right through an integrated and comprehensive approach. While landmark laws such as the Universal Health Care Act and the Cheaper Medicines Act provided a strong backbone for domestic health governance, the Philippines still lacks the legal and systemic infrastructure in shaping or gaining early access to global medical advancements.

In a rapidly changing world, global medical advancements play a vital role in advancing national health security, interest, and resilience. The quality of human life depends on access to medical, pharmaceutical, and technological innovations. In the macro-perspective of public health, strategically integrated global medical advancements reduce long-term health expenditures and prevent a strained economy amidst global health challenges, public health crises, and disease burden. In the micro-lens of individual well-being, for conditions previously deemed fatal, untreatable, with limited treatment, or lacking prophylactic measures, global medical advancements represent breakthrough lifelines, and early access can spell the critical difference between survival and mortality. Hence, the benefits of global science must reach the Filipino people in a way that is timely, equitable, and just.

This Bill seeks to institutionalize health diplomacy as a proactive and strategic tool of international engagement, national health resilience, and public health governance in shaping the direction and equitable distribution of global medical advancements. In an interconnected world, inter-government partnerships, international negotiations, global innovation networks, and cross-border scientific cooperation are formally recognized as diplomatic platforms of progress and synergy. This Bill then further seeks the creation of Philippine Health Innovation and Diplomacy Council to centralize and elevate the Philippine's engagement through policy and program recommendations

that harmonizes foreign relations, health goals, regulatory framework, and innovation integration. In doing so, this measure becomes a national resilience framework on the evolving health needs of the Filipino people.

As health becomes a foreign policy imperative, this Bill provides a long-overdue institutional foundation of a crucial and permanent convergence of foreign policy and health governance. This Bill advances the right to health in terms of security, resilience, equity, readiness, and synergy.

In view of the foregoing, support for the enactment of this measure is earnestly sought.



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**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING HEALTH DIPLOMACY AND ENSURING
FILIPINO ACCESS TO GLOBAL MEDICAL ADVANCEMENTS, CREATING THE
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INNOVATION AND DIPLOMACY COUNCIL, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** — This Act shall be known as the “Health Diplomacy and
2 Filipino Access to Global Medical Advancements Act”.

3 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** — It is the policy of the state to promote and protect
4 the right to health of all Filipinos, consistent with the Constitution. Towards this end, the state shall
5 institutionalize health diplomacy as a strategic instrument of foreign policy and public health
6 governance, thereby safeguarding national health security, upholding global health equity, and
7 promoting timely and just access to global medical advancements.

8 **SECTION 3. Objectives.** — This Act aims to:

- 9 (a) Institutionalize health diplomacy as a tool of international engagement, national
10 development, and public health governance;
11 (b) Facilitate the timely and equitable access to global medical advancements;
12 (c) Proactively support national health security and public interest through sustained
13 international health cooperation;
14 (d) Promote the integration of global medical advancements into the country’s health
15 system; and

- (e) Strengthen the country's capacity for scientific, technological, and regulatory collaboration with foreign governments and international organizations.

SECTION 4. Definition of Terms. — As used in this Act:

- (a) Health Diplomacy refers to the political, diplomatic, and multi-level engagements and negotiations by Philippine government agencies and stakeholders with foreign counterparts, international organizations, and global platforms to advance the health interest, health security, access rights, and scientific capacities of the Filipino people.
- (b) Global Medical Advancements refers to significant progress and innovations in medical science, technology, and public health, including but not limited to new or emerging medicines, vaccines, medical devices, diagnostic methods, treatments, therapies, surgical techniques, and health-related technologies. It also covers the globally recognized advancements that may still be under regulatory development, clinical evaluation, or international research collaboration.

SECTION 5. Creation of the Philippine Health Innovation and Diplomacy Council (PHIDC). — To carry out the purpose of this Act, there is hereby created a Philippine Health Innovation and Diplomacy Council (PHIDC), hereinafter referred to as the Council, which shall serve as the primary inter-agency body for advancing the Philippines' strategic health diplomacy and ensuring equitable access to global medical advancements.

The Council shall be attached to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) for policy coordination and administrative support. It shall be composed of the following:

1. The Secretary of the DFA - Chairperson
2. The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) – Co-Chairperson
3. The Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) – Member
4. The Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Member
5. The Secretary of the Department of Finance (DOF) – Member
6. The Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) – Member
7. The Secretary of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) - Member
8. The Secretary of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) – Member
9. The Secretary of the Department of Justice (DOJ) - Member
10. The Secretary of the Department of National Defense (DND) or Chairperson of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) - Member
11. The Director General of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – Member
12. The Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) - Member
13. The Director General of the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) – Member
14. The Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) - Member

1 15. One representatives each from the academe, civil society, and health research institution
2 with expertise in global health and medical innovation, appointed by the President of the
3 Philippines – Member

4 The Health Technology Assessment Council (HTAC), as created under R.A. No. 11223, shall
5 serve as a technical advisory body to the Philippine Health and Innovation Diplomacy Council. It
6 shall provide evidence-based assessments and recommendations on health technologies, medical
7 innovations, and interventions being considered under the Council's diplomatic or strategic
8 engagements.

9 The heads of government agencies mentioned are authorized to designate permanent
10 alternated with a rank not lower than Assistant Secretary to represent them during Council meetings
11 and other official functions. The ex-officio member shall inform the Council in writing of such
12 designation.

