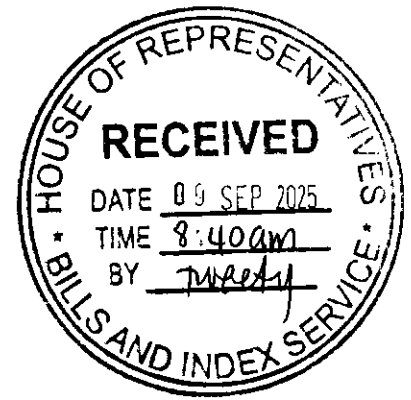




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 4444

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE GERALD CLOYD ALEXIS V. GALANG**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Under Section 5 (5), Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution requires the State to prioritize education funding and secure high-quality teaching by offering competitive compensation and fulfilling work conditions. Despite this constitutional imperative, teachers currently face a crisis characterized by unlivable wages, unsustainable workloads, and critically deficient health benefits.

This healthcare crisis demands urgent legislative action. As the government bears a constitutional duty to safeguard public health, comprehensive hospitalization and healthcare benefits are essential to prevent teachers from suffering financial hardship due to work-related illnesses or injuries.

To address this critical gap, this bill proposes strengthening healthcare access through: establishing specialty centers and wards in DOH-retained hospitals; expanding PhilHealth coverage; enhancing medical assistance programs; providing health-related discounts; and granting dedicated mental health leaves for teachers and their dependents.

In light of these pressing needs and the State's constitutional obligations, the immediate approval of this bill is urgently sought.



GERALD GALANG

2nd Legislative District, City of Valenzuela



Republic of the Philippines
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TWENTIETH CONGRESS
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Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE GERALD CLOYD ALEXIS V. GALANG**

AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR HOSPITAL AND HEALTHCARE BENEFITS FOR PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF

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 "Healthy Buhay at Hanapbuhay Para sa Guro Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy* - It is the policy of the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential health and other social services available to all people. The State further recognizes the role of Filipino teachers in the delivery of education services as a public and common good. Towards this end, the State shall fulfill the right to health and promote the well-being of Filipino teachers and their dependents through the provision of available, accessible, and affordable medical and healthcare services.

SEC. 3. *Coverage*. - This Act shall apply to all public and private elementary and secondary school teachers, regardless of length of service and status of employment, and their declared dependents.

SEC. 4. *Special Centers and Hospital Wards Para sa Mga Guro*. - The Department of Health (DOH) is mandated to establish teachers' health centers and to designate special wards for teachers in all of its retained hospitals and specialty centers. Provided that no fees or expenses shall be charged or paid by the teachers and their qualified dependents in public health facilities.

SEC. 5. *Philhealth Plus Para sa Mga Guro*. - All public and private school teachers, regardless of their length of service and status of employment, shall be automatically covered by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH). The premium contributions of public-school teachers shall be paid by the national government. Provided that the premium contributions of private school teachers shall be equally shared by the educational institutions and the national government. Provided further, PhilHealth is mandated to increase the health benefits coverage of teachers and their dependents to at least twenty percent (20%).

SEC. 6. *Medical Assistance Program Para sa Guro*. - The DOH, DSWD, and DepEd shall establish, harmonize, and strengthen their medical assistance program for teachers to include, but not limited to, subsidies on hospitalization and medical procedures for teachers and their qualified dependents in private health facilities.

SEC. 7. *Medical and Health Discounts Para sa Guro.* - All teachers shall be entitled to a ten percent (10%) discount and exemption from the value-added tax (VAT), if applicable, on the purchase of medicines and other essential medical and health products.

SEC. 8. *Mental Health and Wellness Leave.* - All teachers shall be entitled to a mental health and wellness leave of not more than five (5) working days per year. The mental health and wellness leave shall be in addition to the regular vacation and sick leave entitlements provided under existing laws.

SEC. 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Department of Education (DepEd) and Department of Health (DOH), in consultation with concerned national government agencies, teachers' unions, and organizations, shall promulgate within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act the necessary rules and regulations for its effective and immediate implementation.

SEC. 10. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be provided in the General Appropriation Act.

SEC. 11. *Tax Exemptions.* - All donations, contributions, bequests, subsidies, or financial aids received by government agencies for the implementation of this Act shall be exempt from payment of taxes under the National Internal Revenue Code and the Local Government Code.

SEC. 12. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, issuances, executive orders, letters of instruction, rules or regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 13. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,