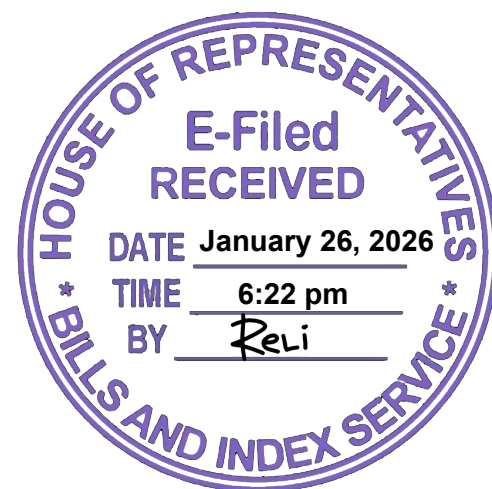


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **7375**



Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Postpartum depression (“PPD”) is a significant maternal health concern, widely recognized as the most common psychiatric condition occurring after childbirth. Globally, studies estimate that between one in ten and one in seven mothers experience PPD within the first year after delivery. Regional data in Asia show even higher rates, averaging at 21.8%. In the Philippine setting, a multicenter study has documented a prevalence of 16.4%, underscoring that a substantial proportion of Filipino mothers are affected by this condition.¹ These figures highlight the urgency of providing adequate psychosocial and institutional support to mothers during the critical postpartum period.

Republic Act No. 11210, or the 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law, marked a milestone in protecting maternal health by extending paid leave to support physical recovery and early childcare. Yet, the law does not specifically respond to the unique needs of women diagnosed with postpartum depression, who often require extended time to pursue treatment and stabilize their mental well-being. Without such support, mothers may be compelled to return to work prematurely, despite the persistence of depressive symptoms that can impair both caregiving and their own recovery.

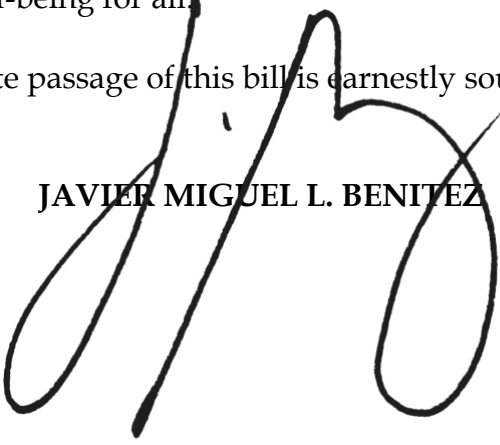
This proposed measure provides an additional fifteen (15) days of fully paid maternity leave to mothers clinically diagnosed with PPD, with the option of further extension without pay for up to one year. Such provisions are designed

¹ De Chavez, M., et al. (2015). Prevalence of postpartum depression among mothers who delivered in a tertiary hospital. *Philippine Journal of Psychiatry* Vol. 37, Issue 2, pp. 29-35. <https://www.herdin.ph/index.php?view=research&cid=62359>. (Date last accessed: August 28, 2025).

to reduce the economic and professional pressures that can exacerbate maternal mental health challenges, while ensuring that families receive the care and stability needed during this vulnerable period. The bill also upholds the principle of non-diminution of benefits, while complementing protections already granted under the Solo Parents' Welfare Act and the Mental Health Act.

In effect, this legislation strengthens the country's maternity protection framework by explicitly integrating maternal mental health into national labor and health policy. By addressing postpartum depression through extended leave, the measure advances the constitutional mandate to protect working women and children, and aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the commitment to ensure health and well-being for all.

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


JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular **7375**

Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR ADDITIONAL MATERNITY LEAVE TO
WOMEN WITH POST-PARTUM DEPRESSION, EXPANDING FOR
THIS PURPOSE THE COVERAGE OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11210
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*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 the “*Mental Wellness
kay Inay Act.*”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the declared policy of the State to ensure optimal maternal healthcare and extend the same to the postpartum period while being consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals. Towards this end, the State shall encourage and support mental health derivatives that will eliminate the social stigma surrounding depression and mental illness and the myth of motherhood. This will provide an enabling environment for support needed in the new mother's inability to self-diagnose her condition, the new mother's shame or embarrassment over discussing her depression so near to the birth of her child, the lack of understanding in society and the medical community of the complexity of postpartum depression.

SEC. 3. Maternity benefit for women with postpartum depression. – In addition to the benefits that may be availed under Republic Act No. 11210, otherwise known as the 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law, all covered female workers in government and the private sector, including those in the informal economy, regardless of civil status or the legitimacy of her child, shall be granted additional fifteen (15) days in addition to maternity leave with full

pay; *Provided*, That they may avail the same with an option to extend for one (1) year or 365 days without pay. This is to ensure that women will continue to uphold their maternal functions and the treatment requirements for postpartum depression, whether the child survives or not.

SEC. 4. *Non-Diminution of Benefits.* - Nothing in this Act shall be construed to diminish existing maternity benefits currently enjoyed, whether these are granted under Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) or present laws, if the same are more beneficial to the female worker. Furthermore, any other working arrangement that the female worker shall agree to during the additional maternity leave period shall be allowed: *Provided*, That in case the woman qualifies as a solo parent under Republic Act No. 8972 or the "Solo Parents' Welfare Act," the availment of additional fifteen (15) days maternity leave with full pay shall not be diminished.

SEC. 5. *Penalties.* - Whoever fails or refuses to comply with the provisions of this Act shall be punished by a fine of not less than Twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00) nor more than Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00), and imprisonment of not less than six (6) years and one (1) day nor more than twelve (12) years or both. Furthermore, if the act or omission penalized by this Act shall be committed by an association, partnership, corporation, or any other institution, its managing head, directors, or partners shall be liable to the penalties provided in this Act for the offense.

Failure on the part of any association, partnership, corporation, or private enterprise to comply with the provisions of this Act shall be a ground for non-renewal of business permits.

SEC. 6. *Funding Source.* - The amount necessary to fund this additional maternity benefit shall be taken from revenues from excise taxes on sweetened beverages, alcohol, tobacco products, heated tobacco products, and vapor products. It may be augmented under the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The Civil Service Commission (CSC), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the Social Security System (SSS) shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act within sixty (60) days from the effectivity thereof.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not so declared shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,