



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 8437

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Constitution, under Article XIII, Section 11, mandates that the State adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development, ensuring that essential goods, health, and other social services are available to all people at an affordable cost. In the 20th century and our current age of technology, this mandate necessitates a transition from antiquated physical systems to a modernized, digital healthcare infrastructure. While developed nations like Australia, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Canada have successfully empowered patients through online access to their medical records, the Philippines remains heavily reliant on traditional paper-based systems. This reliance creates systemic vulnerabilities, including a lack of standardization, poor data searchability, and a heightened risk of permanent data loss.

The institutionalization of a Unified Electronic Medical Record (EMR) System offers transformative benefits that modernize healthcare delivery in the Philippines. By providing accurate, up-to-date, and comprehensive documentation of diagnoses, medications, and treatment plans, the system ensures high levels of clinical accuracy and continuity of care. This digital transition significantly enhances patient safety by facilitating the secure sharing of information among authorized providers, which in turn reduces the risk of medical errors and improves the reliability of prescriptions.

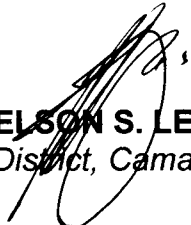
Furthermore, the system provides substantial economic relief by eliminating the unnecessary and costly duplication of medical tests and assessments, thereby lowering healthcare expenditures for both the government and the Filipino family. Beyond individual care, the system generates aggregated data that offers critical, evidence-based policy insights, enabling the government to optimize resource allocation and effectively address national healthcare priorities.

To ensure the success of this transition, the bill establishes the Electronic Medical Record Center under the Department of Health to serve as a secure hub

for all medical databanks. In strict adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and the Electronic Commerce Law of 2000, the system will be equipped with state-of-the-art security features to protect the integrity and confidentiality of patient data. Through this measure, the State ensures that technology serves as a life-saving tool, providing every Filipino with a secure and efficient healthcare record in this modern era.

This bill is a refined consolidation of legislative efforts spanning over a decade, representing a collective vision for a digitized Philippine healthcare system. It carries the intent of various proponents from the 15th and 16th Congresses (Rep. Diosdado Macapagal Arroyo), the 17th Congress (Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo), the 18th Congress (Rep. John Marvin "Yul Servo" Nieto), and the 19th Congress (Rep. Virgilio S. Lacson and Rep. Ma. Alana Samantha Taliño Santos).

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


NELSON S. LEGACION
Representative, Third District, Camarines Sur



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AN ACT ESTABLISHING A UNIFIED ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS FOR ALL PATIENTS OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND CLINICS, ESTABLISHING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD CENTER UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 "*One Electronic Medical Records Act.*"

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development. The State shall encourage the integration of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to modernize and streamline the healthcare sector. A robust and secure database is considered indispensable in the government's healthcare program.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. For purposes of this Act:

- a) *Electronic Medical Records (EMR)* refer to the digital compilation of a patient's medical profile and history stored on a computer, including diagnoses, medications, and treatment plans in a standard format; and
- b) *Medical Service Providers* refer to all practitioners, hospitals, and clinics that provide medical care.

SECTION 4. Establishment, Maintenance, and Uploading of EMR. The DOH, in coordination with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), shall establish a unified EMR database. Medical service providers shall maintain EMRs, which shall be electronically uploaded regularly, while keeping hard copies

as back-up. The DOH may establish guidelines for EMR portability for private institutions subject to privacy laws.

SECTION 5. *Electronic Medical Records Center.* There is hereby created an EMR Center under the Office of the Secretary of the DOH. It shall serve as the hub for all medical databanks. The Center shall generate standard software for the maintenance of records and create an emergency contact center to assist patients 24/7.

SECTION 6. *Data Security.* The EMR system shall fully comply with Republic Act No. 10173 otherwise known as the *Data Privacy Act of 2012*. Security measures shall include end-to-end encryption, multi-factor authentication, redundant storage, and breach response protocols. The system shall also comply with Republic Act No. 8792 also known as the *Electronic Commerce Law of 2000*.

SECTION 7. *Training and Capacity Building.* The DOH shall allocate funds for training healthcare personnel and IT support teams on the use and maintenance of the EMR system.

SECTION 8. *EMR Support Services.* Authorized institutions shall have access to technical support and information from the EMR Center.

SECTION 9. *Monitoring and Evaluation.* A dedicated unit within the Center shall conduct audits, monitor compliance with privacy standards, and report to Congress annually on system performance.

SECTION 10. *Appropriations.* The amount of One Hundred Million Pesos (P100,000,000.00) is authorized for the initial operations of the EMR Center. Thereafter, such amount needed to implement this Act shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) of the Department of Health.

SECTION 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within one hundred eighty (180) days of the effectivity of this Act, the DOH, in coordination with the DICT, PhilHealth, National Privacy Commission (NPC), and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), shall draft and approve the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

SECTION 12. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remaining parts shall continue to be in full force.

SECTION 13. *Repealing Clause.* All laws or rules inconsistent with 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 at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,