



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6957

Introduced by Representative Nelson S. Legacion
Third Congressional District, Camarines Sur

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The State's fundamental obligation to protect its citizens and promote animal welfare is explicitly derived from Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which mandates that the State shall "protect and promote the right to health of the people." The unchecked proliferation of stray dogs and cats constitutes a grave, multi-faceted public health, environmental, and animal welfare crisis that directly undermines this constitutional duty.

The millions of free-roaming animals in the country present a severe risk profile. They serve as the primary reservoir for rabies, a zoonotic disease that remains a significant public health threat and is nearly 100% fatal once symptoms manifest, despite the existence of Republic Act No. 9482 - *The Anti-Rabies Act of 2007*. The failure to control the host population limits the effectiveness of current vaccination efforts.

Stray animals are a significant source of accidents, including traffic hazards, vehicular collisions, and severe bite incidents, which place an immense and unnecessary financial and operational strain on public hospitals, particularly Animal Bite Treatment Centers, and local infrastructure.

Moreover, these animals are habitually subjected to inhumane living conditions, including starvation, injury, disease, and crude population control methods such as culling, which violate the principles enshrined in Republic Act No. 8485 - *The Animal Welfare Act of 1998*.

The most effective and sustainable long-term solution is a strategic, humane intervention that addresses both overpopulation and disease simultaneously.

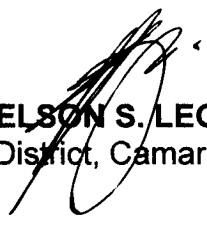
This proposed measure establishes a comprehensive, strategic, and humane Catch-Spay/Neuter-Microchip-Vaccinate (CSNMV) Program. It is a proactive

public health strategy that mandates mass sterilization, mandatory rabies vaccination, and microchipping for national traceability.

This proposed measure is a vital supplement, creating a cohesive legislative framework with both existing and proposed measures. The CSNMV approach enforces the humane principles of R.A. 8485 and modernizes the implementation of R.A. 9482 by establishing mass sterilization as the core method to achieve long-term population control, which is currently lacking. This also transforms the function of city pounds from culling centers into CSNMV Wellness, Rehoming, and Adoption Centers. It also supplements two (2) other proposed bills of this representation: House Bill No. 2356 - *An Act Establishing a Public Veterinary Clinic in Every City and Municipality in the Country*, the CSNMV program provides the core veterinary services and logistical structure necessary to utilize these new Public Veterinary Clinics. Meanwhile, House Bill No. 4127 - *An Act Requiring all National and Local Government Hospitals to Establish and Maintain Animal Bite Treatment Centers*, by strategically reducing the reservoir of rabies and the incidence of animal bites, this bill will exponentially decrease the patient load and operational costs of the Animal Bite Treatment Centers (ABTCs).

Furthermore, this measure fundamentally prioritizes animal welfare and responsible ownership. It institutionalizes the "Adopt, Do Not Shop" philosophy and establishes accountability by requiring the issuance of official Certificates of Adoption from Local Government Units (LGUs).

Given the urgent public health, safety, and animal welfare implications, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


NELSON S. LEGACION
Representative, Third District, Camarines Sur



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House Bill No. **6957**

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Third Congressional District, Camarines Sur

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL STRATEGIC CATCH-SPAY/NEUTER-MICROCHIP-VACCINATE (CSNMV) PROGRAM FOR DOGS AND CATS, PROVIDING FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING, 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 "*National Catch-Spay/Neuter-Microchip-Vaccinate (CSNMV) Act.*"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of its citizenry by controlling the population of stray and free-roaming dogs and cats through humane, responsible, and sustainable methods. The State shall prioritize mass sterilization, mandatory vaccination, and identification as key strategies in preventing the spread of zoonotic diseases, particularly Rabies, and in fostering responsible pet ownership guided by the principle of Adopt, Do Not Shop.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. As used in this Act:

- a. *Catch-Spay/Neuter-Microchip-Vaccinate Program (CSNMV)* - refers to the comprehensive and strategic program of catching, humane sterilization (spay/neuter), mandatory vaccination, microchip implantation, adoption efforts, and post-operative release of stray and free-roaming dogs and cats;
- b. *Stray Animal* - refers to any dog or cat found roaming at large without an owner or appropriate physical restraint, which is unsterilized, unvaccinated, and/or unregistered;

- c. *City/Municipal Pound (Pound)* - refers to the LGU-mandated public facility for the temporary custody of stray or confiscated animals, the function of which shall be transformed by this Act to serve as a CSNMV Wellness and Rehoming Center; and
- d. *Certificate of Adoption* - refers to the official document issued by the LGU confirming the legal transfer of ownership and responsibility for a sterilized and microchipped animal from the state to an individual.

