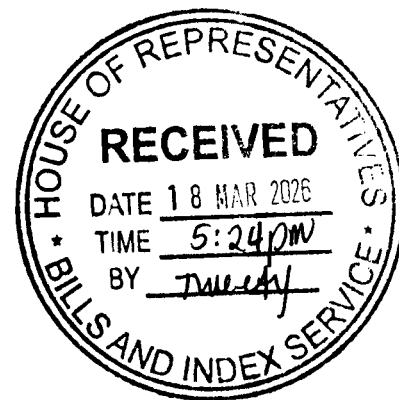


Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8678

Introduced by Hon. Kenneth T. Gatchalian

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Women's health remains a critical yet unevenly addressed component of the country's healthcare system. Despite existing policies under the Universal Health Care Act, many Filipino women—particularly those in underserved and geographically isolated areas—continue to face barriers in accessing preventive, primary, and specialized healthcare services. These gaps result in delayed diagnosis, higher incidence of preventable diseases such as breast and cervical cancer, and increased health risks across the life cycle.

This proposed measure seeks to institutionalize a National Women's Health Access Program to ensure that essential health services for women are accessible, affordable, and responsive to their unique needs. By strengthening community-based healthcare delivery, expanding screening and early detection programs, and integrating mental health and reproductive health services, the bill aims to address longstanding disparities and improve overall health outcomes for women.

Moreover, the establishment of Women's Health Desks and the deployment of mobile health services will bring care closer to communities, particularly to indigent women and those in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. Complemented by capacity-building initiatives for

healthcare workers, this measure ensures that healthcare delivery is not only available but also gender-responsive and patient-centered.

In strengthening preventive care and primary healthcare systems for women, this bill supports the State's commitment to inclusive, equitable, and people-centered healthcare under the Universal Health Care framework.

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



KENNETH T. GATCHALIAN

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8678

Introduced by Hon. Kenneth T. Gatchalian

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR WOMEN'S
HEALTH ACCESS, STRENGTHENING PREVENTIVE AND PRIMARY
HEALTHCARE SERVICES FOR WOMEN, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Women’s*
2 *Health Access Act.*”

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to protect and
4 promote the health and well-being of women and to ensure their equitable access
5 to affordable, quality, and gender-responsive healthcare services.

6 The State recognizes that women face unique health challenges across their
7 life cycle and shall strengthen preventive care, early detection, and treatment of
8 women-specific health conditions through accessible healthcare programs in
9 communities.

10 **SEC. 3. Objectives.** – This Act aims to:

- 11 a. Improve women’s access to preventive and primary healthcare
12 services;
13 b. Promote early detection and treatment of women-specific diseases;

- c. Strengthen community-based health programs for women; and
- d. Ensure gender-responsive healthcare delivery across public health facilities.

SEC. 4. *Coverage.* – This Act shall cover all Filipino women across their life cycle, including adolescents, women of reproductive age, pregnant women, mothers, senior women, and women in vulnerable sectors such as indigent women, women with disabilities, and women in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas.

SEC. 5. *National Women’s Health Access Program.* – There is hereby established a National Women’s Health Access Program, to be implemented by the Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with local government units (LGUs), aimed at providing accessible and comprehensive health services for women.

The program shall include, but not be limited to, the following services:

- a. Annual Comprehensive Women’s Health Checkups in government hospitals, rural health units, and barangay health stations;
- b. Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Programs, including clinical breast examinations and cervical cancer screening services;
- c. Maternal and Reproductive Health Services, including prenatal and postnatal care;
- d. Mental Health Support Services for Women, particularly for mothers and caregivers; and
- e. Health education programs focusing on women’s health, nutrition, and disease prevention.

SEC. 6. *Establishment of Women’s Health Desks.* – All government hospitals and public health facilities shall establish Women’s Health Desks that shall:

- a. Provide guidance and referral services for women seeking healthcare;
- b. Facilitate access to screening, diagnostics, and treatment services; and
- c. Ensure that healthcare delivery is gender-responsive and respectful,

SEC. 7. *Mobile and Community-Based Health Services.* – The Department of Health, in partnership with LGUs, shall deploy mobile health clinics and outreach programs to reach women in underserved and geographically isolated communities.

SEC. 8. *Capacity Building of Healthcare Workers.* – The DOH shall ensure the training of healthcare professionals on gender-responsive healthcare, women-specific health conditions, and patient-centered care.

SEC. 9. *Integration with Existing Health Programs.* – The implementation of this Act shall be integrated with existing programs under the Universal Health Care Act and related laws to maximize healthcare coverage and efficiency.

SEC. 10. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Department of Health. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Department of Health, in consultation with relevant government agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for its effective implementation.

SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

1 **SEC. 13. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, presidential
2 decrees or issuances, letter of instruction, administrative orders, rules, and
3 regulations as well as local ordinances contrary to or inconsistent with the
4 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

5 **SEC. 14. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
6 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general
7 circulation.

Approved,