13 **SECTION 6. Powers and Functions of the Council.** — The Council shall have the
14 following powers and functions:

- 15 (a) Formulate and regularly update a national strategy for health diplomacy that secures
16 Filipino access to global medical advancements and positions the country as an active
17 participant in international health cooperation;
- 18 (b) Identify and prioritize existing and emerging global medical advancement for potential
19 access, adoption, collaboration, or integration, in coordination with relevant national
20 agencies and international partners;
- 21 (c) Recommend policies and strategies to facilitate the transfer, importation, regulation and
22 international participation related to global medical advancement;
- 23 (d) Recommend national programs to advance the objective of this Act, and coordinate with
24 implementing agencies to ensure their inclusion in agency plans, investment priorities,
25 and budget proposals under applicable budgeting laws and the General Appropriations
26 Act (GAA);
- 27 (e) Coordinate multi-agency efforts in monitoring, negotiating, and implementing
28 international health agreements, partnerships, or cooperative frameworks relevant to
29 global medical advancements;
- 30 (f) Convene expert panels, consultative bodies, or technical working groups as necessary to
31 inform policies and decisions relating to health diplomacy;
- 32 (g) Monitor international trends, opportunities, and risks in medical science and public
33 health that may affect the country's interest and public welfare;
- 34 (h) Provide guidance on legal, ethical, scientific, and trade considerations in engaging with
35 foreign entities, research bodies, and regulatory counterparts;
- 36 (i) Create and operationalize effective mechanisms for Filipinos to directly benefit from
37 global medical advancements, including but not limited to access facilitation, equitable
38 distribution, and integration into public health programs; and

- 1 (j) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to fulfil the objectives of this Act, or
2 as may be assigned by the President of the Philippines.

3 **SECTION 7. Special Authority During Public Health Emergencies.** — In the event of
4 a declaration of a public health emergency by the President of the Philippines, the DOH, or the
5 World Health Organization (WHO), the Council shall undertake strengthened advisory function and
6 coordination to ensure health diplomacy for global medical advancements. For this purpose, the
7 Council shall:

- 8 (a) Coordinate with the HTAC, the FDA, and other relevant bodies in recommending
9 urgent policy and regulatory measures to facilitate and streamline the responsible
10 importation, emergency use, and timely access to global medical advancements,
11 consistent with the positive recommendations and standards of the HTAC under the
12 Universal Health Care Law;
13 (b) Advise the President of the Philippines, and the Secretaries of relevant national agencies
14 on international engagements, negotiations, and strategic cooperation to safeguard
15 national health interest;
16 (c) Convene emergency expert panels, consultative bodies, or technical working groups to
17 assess global developments, anticipate evolving risks, and recommend responsive
18 domestic policy measures;
19 (d) Facilitate cooperation with foreign governments, international organizations, and global
20 research networks, through appropriate diplomatic channels, to access essential global
21 medical advancements, or existing treatments, diagnostics, vaccines, or technologies;
22 (e) Propose ethical and equitable protocols for the distribution or use of globally sourced
23 medical interventions, in coordination with relevant government agencies;
24 (f) Monitor and report on international supply chains, innovation pipelines, stockpiling
25 capacities, bottlenecks, and diplomatic or geopolitical developments that may affect the
26 country's medical preparedness, strategic reserves, and timely response; and
27 (g) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to fulfil the objectives of this Act, or
28 as may be assigned by the President of the Philippines.

29 **SECTION 8. Meetings and Quorum.** — The Council shall meet regularly at least once
30 every calendar quarter, or as often as necessary, upon the call of the Chairperson or upon the request
31 of the majority of its members. A majority of all the members of the Council shall constitute a
32 quorum. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members present, there being a quorum, shall be
33 necessary to adopt any decision, resolution, or recommendation of the Council.

34 **SECTION 9. Secretariat.** — A Secretariat to the Council shall be established within the
35 DFA, to be headed by an Executive Director, who shall be appointed by the President. The Council
36 may request the detail or secondment of personnel from its member agencies and may engage
37 consultants or technical experts, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations.

1 The Secretariat shall be composed of personnel with proven competence in international
2 health cooperation, global health governance, diplomacy, and technical coordination. The
3 qualifications, staffing pattern, and operational mechanisms necessary to support the effective
4 functioning of the Secretariat shall be defined in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

5 **SECTION 10. Compensation and Allowances.** — Members of the Council who are
6 government officials shall serve in an ex officio capacity and shall not receive additional
7 compensation. However, they may be entitled to honoraria or per diems, subject to existing rules
8 and regulations and the availability of funds. Non-government members may receive honoraria or
9 reasonable allowances as may be determined the Council and approved by the DBM, in accordance
10 with applicable laws, rules, and auditing standards.

11 **SECTION 11. Annual Report.** — The Council shall submit to the President of the
12 Philippines and both Houses of Congress, an annual report giving a detailed account of the
13 implementation of this Act, including policy and program recommendations.

14 **SECTION 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** — Within ninety (90) days from the
15 effectivity of this Act, the DFA Secretary shall, in consultation with other concerned government
16 agencies and global health expert representatives, promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for
17 the effective implementation of this Act.

18 **SECTION 13. Appropriations.** — The amount necessary for the immediate
19 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual GAA.

20 **SECTION 14. Repealing Clause.** — All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and
21 regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or
22 modified accordingly.

23 **SECTION 15. Separability Clause.** — If, for any reason, any section of this Act shall be
24 deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions shall not be affected and shall
25 remain in force and in effect.

26 **SECTION 16. Effectivity Clause.** — This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from
27 its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general
28 circulation, whichever comes earlier.

29 Approved.