



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Bill No. 10290

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Pursuant to Section 11, Article XIII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the State is explicitly mandated to adopt an integrated, comprehensive, and affordable approach to health development, ensuring that essential goods, health, and other social services are available to all people at an affordable cost. Furthermore, Article II, Section 15 reinforces this duty by requiring the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

The state of public health directly dictates the economic and social vitality of our nation. In the Philippines, liver diseases ranging from Hepatitis B and C infections to cirrhosis, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer) represent an alarming, yet largely unaddressed, public health crisis. Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos suffer from chronic liver ailments, which consistently lead to catastrophic financial burdens due to the lack of specialized, affordable tertiary care.

The State has long recognized that the most effective way to address high-burden, specialized healthcare needs is through the institutionalization of apex medical facilities, as brilliantly exemplified by the Philippine Heart Center (PHC), the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTi), the Lung Center of the Philippines (LCP), and the Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC). While these specialty institutions have successfully democratized public access to advanced, affordable treatments for the heart, kidneys, lungs, and pediatric health, a critical gap remains in the realm of hepatology. No parallel institutional framework currently exists for comprehensive, state-subsidized liver care. Given the lethal and escalating prevalence of hepatic conditions among Filipinos, the absolute absence of a dedicated, state-run liver specialty center represents a severe systemic omission that must be corrected.

Data from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Department of Health (DOH), and the February 2026 Vital Statistics Update from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reveal a staggering toll: liver cancer has risen to become the fourth most common cancer and the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths nationwide, claiming roughly 32 Filipino lives daily, or 11,353 deaths annually. Furthermore, approximately 27.3 out of every 1,000 deaths in the country are directly linked to hepatic complications, with liver cirrhosis accounting for 31.8% and malignant neoplasms of the liver comprising 35.8% of those fatalities. This crisis is heavily fueled by a chronic Hepatitis B prevalence that affects 1 in 10 Filipinos. The largely asymptomatic nature of early-stage liver disease frequently delays medical intervention until the condition reaches an advanced stage, resulting in catastrophic out-of-pocket costs and severe medical bankruptcy for Filipino families.

Compounding this clinical burden is a severe human resource shortage. The Hepatology Society of the Philippines (HSP) warns that the country has fewer than 100 practicing hepatologists—a dangerous ratio of only one specialist per 100,000 Filipinos. Compounding this issue, the vast majority of these doctors are concentrated in the National Capital Region (NCR), leaving provincial areas completely underserved. Moreover, due to the lack of a centralized local hub, our medical specialists are forced to seek advanced fellowship and transplant training abroad. Filipino patients requiring complex liver interventions or liver transplantations are frequently forced to seek treatment overseas, an option entirely out of reach for the vast majority of our population.

To bridge this critical gap, this measure proposes the creation of a specialized Liver Center of the Philippines under the DOH. This initiative is a vital component of a comprehensive healthcare framework championed by the undersigned, working in active synergy with the author's separate measures to institutionalize the Philippine Blood Center (PBC) and establish advanced Blood Plasma Banks across the country. Together, these measures form a unified strategy to elevate specialized health infrastructure and maximize specialized clinical capabilities.

The Liver Center of the Philippines will serve as the premier institution for high-quality, affordable specialized treatment, streamline a national screening registry, and serve as an institutional sanctuary to train a new generation of homegrown liver and transplant specialists while expanding regional capacity.

This measure is a refiled and improved version of the legislative initiative originally introduced by Representatives Juliet Marie de Leon Ferrer and Samuel Jr. S. Versoza during the Nineteenth Congress.

In view of the urgent need to expand our specialty healthcare network, protect the vulnerable, and prevent further preventable loss of life, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


NELSON S. LEGACION
Representative, Third District, Camarines Sur



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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE LIVER CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "*Liver Center of the Philippines Act.*"

SECTION 2. *Establishment of the Liver Center of the Philippines.* - There is hereby established a national specialty center to be known as the Liver Center of the Philippines, which shall be under the direct control and supervision of the Department of Health (DOH). It shall offer comprehensive care of patients with liver disorders, including liver transplant e services, strong teaching and training programs, and research capability to serve the Filipino people.

