

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10238



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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines stands at a critical juncture in aligning its regulatory framework with evolving global standards on animal welfare, scientific innovation, and consumer protection. While Republic Act ("R.A.") No. 8485 (1998), otherwise known as the Animal Welfare Act of 1998, as amended, provides a general framework for the humane treatment of animals, it does not expressly prohibit the use of animals in cosmetic testing, an area that has increasingly drawn ethical, scientific, and economic scrutiny.

Cosmetic testing on animals involves subjecting them to procedures that may cause pain, distress, or lasting harm, often for products that are non-essential to human health. Advances in science have rendered such practices largely unnecessary. Today, validated alternative methods, ranging from in vitro testing to computational models, offer more reliable, human-relevant, and cost-efficient means of ensuring product safety.¹ The continued reliance on animal testing for cosmetics is therefore no longer justified on either scientific or ethical grounds.

Globally, a decisive shift has taken place. The European Union has implemented a comprehensive ban on animal testing for cosmetics and the marketing of animal-tested

¹ Krewski, D., Acosta, D., Jr, Andersen, M., Anderson, H., Bailar, J. C., 3rd, Boekelheide, K., Brent, R., Charnley, G., Cheung, V. G., Green, S., Jr, Kelsey, K. T., Kerkvliet, N. I., Li, A. A., McCray, L., Meyer, O., Patterson, R. D., Pennie, W., Scala, R. A., Solomon, G. M., Stephens, M., ... Zeise, L. (2010). Toxicity testing in the 21st century: a vision and a strategy. *Journal of toxicology and environmental health. Part B, Critical reviews*, 13(2-4), 51-138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10937404.2010.483176>

cosmetic products.² Similar measures have been adopted by jurisdictions such as India, South Korea, and the United Kingdom, among others. These reforms demonstrate that prohibiting cosmetic animal testing is not only feasible but also compatible with robust industry growth and innovation. In fact, global markets are increasingly favoring cruelty-free products, creating both reputational and commercial advantages for compliant industries.³

In the Philippines, the absence of a clear legal prohibition creates regulatory ambiguity and disadvantages local manufacturers in accessing international markets that require cruelty-free certification. Consumers, both domestic and global, are becoming more conscious of ethical sourcing and production practices. A national policy that decisively addresses cosmetic animal testing will therefore enhance consumer confidence, strengthen export competitiveness, and encourage the domestic industry to transition toward modern, science-based testing approaches.

This proposed measure seeks to fill the existing legal gap by prohibiting cosmetic testing on animals within the country, as well as the manufacture, importation, and sale of cosmetic products that rely on such testing. It likewise provides a clear regulatory framework for enforcement, allows narrowly defined exceptions when strictly necessary for public health and safety, and promotes the development and adoption of validated alternative methods consistent with international standards such as those recognized by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Importantly, the bill adopts a balanced and pragmatic approach by providing a reasonable transition period for industry compliance, recognizing the need for adjustment while ensuring that reform is both effective and sustainable. The long-term benefits, such as reduced testing costs, improved scientific outcomes, enhanced global market access, and strengthened ethical standards, clearly outweigh the short-term adjustments required.

This measure affirms the Philippines' commitment to humane and responsible innovation. It aligns national policy with global best practices, supports the

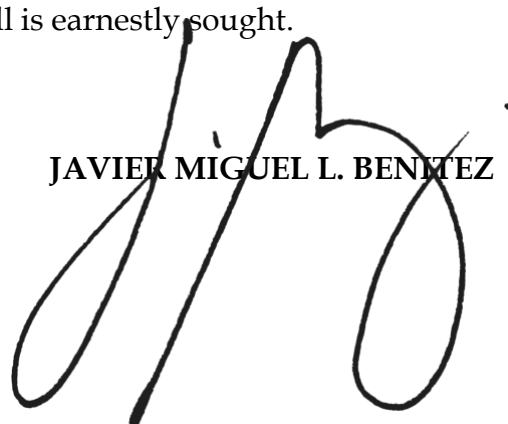
² European Commission. "Cosmetics – Animal Testing." Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/cosmetics/animal-testing_en

³ Market Reports World, "Cruelty-Free Cosmetics Market Size, Share, Growth, and Industry Analysis , By Type (Cream, Gel, Liquid, Powder, Others), By Application (Supermarket/Hypermarket, Specialty Retailers, Convenience Stores, Online Store, Others), Regional Insights and Forecast to 2033," last updated 30 March 2026, accessed 16 April 2026.

modernization of the cosmetics industry, and upholds the principle that animal welfare must not be compromised for non-essential purposes.

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

JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long vertical stroke, positioned over the printed name.

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10238

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

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF ANIMAL TESTING FOR COSMETIC PURPOSES, REGULATING THE MANUFACTURE, IMPORTATION, DISTRIBUTION, AND SALE OF COSMETICS IN RELATION THERETO, PROMOTING THE USE OF ALTERNATIVE METHODS, 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 “Philippine Cruelty-Free Cosmetics Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them, ensure the humane treatment of animals, and regulate products that may affect public health and safety, consistent with Section 15, Article II of the 1987 Constitution and Republic Act (“R.A.”) No. 8485 (1998), otherwise known as the “Animal Welfare Act of 1998,” as amended.

