

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4310



Introduced by **HON. JORGE DANIEL S. BOCOBO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

*“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.
Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”*

Proverbs 31: 8-9

Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.” To carry out this mandate, primary health care is recognized as the cornerstone of the national health system, delivering preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative services at the community level. In this framework, barangays and their barangay health workers play an indispensable role in ensuring the effective delivery of such services.

Republic Act No. 7883, or the “Barangay Health Workers’ Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995,” recognizes Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) as community-based health workers who perform key functions in community organizing, health education, and health care provision. Republic Act No. 11223, or the Universal Health Care Act, further expands these responsibilities by integrating BHWs into the broader health care delivery system and emphasizing their role in ensuring that quality and affordable health services reach communities, especially the underprivileged.

In line with the thrust to strengthen primary health care, there is a compelling need to provide stronger support for BHWs through adequate training, resources, and recognition of their service. The experience of the City of Taguig illustrates how this can be achieved: its BHWs, aside from receiving regular salaries, are provided with bonuses, training, overtime pay, and hazard pay, and are formally employed as Job Order and Casual employees under the local government unit. This proposal seeks to institutionalize such practices at the national level, ensuring that all BHWs across the country are properly compensated, supported, and equipped to fulfill their responsibilities.

To this end, the Department of Health (DOH) shall determine the ideal BHW-to-population ratio, thereby guiding cities and municipalities in meeting the health needs of their constituents. Local government units (LGUs) shall, in turn, hire BHWs as job order, contractual, casual, or regular employees, with preference given to those already serving in their communities. This measure likewise provides that BHWs shall receive the same compensation and benefits as other LGU personnel of similar status, ensuring security of tenure and due recognition of their contributions to local health service delivery.

Further, the bill directs the DOH, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), to establish a Special Barangay Health Workers Assistance Program. This program will extend financial and technical assistance, training, and other forms of support, giving priority to LGUs that are unable to provide adequate salaries or allowances to their BHWs, particularly within the next ten years.

This initiative affirms the centrality of primary health care in fulfilling the State's constitutional mandate to protect and promote the right to health. By strengthening barangays and their health workers as frontline providers, the measure seeks to ensure accessible, responsive, and comprehensive health services for all communities.

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



JORGE DANIEL S. BOCOBO

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Introduced by **HON. JORGE DANIEL S. BOCOBO**

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE GRASSROOTS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM THROUGH THE
APPOINTMENT OF SUFFICIENT BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN CITIES AND
MUNICIPALITIES AND ELEVATING THEIR STATUS FROM VOLUNTEERS TO JOB
ORDER, CONTRACTUAL, CASUAL, OR REGULAR EMPLOYEES AND FURTHER
STRENGTHENING THE BARANGAY HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, 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 “Mahal Ko, Barangay Health Worker Ko Law.”

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. It is therefore the responsibility of the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost.

The State recognizes the importance of primary healthcare in ensuring the health and well-being of our communities, the direct responsibility for which has now been assumed by local governments, pursuant to the Local Government Code of 1991, as amended.

As the frontliners of our primary healthcare, the State recognizes the vital role of Barangay Health Workers and the need to provide them with security of tenure, adequate benefits and just compensation, consistent with the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value.

Sec. 3. Definition. – The term “Barangay Health Worker” refers to a person who has undergone training programs under any accredited government and non-government organization and who renders primary health care services in the community after having been accredited to function as such by the local health board in accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the Department of Health (DOH) and appointed by the city or municipal mayor, as the case may be.

Sec. 4. Ideal Ratio of Barangay Health Workers. – The DOH shall issue the guidelines as to the ideal number of Barangay Health Worker-to-population ratio. Such a number should be sufficient to allow the city or municipality to satisfactorily deliver primary healthcare to its constituents.

Sec. 5. Barangay Health Workers as employees of the Local Government Units (LGU).

– The city or municipality shall hire the Barangay Health Workers as job order, casual, contractual, or regular employees.

Barangay Health Workers currently serving the city or municipality and receiving allowances therefrom shall be given preference in the hiring by the city or municipality under this Act.

Sec. 6. Compensation and Benefits. – Barangay Health Workers hired pursuant to this Act shall receive all the compensation and benefits given by the city or municipality to its job order, contractual, casual, or regular employees.

Sec. 7. Special Barangay Health Workers Assistance Program. – The DOH, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), shall create a Special Barangay Health Workers Assistance Program, providing additional financial and technical assistance, training and other support to selected LGUs for their Barangay Health Workers. This program shall prioritize assistance to LGUs that have no or less capacity to give regular and adequate salaries/allowances to its Barangay Health Workers for the next ten (10) years, as determined by the DOH and DILG.

Sec. 8. Appropriation. – The amount needed for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) share of the cities and municipalities, including but not limited to the additional funds to be received once the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling has been fully implemented.

The amount necessary for the initial implementation of the Special Barangay Health Workers Assistance Program shall be charged to the current appropriation of the DOH. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with the Department of Health (DOH), shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, prepare the Implementing Rules and Regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 10. Separability Clause. – If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts hereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

Sec. 11. Repealing Clause. – All laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

Sec. 12. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,