

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2876**



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL CANCER CENTER OF THE
PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State provides that it shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them and as such it enacted legislations such as the National Health Insurance Act of 1995 as well as the Philippine Universal Health Care Act.

Cancer remains a significant health concern in the Philippines, as it ranks second leading cause of death in the country according to the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Cancer Society. The Global Cancer Observatory (GLOBOCAN) 2020 estimates that there were over 150,000 new cases of cancer and over 90,000 cancer-related deaths in the country in that year alone.

Among the most common cancer types in the country include breast, lung, colorectum, liver, and prostate cancers. Breast cancer is notably the leading cancer among Filipino women with about 1 in every 13 *pinays* at risk of developing the disease in her lifetime. Many of these cases are diagnosed at later stages due to the limited access to early detection, diagnosis, and treatment services—especially in undeserved communities.

Despite the enactment of National Integrated Cancer Control Act (NICCA) in 2019, implementation remains challenged by insufficient infrastructure, underfunded programs and the lack of a centralized facility dedicated to cancer care, research and training.

The proposed bill seeks to establish the National Cancer Care of the Philippines, a state-of-the art institution that will lead the country's fight against cancer through coordinated research, patient-centered

care, specialized training, and equitable access to services. It aims to consolidate cancer initiatives under one roof, improve early detection and diagnosis, strengthen cancer data collection and policy planning, and ensure that cancer services are accessible and affordable, especially among the marginalized sectors.

By institutionalizing a dedicated national cancer center, we empower our health system to proactively respond to the cancer crisis and improve survival outcomes. It also aligns with the Philippines' commitments to global health targets such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3.4), which aim to reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases by one-third by 2030.

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



REP. PM VARGAS

Fifth District of Quezon City

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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 “National Cancer Center of the Philippines”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is declared a policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of every Filipino by ensuring equitable access to comprehensive, quality, and affordable cancer prevention, detection, treatment, and care services. Recognizing the increasing burden of cancer as a major public health concern, the State shall establish a specialized institution that will serve as the premier center for cancer research, diagnosis, treatment, and patient support.

As such, the state shall allocate adequate resources, enhance the healthcare workforce capacity, and ensure the accessibility and affordability of cancer-related services, particularly for marginalized and underserved populations.

SECTION 2. Purposes and Objectives. – The National Cancer Center shall be a state-of-the-art facility dedicated to advancing cancer care through multidisciplinary and patient-centered approaches, innovative research, and capacity-building programs with the following purposes and objectives:

- (a) promote specialized, multidisciplinary, and comprehensive cancer research, dissemination, and/or utilization of the results of the research and development, including the formulation, updating, and implementation of a comprehensive cancer control plan to overcome cancer;

- (b) enhance cancer prevention through education, and information dissemination to the public by healthcare professionals and institutions;
- (c) create awareness on cancer prevention, treatment and control through public information dissemination;
- (d) strengthen training programs for physicians, nurses, medical technicians, health officers and social workers on the practical and scientific conduct and implementation of services, and related activities;
- (e) provide assistance to universities, colleges, hospitals and research institutions in their studies of cancer and encourage advanced training and specialization on matters of, or affecting cancer; and
- (f) consolidate the information from other related organizations for the purpose of aiding government's efforts, policies and programs relative to the purposes and objectives enumerated herein. health system and infrastructure of the country that will enable it to serve all Filipinos and withstand any unforeseen events.

SECTION 3. *Board of Trustees of the Philippine National Cancer Center.* The National Cancer Center of the Philippines shall be governed, directed, controlled, and managed by the Board of Trustees, which shall be composed of a Chairman and six (6) members, all of whom to be appointed by the President of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Department of Health.

The members of the Board of Trustees shall serve for a period of five (5) years and until their successors have been appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired term of the member. Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the Board, the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired term of the member.

The Board shall elect a Chairman from among themselves, who shall be the presiding officer of the Board of Trustees. The Medical Director of the Philippine National Cancer Center shall also function as Vice-Chairman of the Board.

The Director of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines shall serve as Vice Chairman of the Board. The Director shall act as the Chief Executive Office of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines with authority, among others, to appoint, remove, and fix the compensation of the personnel thereof, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees and in accordance with Republic Act no. 10149, otherwise known as the "GOCC Governance Act of 2011".

Four (4) members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum to transact business and any decision of such four (4) members on any matters duly presented to the Board of Trustees shall constitute a valid and binding act of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines.

SECTION 4. Powers of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines. The National Cancer Center of the Philippines, as corporate body acting through its Board of Trustees, shall have the following powers:

- (a) to acquire and hold in any property of whatever nature of description, and to dispose such property under any mode of encumbrance or conveyance;
- (b) to contract and be contacted with;
- (c) to mortgage, lease, sell, transfer, convey or otherwise dispose of properties;
- (d) to solicit and receive donations, endowments and funds in the form of contributions, whether in cash or in kind, from both public and private sectors;
- (e) to open accounts in banks and other financial institutions, and to disburse such funds or invest the same as the Board may direct to accomplish or advance the purposes or interest of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines;
- (f) to invite foreign cancer specialists and similar expert in various medical fields to train the personnel or trainees or residents of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines;
- (g) to send the personnel of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines to research institutes, medical institutes or universities for advance training or observation and to attend international or regional conventions, conferences, congresses, and seminars as the Board may deem necessary to accomplish the purposes and objectives of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines;
- (h) to adopt a set of By-Laws, rules and regulations consistent with the laws and provisions hereof to govern the administration and operation of the affairs of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines; and
- (i) to do all such other acts and things as are or may be necessary for the accomplishment of the purpose and objectives of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines.

SECTION 5. *Government Counterpart.* – The Government shall constitute the necessary land, building, equipment, and facilities to the National Cancer Center of the Philippines, and shall pay such obligations for real, personal and mixed properties arising from such undertaking under a deferred payment arrangement within five (5) years, at a preferred rate of interest.

SECTION 7. *Property of the Center.* - The property of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines shall consist of such real, personal, mixed, and other donated types of property, now owned or reserved for, or may hereafter be given, donated, acquired, transferred or conveyed to the National Cancer Center of the Philippines by the Philippine government, its branches and instrumentalities, any foreign government, as well as by trust, foundations, corporations or persons, alien or domestic, in order to carry out its purpose and objectives as set forth herein.

SECTION 8. *Assistance from Other Government Offices.* The National Cancer Center of the Philippines may call upon any department, bureau, office, agency, or instrumentality of the government, including government-owned and controlled corporations, for such assistance it may need in pursuit of its purposes and objectives.

SECTION 9. *Tax Exemptions.* All donations, contributions, or endowments made by entities or persons to the National Cancer Center of the Philippines shall be exempt from income and donor taxes, and the same shall be further deductible in full for purposes of computing the maximum amount deductible under Section 101 of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

The National Cancer Center of the Philippines shall also be exempt from the payment of all taxes, charges, and fees imposed by the government or any political subdivision or instrumentality thereof for a period of (10) years.

SECTION 10. *Appropriations.* An initial amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (Php 500,000,000.00) shall be allocated for the initial construction, operation, and maintenance of the National Cancer Center of the Philippines, which shall be sourced from the General Annual Appropriations (GAA). Subsequent funding for the years thereafter shall be included in the GAA under the Budgetary Support for Government Corporations.

SECTION 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Department of Health (DOH) in collaboration with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement this Act within ninety (90) days from its effectivity.

SECTION 12. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 13. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and issuances, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 14. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,