SECTION 3. *Purposes and Objectives.* - The Liver Center of the Philippines shall have the following purposes and objectives:

- a. Establish and operate a liver rehabilitation, treatment or transplant center for the public welfare;
- b. Offer comprehensive care for patients with liver diseases;
- c. Conduct training and research on the prevention and treatment of hepatic diseases and those related to liver regeneration and transplant services, including the sponsorship and conduct of relevant congresses, conventions, seminars and conferences;

- e. Establish a liver stem cell transplant program and a hepatic tissue and organ donor registry;
- f. Facilitate the ethical allocation and sourcing of liver organs from qualified voluntary deceased and living liver donors in accordance with established national transplant ethics laws;
- g. Process, preserve, and maintain liver grafts and hepatic tissues;
- h. Recruit and retain voluntary organ and tissue donors through continuous public awareness campaigns;
- i. Procure and manage advanced hepatobiliary biomaterials and medical technologies;
- j. Store, issue, transport, and distribute specialized hepatic products and surgical grafts to end-user hospitals and non-hospital health facilities;
- k. Ensure that the safe supply of liver-related biological therapies and liver products to all hospitals and other health facilities are adequate in terms of distribution and delivery;
- l. Implement and monitor quality assurance standards in selected regional liver centers;
- m. Test for blood-borne and localized liver infections; and
- n. Provide special and confirmatory tests and perform specialized liver examinations.

SECTION 4. Powers and Functions. - The Liver Center of the Philippines shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Serve as an apex hospital and end-referral facility which shall specialize in liver care and diseases;
- b. Establish and maintain professional and technical educational systems for the sustained development of the necessary manpower to manage and operate its affairs and business;
- c. Provide technical assistance and capacity building in the establishment of liver specialty centers in accordance with Republic Act No. 11959, otherwise known as the "Regional Specialty Centers Act";
- d. Invest its funds as it may deem proper and necessary, but subject to applicable rules and regulations, in any activity related to the Liver Center of the Philippines, including in any bonds or securities issued and guaranteed by the Government of the Philippines;
- e. Acquire assets, real or personal, or interest therein and encumber or otherwise dispose the same as it may deem proper and necessary in the conduct of its business;

- e. Acquire assets, real or personal, or interest therein and encumber or otherwise dispose the same as it may deem proper and necessary in the conduct of its business;
- f. Borrow money from local or foreign sources as may be necessary for its operations, subject to applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- g. Accept any gifts, contributions, endowments, grants, bequests and devices of any kind of real or personal property which are necessary and proper for the attainment of the purpose of the hospital; and
- h. Perform such acts and exercise such functions as may be necessary and proper for the attainment of the purposes and objectives herein specified.

SECTION 5. *Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Director.* - The Liver Center of the Philippines shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- a. Provide overall direction and strategic leadership to the Liver Center of the Philippines toward the provision of high-quality health services;
- b. Oversee all managerial and administrative processes and operations of all departments of the Liver Center of the Philippines;
- c. Supervise the daily activities of functional units;
- d. Ensure high standards in clinical training for medical and allied medical personnel;
- e. Execute, on behalf of the hospital, all contracts and agreements which the hospital may enter into and accomplish and deliver any and all documents relative to such contracts and agreements, subject to the approval of the Secretary of Health;
- f. Represent the hospital in all dealings with other offices, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Government and all other persons or entities, whether domestic or foreign and whether government or private; and
- g. Exercise such other powers and perform such duties as may be vested or reposed by the DOH or its governing board.

SECTION 6. *Program for Indigents.* - The DOH shall ensure that the Liver Center of the Philippines adopts and implements a program for indigent patients needing liver transplants, specialized surgical interventions, or liver-related products, as well as for patients with liver diseases, in accordance with the implementing guidelines on the classification of patients for the availment of Medical Social Services in government hospitals.

SECTION 7. *Exemption from Taxes.* - All donations, endowments, contributions, grants and bequests used actually, directly and exclusively for and in accordance with the purposes and functions of the Liver Center of the

Philippines shall be exempt from donor's tax, and the same shall be considered as allowable deductions from gross income for purposes of computing the taxable income of the donors, in accordance with the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended.

The Liver Center of the Philippines shall be exempt from income tax and customs duty levied by the government and its political subdivisions, agencies and instrumentalities subject to the provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended and Republic Act No. 10863, otherwise known as the "Customs Modernization and Tariff Act."

The Liver Center of the Philippines shall avail of the tax expenditure subsidy administered by the Fiscal Incentives Review Board, subject to the provisions of Title III (Tax Incentives) of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended, Executive Order No. 93, as amended, and the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 8. *Contracts.* - The Liver Center of the Philippines shall have the authority to enter into contracts with any person or entity, domestic or foreign and with government for the undertaking of the varied aspects of the Liver Center, including the acquisition, by way of purchase, lease, rent or other deferred payment arrangements of equipment and/or raw materials and supplies, as well as for services connected therewith under such terms and conditions as it may deem proper and reasonable.

In the acquisition and disposal of property real and personal, a bidding process shall be necessary to conform to the requirements of public bidding as provided for in Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act and related laws.

SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the DOH shall, in consultation with other stakeholders, promulgate the rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 10. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the DOH. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for its continued operation and maintenance shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SECTION 11. *Separability Clause.* - If any part or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof, which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. *Effectivity Clause.* -This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,