Towards this end, the State shall prohibit unnecessary animal testing for cosmetic purposes, regulate the manufacture, importation, distribution, and sale of cosmetic

products in accordance with public health and safety standards, and promote the development and use of scientifically valid alternative methods that do not involve the use of animals.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (a) “*Alternative method*” refers to a non-animal test method or strategy that is scientifically valid and accepted, adopted, or recognized by the Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”), including methods reflected in relevant OECD guidelines, ASEAN cosmetic standards, or other internationally accepted validation standards.
- (b) “*Animal testing*” refers to any *in vivo* procedure carried out on a living non-human vertebrate for the purpose of developing or assessing the safety, efficacy, or regulatory compliance of a cosmetic product or cosmetic ingredient;
- (c) “*Cosmetic*” refers to any substance or mixture intended to be placed in contact with the external parts of the human body, teeth, or the mucous membranes of the oral cavity, with a view exclusively or mainly to cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance, correcting body odors, protecting them, or keeping them in good condition, consistent with the laws, rules, and regulations administered by the FDA;
- (d) “*Laboratory animal*” refers to any live non-human vertebrate used in experimentation or testing;
- (e) “*Manufacturer, importer, distributor, or trader*” refers to any natural or juridical person engaged in the manufacture, importation, distribution, supply, sale, offer for sale, or placing on the market of cosmetic products in the Philippines.

SEC. 4. *Prohibition on Animal Testing for Cosmetics.* – The following acts are hereby prohibited:

- (a) Conducting or causing the conduct of animal testing within the Philippines for cosmetic purposes;

- (b) Manufacturing, importing, distributing, selling, offering for sale, or otherwise placing on the Philippine market any cosmetic product where the responsible person knowingly relied on animal testing conducted after the effectivity of this Act for cosmetic purposes, where an accepted alternative method was available at the time such testing was conducted;
- (c) Commissioning, authorizing, or knowingly causing a third party to conduct animal testing for cosmetic products or cosmetic ingredients intended to be placed on the Philippine market, except as provided under this Act.

Animal testing conducted for non-cosmetic purposes pursuant to other applicable laws shall not fall within the prohibition under this Act, provided that such testing is not undertaken to circumvent the provisions herein.

SEC. 5. *Exceptions.* – The FDA, in coordination with the Bureau of Animal Industry and subject to R.A. 8485, as amended, may allow, on a case-to-case basis, the limited use of animal testing only upon a determination, supported by substantial evidence, that:

- (a) A specific cosmetic product or ingredient poses a demonstrated and serious risk to human health;
- (b) No scientifically valid and accepted alternative method is available to address the identified safety concern; and
- (c) The use of animal testing is strictly necessary and proportionate to address such risk.

Any authorization under this section shall be prior, written, narrowly tailored, time-bound, and subject to strict documentation and regulatory oversight.

SEC. 6. *Regulatory Authority and Coordination.* – The FDA shall be the primary agency responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this Act with respect to cosmetic products and establishments.

The Bureau of Animal Industry and the Committee on Animal Welfare shall assist in matters relating to animal use, humane treatment, and laboratory oversight.

The FDA shall integrate compliance with this Act into existing regulatory systems, including licensing, product notification, inspection, and post-market surveillance mechanisms.

SEC. 7. *Proof of Compliance.* – Manufacturers, importers, distributors, and traders shall maintain records sufficient to demonstrate compliance with this Act and shall submit such documentation as may be required by the FDA, including sworn declarations, technical dossiers, and certifications relating to the use or non-use of animal testing.

SEC. 8. *Promotion of Alternative Testing Methods.* – The State shall promote the development, validation, and adoption of alternative testing methods by supporting research and innovation, recognizing internationally accepted validation standards, and encouraging collaboration among government agencies, academic institutions, and the private sector.

SEC. 9. *Penalties.* – Any person who violates any provision of this Act or its implementing rules and regulations shall, upon conviction, be subject to the following penalties:

- (a) First offense – A fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000.00) but not more than Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱250,000.00);
- (b) Second offense – A fine of not less than Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱250,000.00) but not more than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱500,000.00), and suspension of the appropriate license, permit, or authorization issued by the FDA;
- (c) Third and subsequent offenses – A fine of not less than Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱500,000.00) but not more than One Million Pesos (₱1,000,000.00), cancellation or revocation of the appropriate license, permit, or authorization, and imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than two (2) years, at the discretion of the court.

In addition to the foregoing penalties, the FDA may impose appropriate administrative sanctions, including product recall, seizure, market withdrawal, and blacklisting of non-compliant entities.

If the offender is a juridical person, the directors, officers, or responsible employees who ordered, authorized, knowingly permitted, or through gross negligence allowed the commission of the violation shall be held liable, without prejudice to the civil and administrative liability of the juridical entity.

SEC. 10. *Transition Period.* – All covered persons shall be given a period of two (2) years from the effectivity of this Act within which to comply with its provisions. During such periods, the FDA shall issue the necessary guidelines, compliance mechanisms, and transitional rules.

SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the FDA under the Department of Health and the Bureau of Animal Industry under the Department of Agriculture for the initial year of implementation. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

In allocating funds, priority shall be given to strengthening regulatory enforcement, inspection and monitoring systems, development and validation of alternative testing methods, capacity-building of regulatory personnel, and the establishment of compliance verification mechanisms.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the FDA, in coordination with relevant agencies, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,