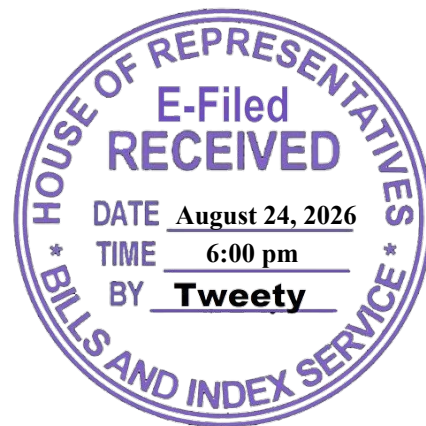




Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 589

Submitted by the Committee on Health on August 24, 2026

Re : House Bill No. 10923

Recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 302, 1138, 6832, 7442, 7476, 8299, 9785, 9898, and 10135

Sponsors : Representatives Ciriaco B. Gato, Jr., M.D., FPSO-HNS, Charisse Anne C. Hernandez, and Dadah Kiram Ismula

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee on Health, to which were referred House Bill No. 302, introduced by Rep. Salvador A. Pleyto, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING THE HOLDING OR DETENTION OF CADAVERS BY MEDICAL FACILITIES, MORGUES, AND FUNERAL PARLORS FOR NON-PAYMENT OF HOSPITAL / MEDICAL BILLS AND FUNERAL EXPENSES”

House Bill No. 1138, introduced by Rep. Charisse Anne C. Hernandez, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS AND CADAVERS IN HOSPITALS, MEDICAL CLINICS, OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR FACILITIES ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439 ENTITLED "AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

House Bill No. 6832, introduced by Representatives Dadah Kiram Ismula, Jose Manuel Tadeo “Chel” I. Diokno, Percival “Perci” Cendaña, and Kaka J. Bag-ao, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF PATIENTS AGAINST HOSPITAL DETENTION ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT 9439 ENTITLED “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES””

House Bill No. 7442, introduced by Rep. Jorge Daniel S. Bocobo, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE RIGHTS OF PATIENTS AGAINST HOSPITAL DETENTION ON THE GROUND OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS AND MEDICAL EXPENSES AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES””

House Bill No. 7476, introduced by Rep. Arlyn P. Ayon, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES,” PROVIDING ENHANCED PENALTIES, CLEAR ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS, AND ADDITIONAL PATIENT REMEDIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

House Bill No. 8299, introduced by Rep. Ryan S. Recto, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 1, 2 AND 3 OF REPUBLIC ACT 9439, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON THE GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES”

House Bill No. 9785, introduced by Rep. Jeffrey Soriano, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR THE REFUSAL OF HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS TO ADMINISTER APPROPRIATE INITIAL MEDICAL TREATMENT AND SUPPORT IN EMERGENCY OR SERIOUS CASES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 702, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “ANTI-HOSPITAL DEPOSIT LAW”, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

House Bill No. 9898, introduced by Rep. Carmelo G. Lazatin, Jr., entitled:

“AN ACT IMPOSING HIGHER PENALTIES FOR THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS AND/OR THE BODIES OF THE DECEASED PATIENTS (CADAVERS) IN HOSPITALS, MEDICAL CLINICS, OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR FACILITIES DUE TO NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES, AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

and House Bill No. 10135, introduced by Rep. Leila M. De Lima, entitled:

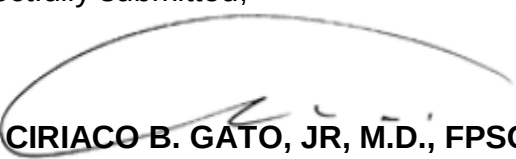
“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF PATIENTS AGAINST HOSPITAL DETENTION ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT 9439 ENTITLED “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES””

has considered the same and recommends that the attached House Bill No. **10923**, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF PATIENTS AGAINST HOSPITAL DETENTION ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439, ENTITLED “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES””

