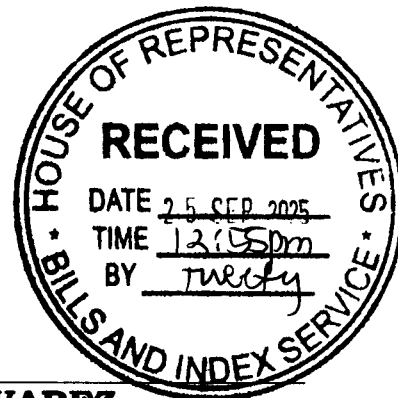


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4902**

Introduced by **REP. ERIC L. OLIVAREZ**



AN ACT MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) TO ENSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF MEDICINES AND PROCUREMENT OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT IN ALL PUBLIC HOSPITALS THROUGH THE UTILIZATION OF THE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO INDIGENT AND FINANCIALLY INCAPACITATED PATIENTS (MAIFIP) FUND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution, under Article II, Section 15, declares that *"The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them."* Moreover, Article XIII, Section 11, mandates 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."*

Despite these constitutional mandates, many public hospitals across the country continue to face shortages of essential medicines and the absence of basic diagnostic equipment. Patients, particularly the poor and financially incapacitated, are often compelled to purchase medicines outside hospital facilities or seek diagnostic tests in private institutions—adding financial burden to families already in crisis.

The Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients (MAIFIP) Fund was primarily created to assist indigent patients, yet its potential remains underutilized. Instead of being confined solely to direct financial aid, a portion of this fund can be strategically directed toward ensuring the availability of medicines and the procurement of essential medical equipment in government hospitals nationwide.

This bill seeks to mandate the Department of Health (DOH) to guarantee the supply of essential medicines and provide adequate medical equipment in all public hospitals through the utilization of the MAIFIP Fund. At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the annual MAIFIP allocation shall be dedicated for this purpose. The measure also institutionalizes transparent guidelines, monitoring, and reporting mechanisms to prevent misuse of funds and ensure accountability.

By passing this measure, we strengthen the capacity of public hospitals to deliver effective healthcare services, safeguard the constitutional right to health, and ease the financial burden of our poorest and most vulnerable sectors.

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


ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

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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 "Universal Medical Access and Equipment Act of 2025."

SEC.2.Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to promote and protect the right to health of every Filipino by ensuring universal access to essential medicines and quality healthcare services.

In line with this, the State shall mandate the Department of Health (DOH) to provide adequate medicines and procure essential medical equipment for all government hospitals using the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients (MAIFIP) Fund.

SEC 3. Definition of Terms. - For the purposes of this Act, the following definitions shall apply:

- a. Essential Medicines- refers to the list of medicines identified by the DOH as essential for the treatment of prevalent diseases and health conditions in the Philippines, as well as medicines included in the Philippine National Formulary.
- b. Essential Medical Equipment- refers to x-ray machines, ultrasound machines, electrocardiogram (ECG) machines, and other diagnostic equipment deemed necessary by the DOH for basic diagnostic services in public hospitals.
- c. Public Hospitals- refers to all hospitals owned and operated by the national government, including, but not limited to, national hospitals, regional hospitals, provincial hospitals, city hospitals, and municipal hospitals.
- d. MAIFIP Fund- refers to the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients Fund.

SEC 4. Availability of Essential Medicines. - The DOH shall ensure the continuous and

adequate supply of essential medicines in all public hospitals nationwide. This includes:

- a. **Procurement:** The DOH shall establish a streamlined procurement process for essential medicines, ensuring competitive pricing and timely delivery. Bulk purchasing and strategic partnerships with pharmaceutical companies shall be explored to maximize cost effectiveness. Preference shall be given to locally manufactured medicines that meet quality standards.
- b. **Inventory Management:** Public hospitals shall implement efficient inventory management systems to prevent stockouts and wastage of medicines. The DOH shall provide technical assistance and training to hospital personnel on inventory management best practices,
- c. **Storage:** Public hospitals shall ensure proper storage of medicines, adhering to prescribed temperature and humidity requirements to maintain their efficacy and safety.
- d. **Dispensing:** The DOH shall develop guidelines for the efficient and equitable dispensing of medicines to patients in public hospitals, prioritizing indigent and financially incapacitated patients.

SEC 5. Provision of Essential Medical Equipment. - The DOH shall ensure that all public hospitals are equipped with essential medical equipment, including but not limited to:

- a. **For X-ray Machines:** Every public hospital shall have at least one functional x-ray machine capable of performing basic radiographic examinations.
- b. **Ultrasound Machines:** Every public hospital shall have at least one functional ultrasound machine capable of performing basic ultrasound examinations.
- c. **Electrocardiogram Machines:** Every public hospital shall have at least one functional machine capable of performing electrocardiograms.
- d. **Other Equipment:** The DOH shall conduct a needs assessment to determine the need for other essential medical equipment in public hospitals and prioritize their procurement based on the assessment results, taking into consideration the needs of indigent and financially incapacitated patients.

SEC 6 Funding. - The funding for the procurement of essential medicines and medical equipment under this Act shall be sourced primarily from the MAIFIP Fund. The DOH shall:

- a. **MAIFIP Allocation:** At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the annual MAIFIP Fund shall exclusively be utilized for the procurement of essential medicines and medical equipment as mandated by this Act. This allocation shall be prioritized and protected from other uses.
- b. **Annual Appropriations:** While the primary funding source is the MAIFIP Fund, sufficient funds may also be included in the annual General Appropriations Act to supplement the MAIFIP allocation and ensure the long-term sustainability of the program.
- c. **Other Sources:** The DOH is authorized to explore other funding sources, including grants

and donations, to further supplement the funds allocated under this Act, provided that such funds are aligned with the objectives of the MAIFIP and this Act.

SEC 7. MAIFIP Fund Management and Transparency. - The DOH shall develop clear and transparent guidelines for the utilization of the MAIFIP fund for the purposes of this Act, ensuring accountability and preventing misuse of funds. Implement a robust monitoring system to track the utilization of MAIFIP funds for the procurement of medicines and equipment and to assess the impact of this Act on access to healthcare for indigent and financially incapacitated patients. Publish regular reports on the utilization of the MAIFIP fund, including details on the procurement of medicines and equipment, the number of patients served, and the overall impact on public health.

SEC. 8. Implementation and Monitoring. - The DOH shall be the lead implementing agency for this Act. It shall develop implementing rules and regulations within sixty (60) days of the reflectivity of this Act and shall conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this Act to ensure its effectiveness. It shall submit an annual report to Congress on the progress of the implementation of this Act, including data on the availability of medicines and equipment in public hospitals, the utilization of funds, the number of indigent and financially incapacitated patients served, and any challenges encountered

SEC 9. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Approved,