

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 5059

**Introduced by Representative JB BERNOS
and Representative CHING B. BERNOS**

**AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC VETERINARY CLINIC IN EVERY CITY AND
MUNICIPALITY IN THE COUNTRY, PROVIDING FOR THEIR OPERATION
AND MAINTENANCE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Veterinary services might as well be the next big field in the Philippine healthcare, as 64% of Filipino households have pets, as the Social Weather Stations have reported in 2023. The rise of pet ownership can be attributed not only to the circumstances brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, but also by the shifting demographics in Filipino families, where there is a rise in couples with no children but with a number of pets. This shows that more and more Filipinos are choosing to adopt pets, primarily dogs and cats, to be their companions – bonds that are regularly featured on social media sites as entertaining and heartwarming viral videos.

Veterinary science, however, should not only be limited to pet care and treatment, but must also be sufficiently extended to animals that are part of the agricultural economy, as their care and health are important in keeping food systems going. On 04 July 2024, the Philippine Star published an article entitled, “*Abra town on alert for ASF*,” highlighting that the more than 200 hogs were reported to have been affected by the African swine fever. This resulted to loss of income for the hog raisers, as well as the temporary establishment of barriers to prevent the transmission of the disease to livestock in neighboring towns and provinces. However, such actions were only preventative, and did not adequately eradicate the disease. In fact, as of 07 August 2025, the Bureau of Animal Industry reported that fifty-one (51) barangays in twelve (12) provinces still have active cases of ASF.

Animals—whether farm animals, work animals, or pets—play a vital role in food security, agricultural productivity, community livelihood, and companionship. Preventing and controlling animal diseases is essential not only to protect these animals, but also to prevent zoonotic diseases that can be transmitted to humans, such as rabies, avian influenza, and leptospirosis. These threats carry significant public health risks and economic costs when left unaddressed.

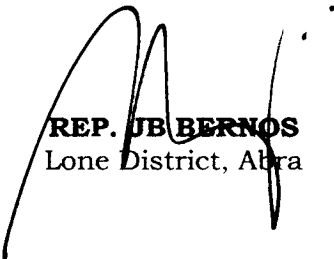
While Republic Act No. 7160, or the Local Government Code, as amended, provided for the creation of the positions of Provincial and City Veterinarian, no specific provision in the said law provides for a municipal veterinarian. Furthermore, nothing in the said law mandates for the creation of a veterinary clinic or center, let alone an explicit mention that the provincial and city veterinarians will lead clinics or centers. Such creations depend on the local government unit's capacity or resources to fund these clinics or centers.

As such, the establishment of Public Veterinary Clinics (PVCs) in every province, city, and municipality will:

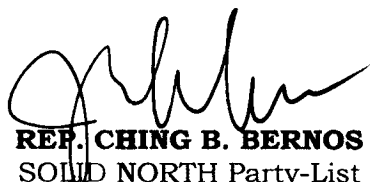
1. Provide accessible and affordable veterinary consultations, vaccinations, disease diagnosis, treatment, and minor surgical procedures for both farm and companion animals;
2. Serve as a hub for disease monitoring, outbreak response, and vaccination drives;
3. Promote responsible pet ownership and humane treatment of animals through public education;
4. Support farmers and livestock raisers with technical assistance and health management programs; and
5. Strengthen inter-agency coordination in the control of zoonotic and animal diseases.

By institutionalizing the creation of PVCs, the government can ensure a permanent, well-equipped, and professionally staffed facility dedicated to animal health services in every local government unit. This measure will also complement existing programs of the DA, the Bureau of Animal Industry, and LGUs in achieving the One Health approach—recognizing the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health.

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



REP. JB BERNOS
Lone District, Abra



REP. CHING B. BERNOS
SOLID NORTH Party-List

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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 "Animal Medical Center Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared a policy of the State to protect and promote the welfare of every animal, recognize their intrinsic value, and ensure that their basic health and safety needs are adequately met. Towards this end, the State shall establish and strengthen accessible and affordable animal health and veterinary services in all local government units nationwide, thereby contributing to public health, responsible pet ownership, and a humane society.