be approved in substitution of House Bills Numbered 302, 1138, 6832, 7442, 7476, 8299, 9785, 9898, and 10135, with Representatives Salvador A. Pleyto, Charisse Anne C. Hernandez, Dadah Kiram Ismula, Jose Manuel Tadeo “Chel” I. Diokno, Percival “Perci” Cendaña, Kaka J. Bag-ao, Jorge Daniel S. Bocobo, Arlyn P. Ayon, Ryan S. Recto, Jeffrey Soriano, Carmelo G. Lazatin, Jr., Leila M. De Lima, Ciriaco B. Gato, Jr., M.D., FPSO-HNS, Antolin A. Oreta III, Milagros Aquino-Magsaysay, Eleanor C. Bulut-Begtang, Beverley Rose A. Dimacuha, Carl Nicolas C. Cari, Munir N. Arbison, Jr., Crispin Diego D. Remulla, Brian Poe, Katrina Reiko Chua-Tai, Reynante U. Arrogancia, Maria Rachel J. Arenas, Marlo C. Bancoro, Howard A. Guintu, Steve Chiongbian Solon, Audrey Kay T. Zubiri, Bernadette G. Escudero, Marlesa “Doc Marly” Hofer-Hasim, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Jurdin Jesus M. Romualdo, Edwin L. Cruzado, M.D., Jesus “Jess” R. Marquez, Solomon R. Chungalao, Henry “Indy” F. Oaminal, Jr., Johanne Monich G. Bautista, Atty. Jennifer “Karen” A. Lagbas, Arnan C. Panaligan, Leody “Odie” F. Tarriela, Sergio C. Dagooc, Janice Degamo, Gil “Kabarangay Jr” Acosta, Emmanuel L. Iway, Agatha “Agay” Cruz, Laarni Lavin Roque, Julius Cesar “Jay” V. Vergara, Elijah Rumbaoa San Fernando, Joseph “Jojo” L. Lara, Kristine Singson-Meehan, Giselle Mary L. Maceda, Kathryn Joyce F. Gorriceta, M.D., and Girlie E. Veloso as authors thereof.

Respectfully submitted,



HON. CIRIACO B. GATO, JR, M.D., FPSO-HNS
Chairperson
Committee on Health

THE HONORABLE SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
QUEZON CITY

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10923

(In substitution of House Bills Numbered 302, 1138, 6832, 7442, 7476, 8299, 9785, 9898, and 10135)

Introduced by Representatives Salvador A. Pleyto, Charisse Anne C. Hernandez, Dadah Kiram Ismula, Jose Manuel Tadeo “Chel” I. Diokno, Percival “Perci” Cendaña, Kaka J. Bag-ao, Jorge Daniel S. Bocobo, Arlyn P. Ayon, Ryan S. Recto, Jeffrey Soriano, Carmelo G. Lazatin, Jr., Leila M. De Lima, Ciriaco B. Gato, Jr., M.D., FPSO-HNS, Antolin A. Oreta III, Milagros Aquino-Magsaysay, Eleanor C. Bulut-Begtang, Beverley Rose A. Dimacuha, Carl Nicolas C. Cari, Munir N. Arbison, Jr., Crispin Diego D. Remulla, Brian Poe, Katrina Reiko Chua-Tai, Reynante U. Arrogancia, Maria Rachel J. Arenas, Marlo C. Bancoro, Howard A. Guintu, Steve Chiongbian Solon, Audrey Kay T. Zubiri, Bernadette G. Escudero, Marlesa “Doc Marly” Hofer-Hasim, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Jurdin Jesus M. Romualdo, Edwin L. Cruzado, M.D., Jesus “Jess” R. Marquez, Solomon R. Chungalao, Henry “Indy” F. Oaminal, Jr., Johanne Monich G. Bautista, Atty. Jennifer “Karen” A. Lagbas, Arnan C. Panaligan, Leody “Odie” F. Tarriela, Sergio C. Dagooc, Janice Degamo, Gil “Kabarangay Jr” Acosta, Emmanuel L. Iway, Agatha “Agay” Cruz, Laarni Lavin Roque, Julius Cesar “Jay” V. Vergara, Elijah Rumbaoa San Fernando, Joseph “Jojo” L. Lara, Kristine Singson-Meehan, Giselle Mary L. Maceda, Kathryn Joyce F. Gorriceta, M.D., and Girlie E. Veloso

