



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

20th CONGRESS
2nd Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10320

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER A. LAGBAS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Department of Health recorded 426 rabies deaths in 2024, nearly double the 235 recorded in 2020, for a five-year total of 1,750 deaths between 2020 and 2024, alongside roughly 4 million animal-bite cases annually, with 260 additional cases logged from January to September 2025. Rabies is fatal in nearly all cases once symptoms appear, yet it is almost entirely preventable through timely post-exposure prophylaxis. In practice, however, such prophylaxis is often unavailable or must be paid for out of pocket in many rural health units, forcing bite victims — especially in provinces far from major hospitals — to travel long distances or forgo treatment altogether, with fatal results. Free anti-rabies vaccination and animal-bite treatment remain inconsistently available across the country's rural health units, many of which lack dedicated animal bite centers, trained personnel, or a steady vaccine supply, a gap that disproportionately affects rural and lower-income communities.

Article II, Section 15 of the Constitution obliges the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people, and Article XIII, Section 11 directs the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development and make essential health services available to all at affordable cost, particularly the underprivileged.

To close this gap, the bill mandates the establishment of Animal Bite Centers in Rural Health Units nationwide, in coordination between the DOH and local government units, and requires all RHUs to provide free post-exposure and, where needed, pre-exposure prophylaxis under DOH guidelines. The DOH is designated as lead implementing agency, working with the DILG and LGUs to ensure timely vaccine distribution, and is directed to conduct public information campaigns on rabies prevention and the availability of free services. Funding is drawn initially from the DOH's current budget, with continuing appropriations built into the annual General Appropriations Act to make the program permanent rather than a one-time initiative.

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

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HON. JENNER A. LAGBAS
Representative
First District, Misamis Oriental



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HOUSE BILL NO. **10320**

Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER A. LAGBAS**

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL ANTI-RABIES PROGRAM THROUGH THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF ANIMAL BITE CENTERS IN RURAL HEALTH UNITS, THE
PROVISION OF FREE ANTI-RABIES VACCINATIONS, 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 “Free Anti-Rabies Vaccination in Rural Health Units Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is the declared policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of the people. Towards this end, the State shall adopt measures to strengthen public health services by ensuring accessible and timely anti-rabies prevention and treatment services through the provision of free anti-rabies vaccinations and related medical interventions in rural health units, and by promoting greater access to anti-rabies services for all Filipinos.

SEC. 3. *Establishment of Animal Bite Centers in Rural Health Units.* — The Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with local government units (LGUs), shall ensure the establishment of Animal Bite Centers (ABCs) in Rural Health Units (RHUs) nationwide for the prevention and management of rabies and animal bite cases.

SEC. 4. *Free Anti-Rabies Vaccination Program.* — All RHUs nationwide are hereby mandated to provide free anti-rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and, when necessary, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), in accordance with the guidelines set by the DOH.

SEC. 5. *Program Implementation.* — The DOH shall lead the implementation of the national free anti-rabies vaccination program. It shall coordinate with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), LGUs, and other concerned agencies to ensure the availability, timely distribution, and administration of vaccines.

SEC. 6. *Public Information and Community Awareness.* — The DOH, in partnership with LGUs, shall conduct regular information campaigns to raise awareness on rabies prevention, proper response to animal bites, and the availability of free vaccination services.

SEC. 7. *Appropriations.* — The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the current budget of the DOH. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continuous implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulation.* — Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DOH, in consultation with the DILG, LGUs, and relevant stakeholders shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to effectively carry out the intent of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* — Should any provision or part of this Act be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions and parts hereof, insofar as they are separable from the invalid ones, shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *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,