SECTION 4. *Establishment of the National CSNMV Program.* The Department of Agriculture (DA), through the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) for mandatory LGU compliance and with the technical support of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), in consultation with the Department of Health (DOH) and accredited Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) focused on animal welfare, shall establish and oversee the National Strategic Catch-Spay/Neuter-Microchip-Vaccinate (CSNMV) Program, with a national target of sterilizing and vaccinating at least seventy percent (70%) of the stray animal population within three (3) years of the Act's effectivity.

SECTION 5. *Components of the CSNMV Program.* The CSNMV Program shall consist of the following components:

- a. Strategic Catching - establishment of humane, area-specific methods for catching stray and free-roaming animals, utilizing local Animal Control Officers in partnership with accredited NGOs and reputable animal welfare associations;
- b. Mass Sterilization - conduct of large-scale, subsidized, and free spay and neuter services, primarily utilizing the Public Veterinary Clinics established under HB No. 2356;
- c. Mandatory Vaccination - all animals undergoing the CSNMV program shall receive mandatory anti-rabies vaccination and other core vaccinations as determined by the BAI and the DOH; and
- d. Microchip Implantation and Registry - mandatory implantation of a standardized microchip in every animal undergoing sterilization, and its registration in a National Animal Identification Database managed by the BAI, with technical support from the DICT, for effective tracing and monitoring.
- e. Post-Operative Management, Rehoming, and Adoption:
 - i. Provision of humane temporary shelter and post-operative care within the local Pound (CSNMV Wellness and Rehoming Center);
 - ii. The program shall actively promote a "Adopt, Do Not Shop" campaign and establish a formal adoption and rehoming protocol for all healthy, non-aggressive, and suitable animals during a

mandatory holding period, the duration of which shall be determined in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR);

- iii. Successful adopters shall be issued an official Certificate of Adoption from the LGU, which shall serve as a proof of responsible ownership and a waiver for future mandatory registration fees; and
- iv. Only after reasonable efforts to secure adoption have been exhausted shall sterilized, vaccinated, and microchipped animals be safely released back to the catchment location, adhering to Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) principles.

SECTION 6. *Redefining the City/Municipal Pound.* The existing function of the City/Municipal Pound shall be immediately reoriented by the LGU and the DA-BAI to serve as the CSNMV Wellness and Rehoming Center.

This Center shall:

- a. Function as the post-operative recovery, holding, and adoption facilitation facility;
- b. Actively facilitate the adoption and rehoming of suitable, sterilized, and microchipped animals under the principle of "Adopt, Do Not Shop";
- c. Uphold the minimum standards of humane treatment, food, water, and veterinary care as set forth in Republic Act No. 8485 and guidelines issued by the BAI; and
- d. Prohibit mass culling or inhumane euthanasia as a primary form of population control, limiting euthanasia strictly to cases of extreme sickness, incurable aggression, or severe injury as certified by a licensed veterinarian.

SECTION 7. *Role of Local Government Units (LGUs).* LGUs shall be primarily responsible for the implementation of the CSNMV Program within their jurisdictions. This includes:

- a. Utilizing the local Public Veterinary Clinics as primary CSNMV service centers and the City/Municipal Pound as the Wellness and Rehoming Center;
- b. Allocating local funds to supplement the National CSNMV Program;
- c. Enforcing local ordinances on animal control and microchip registration, imposing penalties for failure to register or pet abandonment; and
- d. Collaborating with accredited NGOs and veterinarians to maximize the reach and efficiency of mass sterilization and adoption events.

SECTION 8. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of the CSNMV Program shall be included in the annual

appropriations of the DA. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued operation and maintenance of the Program shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). LGUs shall likewise allocate funds from their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) for local program operations.

SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, DA, BAI, in consultation with the DILG, DOH, the DICT, and representatives from accredited non-government animal welfare organizations, shall jointly formulate and promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act, including the definitive duration of the mandatory holding period for adoption.

SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. *Repealing and Amending Clause.* All local ordinances, rules, and regulations, or parts thereof, that authorize mass culling or inhumane euthanasia as a primary means of animal population control are hereby repealed. All provisions of existing national laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 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,