AN ACT

STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF PATIENTS AGAINST HOSPITAL DETENTION ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439, ENTITLED “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES”

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

1 **SECTION 1.** Section 1 of Republic Act No. 9439, entitled “An Act Prohibiting the
2 Detention of Patients in Hospitals and Medical Clinics on Grounds of Nonpayment of
3 Hospital Bills or Medical Expenses”, is hereby amended to read as follows:
4

5 **“SECTION 1.** It shall be unlawful for any hospital, [or] medical clinic, **OR ANY**
6 **OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY** in the country to detain or to otherwise cause,
7 directly or indirectly, the detention of patients, **INCLUDING THE NEWBORN**
8 **CHILD IN THE CASE OF MATERNITY PATIENTS**, who [have fully or partially

1 recovered, or have been adequately attended to] **ARE ORDERED**
2 **DISCHARGED OR TO BE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER HOSPITAL BY THE**
3 **ATTENDING PHYSICIAN**, or who may have died, for reasons of nonpayment,
4 in part or in full, of hospital bills, [or] medical expenses, **OR PROFESSIONAL**
5 **FEES.**

6
7 **IT SHALL ALSO BE UNLAWFUL TO DETAIN THE RELATIVES,**
8 **REPRESENTATIVES, OR CAREGIVERS OF SUCH PATIENTS, IN**
9 **EXCHANGE FOR ALLOWING THE PATIENT TO LEAVE THE HOSPITAL,**
10 **MEDICAL CLINIC, OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY.**

11
12 **FOR PURPOSES OF THIS ACT:**

13
14 **A) *DETENTION* REFERS TO ANY ACT OF RESTRAINING A PATIENT,**
15 **RELATIVE, REPRESENTATIVE, CAREGIVER, NEWBORN, OR DECEASED**
16 **PERSON, FROM LEAVING OR BEING RELEASED FROM A HOSPITAL,**
17 **MEDICAL CLINIC, OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY ON THE GROUND**
18 **OF NON-PAYMENT, IN FULL OR IN PART, OF HOSPITAL BILLS, MEDICAL**
19 **EXPENSES, OR PROFESSIONAL FEES. IT INCLUDES THE REFUSAL TO:**
20 **(1) PHYSICALLY DISCHARGE A PATIENT OR ISSUE DOCUMENTS**
21 **NECESSARY FOR DISCHARGE, INTERMENT, OR BENEFIT CLAIM; (2)**
22 **REMOVE MEDICAL DEVICES WHEN SUCH REMOVAL IS MEDICALLY**
23 **APPROPRIATE; (3) RELEASE PERSONAL BELONGINGS; AND (4)**
24 **RELEASE THE CADAVER OF A DECEASED PATIENT TO THE SURVIVING**
25 **RELATIVES.**

26
27 **B) *HOSPITAL* REFERS TO AN ESTABLISHMENT PROVIDING SHORT- AND**
28 **LONG-TERM MEDICAL CARE—INCLUDING OBSERVATIONAL,**
29 **DIAGNOSTIC, THERAPEUTIC, AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES—FOR**
30 **THE SICK, INJURED, AND MATERNITY PATIENTS;**

31
32 **C) *MEDICAL CLINIC AND OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY* REFERS TO A**
33 **HEALTH FACILITY THAT SATISFIES THE ABOVE DEFINITION OF A**
34 **HOSPITAL BUT USES THE PHRASE "MEDICAL CLINIC" OR SUCH OTHER**
35 **BUSINESS NAME.**

