

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila
TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. **2878**



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PM VARGAS

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BREAST CARE CENTERS IN
EVERY REGION NATIONWIDE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has the highest incidence of breast cancer among Asian countries, and the 9th highest in the world today.¹ According to the Philippine Society of Medical Oncology (PSMO), three out of 100 Filipino women can develop breast cancer before they reach the age of 75. It is further reported that breast cancer accounts for 17 percent of all cancer incidence in the country, and eight percent of all cancer-related deaths.²

Cancer experts and advocates have also warned that the Philippines had the lowest survival rate of people with breast cancer among 15 countries in Asia³.

Despite this, hope is not lost. It is noteworthy that the number of breast cancer survivors is increasing worldwide due to intensified awareness campaigns and early screening that helps detect the disease during its curable stage. The challenge now is for us to replicate these efforts in hopes of helping Filipino breast cancer patients in dealing with such disease.

¹ Argenal, Rene N.; Baterna, Margie L.; Peña, Christine F; Ravina, Jovita N.; and Sionzon, Marian R. 2019. "Risk Factors of Breast Cancer Among Women: A Meta Analyses". 12th National Convention on Statistics. Philippine Statistics Authority.

² Philippine Journal of Surgical Specialties. Vol. 76, No. 2, July -December 2021

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6385717/>

It is thus imperative for the State to exert more efforts to disseminate information for breast cancer prevention and to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of conditions for breast-related ailments.

This bill aims to establish a Breast Care Center in every region of the Philippines. These Centers shall be equipped with specialized diagnosis and treatment facilities. They shall also direct the conduct awareness campaigns, information drive and public education programs in a localized level.

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



REP. PM VARGAS

Fifth District, 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 “*Breast Care Centers in Every Region Act.*”

SECTION 2. *Establishment of Breast Care Centers in Every Region.* – A Breast Care Center, known in this Act as “Center”, shall be established in every region of this country to spearhead the fight against breast cancer and to specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of conditions affecting the breast. It shall be a new department in the existing regional hospitals of the National Government. Should there be no regional hospital in the region, the Center shall be attached to any district hospital in the region, which is most accessible to the highest of constituents.

SECTION 3. *Equipment and Personnel.* - The Centers shall be provided with such equipment tools, implements, devices, apparatus, and personnel as may be necessary for them to carry out multiple programs such as Breast Protection, Breast Surveillance, Breast Imaging, Breast Diagnostics and Surgery, Breast Cancer Chemotherapy and Breast Cancer Awareness and Protection.

SECTION 4. *Function.* – The Centers shall, in coordination with local government units, local health offices, the Philippine Information Agency, and other government agencies, shall spearhead a sustained and extensive

information and awareness campaign within their respective region to raise the level of awareness of the region's constituents especially the women sector on the ills, causes and symptoms of the disease for its early detection and prevention.

The centers shall coordinate with regional and local education officials to ensure that female high school students in both public and private schools are taught the pertinent information about the disease and are trained to habitually self-examine themselves as a part of the regular secondary curriculum.

SECTION 5. *Implementing Rules and Regulations* – The Secretary of the Department of Health shall issue guidelines, orders, or rules and regulations as may be necessary for implementation of this Act.

SECTION 6. *Operationalization and Appropriations*. – To fully implement the provisions of the Act, the Secretary of Health shall immediately include in the Department's program the operationalization of the Centers, the funding for which shall be included in the annual General Appropriation Act.

SECTION 7. *Separability Clause*. – If any if this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of other provisions hereof.

SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause*. – All laws, decrees, executive order, and rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 9. *Effectivity*. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,