SECTION 3. Establishment. There shall be established, operated, and continuously maintained a public veterinary clinic in every city and municipality in the country. These clinics shall be under the direct control and supervision of the respective city or municipal local government unit (LGU), in consultation and coordination with the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Animal Industry (DA-BAI).

SECTION 4. Provision of Facilities and Equipment. The concerned city or municipal LGU shall provide an adequate, accessible, and suitable lot or space where the public veterinary clinic shall be constructed or established. The clinics

shall be equipped with essential machines, equipment, instruments, and supplies necessary for providing comprehensive basic veterinary services.

SECTION 5. Functions and Services. The public veterinary clinics shall perform functions and provide services including, but not limited to:

- (a) Providing routine vaccinations (e.g., anti-rabies, distemper) and deworming services;
- (b) Conducting spay and neuter programs for pet population control;
- (c) Offering basic veterinary consultations, diagnoses, and medical treatments for common animal illnesses;
- (d) Performing minor surgical procedures;
- (e) Assisting in the control and prevention of zoonotic diseases in coordination with local health offices;
- (f) Conducting animal welfare awareness and responsible pet ownership campaigns;
- (g) Maintaining a database of registered pets and vaccinated animals within the LGU's jurisdiction;
- (h) Support, alongside the Municipal Agriculturist, farmers and livestock and poultry raisers with technical assistance and health management programs;
- (i) Providing basic emergency care for animals; and
- (j) Coordinating with local animal welfare organizations and law enforcement for animal rescue and cruelty cases.

SECTION 6. Organizational Structure and Staffing. The local chief executive shall appoint a qualified Chief Veterinarian to head the public veterinary clinic, who shall have the necessary professional qualifications and experience as prescribed by the Civil Service Commission and the Professional Regulation Commission. The Chief Veterinarian shall render full-time service and be responsible for the clinic's overall administration and operation. The local chief executive shall also appoint the necessary veterinary medical, technical, and administrative personnel and staff, proportionate to the needs of the LGU and in accordance with relevant civil service laws, rules, and regulations.

SECTION 7. Design, Policies, Terms and Conditions. The LGU shall prepare the design and layout of the clinic structure in consultation with the DA-BAI.

The LGU shall also formulate and implement appropriate local policies, guidelines, fees (if any, for non-indigent cases, and subject to LGU ordinances), and terms and conditions relative to the efficient operation and maintenance of the public veterinary clinic, ensuring accessibility and affordability of services.

SECTION 8. National Government Support. The National Government, through the Department of Agriculture (DA), shall extend technical, financial, and material assistance to LGUs for the effective operation of municipal veterinary offices. In cases of animal disease outbreaks and other public animal health emergencies, the DA shall, in coordination with the concerned LGUs, immediately mobilize emergency funds, personnel, vaccines, equipment, and other resources necessary for containment, prevention, and eradication efforts. The DA shall likewise provide continuing capacity-building, surveillance support, and access to diagnostic facilities to strengthen local preparedness and response systems.

SECTION 9. Funding. For the initial establishment and construction or renovation of public veterinary clinics, an initial appropriation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act for the ensuing fiscal year following the approval of this Act. This initial funding shall be allocated as a subsidy from the National Government, through the Department of Agriculture, to assist cities and municipalities in meeting the capital outlay requirements for these facilities.

The city or municipal local government unit shall primarily be responsible for providing the necessary funds for the continuous operation, maintenance, and personnel services of their respective public veterinary clinics. Such funds shall be included in their annual regular appropriations. The Department of Agriculture may provide supplementary financial assistance or technical support for specific programs (e.g., mass vaccination, spay/neuter drives) as part of its regular mandate.

SECTION 10. Monitoring and Evaluation. The DA-BAI, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and relevant professional organizations, shall establish a robust system for monitoring and evaluating the establishment, operation, and effectiveness of the public veterinary clinics. This system shall ensure compliance with national standards, promote best practices, and facilitate continuous improvement of animal health services nationwide.

SECTION 11. Implementing Rules and Regulations. Within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act, the DA-BAI, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and such other relevant agencies

and professional organizations, shall prepare and issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SECTION 12. Separability Clause. If any portion or provisions of this Act are declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining portions or provisions not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 13. Repealing Clause. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, memoranda, circulars, and other issuances, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 14. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,