36
37 **PATIENTS WHO STAYED IN PRIVATE ROOMS SHALL NOT BE COVERED**
38 **BY THIS ACT, UNLESS THEY WERE COMPELLED TO BE ADMITTED TO**
39 **A PRIVATE ROOM DESPITE EXPRESSLY REQUESTING A NON-PRIVATE**
40 **ROOM WITH BASIC ACCOMMODATION BECAUSE: (A) NO NON-PRIVATE**
41 **ROOM WAS AVAILABLE IN THE HOSPITAL, MEDICAL CLINIC, OR ANY**
42 **OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY, AND (B) THE ATTENDING PHYSICIAN DEEMED**
43 **IT TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PATIENT DUE TO THE**
44 **SERIOUSNESS AND URGENCY OF THE CASE: *PROVIDED*, THAT THE**
45 **MEDICAL JUSTIFICATION SHALL BE IN WRITING AND SIGNED BY THE**
46 **ATTENDING PHYSICIAN: *PROVIDED, FURTHER*, THAT THE PATIENT**
47 **SHALL BE TRANSFERRED TO A NON-PRIVATE ROOM AS SOON AS**
48 **AVAILABLE.**

49
50 **SEC. 2.** Section 2 of Republic Act No. 9439 is hereby amended to read as
51 follows:
52

1 **SEC. 2. Patients who ARE DISCHARGED BY THE ATTENDING PHYSICIAN**
2 **OR** ~~[have fully or partially recovered and]~~ who ~~[already]~~ **EXPRESSLY** wish to

3 leave the hospital, ~~[or]~~ medical clinic, **OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY**, but

4 are financially incapable ~~[to settle]~~ **OF SETTLING**, in part or in full, their

5 hospitalization expenses, including professional fees and medicines, shall be

6 allowed to leave ~~[the hospital or medical clinic,]~~ with ~~[a]~~ **THE** right to demand the

7 **IMMEDIATE** issuance of the corresponding medical certificate, **DISCHARGE**

8 **SUMMARY**, and other pertinent papers required for ~~[the]~~ **THEIR** release ~~[of the~~

9 ~~patient from the hospital or medical clinic]~~ upon the execution of a promissory

10 note covering the unpaid obligation: **PROVIDED, THAT NO PROMISSORY**

11 **NOTE SHALL BE REQUIRED OF INDIGENT PATIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN**

12 **ENDORSED BY THE MEDICAL SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE OF THE**

13 **HOSPITAL, MEDICAL CLINIC, OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY, TO THE**

14 **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD) AND**

15 **THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH): PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT IN**

16 **SUCH CASES, A GUARANTEE LETTER FROM THE DSWD OR THE DOH**

17 **SUFFICIENT TO COVER THE AMOUNT DUE SHALL BE SUBMITTED IN LIEU**

18 **OF A PROMISSORY NOTE: PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT THE DSWD AND**

19 **DOH, IN COORDINATION WITH RELEVANT HOSPITAL AUTHORITIES,**

20 **SHALL ISSUE GUIDELINES DEFINING THE CRITERIA FOR INDIGENCY,**

21 **ENDORSEMENT PROCESS, AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO**

22 **QUALIFY UNDER THIS EXEMPTION.**

23

24 The promissory note shall be secured by ~~[either a mortgage or by a guarantee~~

25 ~~of a co-maker, who will be jointly and severally liable with the patient for the~~

26 ~~unpaid obligation.] ANY OR A COMBINATION OF THE FOLLOWING:~~

27

28 **(A) A MORTGAGE OVER REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY, EXCEPT**

29 **THOSE PROPERTIES PRIMARILY USED FOR LIVELIHOOD OF THE**

30 **PATIENT, A RELATIVE, OR A CO-MAKER, WITHOUT NEED OF PUBLIC**

31 **AUCTION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11057 OR THE**

32 **‘PERSONAL PROPERTY SECURITY ACT’;**

33

34 **(B) A CONTRACT OF GUARANTY WHOSE MAKER SHALL BE JOINTLY**

35 **AND SEVERALLY LIABLE WITH THE PATIENT FOR THE UNPAID**

36 **OBLIGATION;**

37

38 **(C) A DEED OF ASSIGNMENT OF THE LOAN PROCEEDS OR BENEFITS**

39 **ENTITLEMENT FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS) OR THE**

40 **GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS), IN CASE THE**

41 **PATIENT IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER THEREOF;**

42

43 **(D) A GUARANTEE LETTER FROM THE PHILIPPINE CHARITY**

44 **SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE (PCSO); AND**

45

46 **(E) IN THE CASE OF FINANCIALLY INCAPACITATED PATIENTS, A**

47 **GUARANTEE LETTER FROM THE DSWD OR THE DOH. IN ALL CASES, THE**

48 **MEDICAL CERTIFICATE, DISCHARGE SUMMARY, PRESCRIPTIONS, AND**

49 **OTHER DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR THE PROCESSING OF CLAIMS OR**

50 **BENEFITS SHALL BE ISSUED WITHOUT DELAY AND WITHOUT**

51 **REQUIRING FULL OR PARTIAL PAYMENT.**

52

1 In the case of a deceased patient,~~[the corresponding death certificate and other~~
2 ~~documents required for interment and other purposes shall be released to any of~~
3 ~~his surviving relatives requesting for the same: *Provided, however,* That patients~~
4 ~~who stayed in private rooms shall not be covered by this Act]~~ **THE CADAVER**
5 **SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY RELEASED TO THE SURVIVING RELATIVES**
6 **WITHOUT UNNECESSARY DELAY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS ACT AND**
7 **OTHER APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS. THE**
8 **CORRESPONDING DEATH CERTIFICATE AND OTHER DOCUMENTS**
9 **REQUIRED FOR INTERMENT, BENEFIT CLAIMS, OR LEGAL**
10 **PROCEEDINGS SHALL BE ISSUED PROMPTLY AND WITHOUT DELAY:**
11 ***PROVIDED, THAT, FOR PURPOSES OF PRIVATE INSURANCE CLAIMS OR***
12 ***SETTLEMENT OF ESTATE, A SECURED PROMISSORY NOTE OR A DEED***
13 ***OF ASSIGNMENT OF PROCEEDS MAY BE REQUIRED PRIOR TO THE***
14 ***ISSUANCE OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS: *PROVIDED, FURTHER,* THAT A***
15 ***DEED OF ASSIGNMENT OF BENEFITS ENTITLEMENT FROM THE SSS OR***
16 ***GSIS, IF THE DECEASED WAS A MEMBER THEREOF, OR A***
17 ***GUARANTEE LETTER FROM THE DSWD, IF THE DECEASED WAS AN***
18 ***INDIGENT, MAY BE ACCEPTED IN LIEU OF A PROMISSORY NOTE.***
19

20 **SEC. 3.** Section 3 of Republic Act No. 9439 is hereby amended to read as
21 follows:
22

23 **SEC. 3.** Any officer or employee of the hospital, ~~[or]~~ medical clinic, ~~[responsible~~
24 ~~for releasing patients, who violates the provisions of this Act shall be punished~~
25 ~~by a fine of not less than Twenty thousand pesos (P20,000.00), but not more~~
26 ~~than Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00), or imprisonment of not less than one~~
27 ~~month, but not more than six months, or both such fine and imprisonment, at the~~
28 ~~discretion of the proper court.]~~ **OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR FACILITY,**
29 **RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISCHARGE OF PATIENTS OR THE RELEASE OF**
30 **CADAVERS, WHO VIOLATES THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT SHALL,**
31 **UPON CONVICTION BY FINAL JUDGMENT, BE PUNISHED WITH A FINE OF**
32 **NOT LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P100,000.00) BUT**
33 **NOT MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P300,000.00), OR**
34 **IMPRISONMENT OF NOT LESS THAN SIX (6) MONTHS AND ONE (1) DAY**
35 **BUT NOT MORE THAN TWO (2) YEARS AND FOUR (4) MONTHS, OR BOTH,**
36 **AT THE DISCRETION OF THE COURT.**
37

38 **IF THE VIOLATION WAS COMMITTED PURSUANT TO AN ESTABLISHED**
39 **POLICY OF THE HOSPITAL OR MEDICAL CLINIC OR UPON INSTRUCTION**
40 **OF ITS MANAGEMENT, THE DIRECTOR OR OFFICER SHALL, UPON**
41 **CONVICTION BY FINAL JUDGMENT, BE PUNISHED WITH A FINE OF NOT**
42 **LESS THAN FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P500,000.00) BUT NOT**
43 **MORE THAN ONE MILLION PESOS (P1,000,000.00), OR IMPRISONMENT**
44 **OF FOUR (4) TO SIX (6) YEARS, OR BOTH, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE**
45 **COURT.**
46

47 **UPON THE COMMISSION OF THREE (3) REPEATED VIOLATIONS UNDER**
48 **SUCH POLICY OR INSTRUCTION, THE LICENSE TO OPERATE OF SUCH**
49 **HEALTH FACILITY SHALL BE REVOKED BY THE DOH.”**
50

51 **SEC. 4.** A new Section 3-A is hereby inserted after Section 3 of Republic Act No.
52 9439, to read as follows:

1
2 **“SEC. 3-A. THE DOH AND DSWD SHALL ENSURE THAT PATIENTS**
3 **COVERED UNDER THIS ACT SHALL HAVE ACCESS TO THE MEDICAL**
4 **ASSISTANCE TO INDIGENT AND FINANCIALLY INCAPACITATED**
5 **PATIENTS AND THE ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS IN CRISIS**
6 **SITUATIONS AND OTHER MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE**
7 **GOVERNMENT TO COVER UNPAID HOSPITALIZATION BILLS, MEDICAL**
8 **EXPENSES, OR PROFESSIONAL FEES.”**
9

10 **SEC. 5.** A new Section 3-B is hereby inserted after Section 3-A of Republic Act
11 No. 9439, to read as follows:
12

13 **“SEC. 3-B. THE DOH SHALL ESTABLISH A GRIEVANCE AND REDRESS**
14 **MECHANISM FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO ARE**
15 **UNLAWFULLY DETAINED IN HOSPITALS, MEDICAL CLINICS, OR SIMILAR**
16 **FACILITIES, DUE TO NON-PAYMENT, IN PART OR IN FULL, OF HOSPITAL**
17 **BILLS, MEDICAL EXPENSES, OR PROFESSIONAL FEES.**
18

19 **ALL HEALTHCARE FACILITIES SHALL UPHOLD PATIENT PROTECTION**
20 **BY ENSURING FULL TRANSPARENCY IN HEALTHCARE COSTS AND**
21 **BILLING, CONSISTENT WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF REPUBLIC ACT NO.**
22 **11223, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE ACT”:**
23 ***PROVIDED*, THAT NO HIDDEN OR UNAUTHORIZED CHARGES SHALL BE**
24 **IMPOSED.**
25

26 **THE DOH SHALL ACT ON COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES RECEIVED**
27 **THROUGH ITS PATIENT GRIEVANCE AND REDRESS MECHANISM WITHIN**
28 **FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS FROM RECEIPT THEREOF. FAILURE OF THE**
29 **RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC OFFICIAL OR EMPLOYEE TO ACT ON ANY**
30 **COMPLAINT WITHIN THE PRESCRIBED PERIOD SHALL CONSTITUTE**
31 **NEGLECT OF DUTY, SUBJECT TO THE FILING OF THE APPROPRIATE**
32 **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION BASED ON THE PREVAILING CIVIL SERVICE**
33 **COMMISSION RULES AND REGULATIONS: *PROVIDED*, THAT WHERE THE**
34 **CAUSE OF DELAY IS FORCE MAJEURE OR OTHER ANALOGOUS**
35 **CIRCUMSTANCES, THE PRESCRIBED PERIOD MANDATED HEREIN**
36 **SHALL BE SUSPENDED AND APPROPRIATE ADJUSTMENTS MADE:**
37 ***PROVIDED, FURTHER*, THAT IN SUCH CASES OF JUSTIFIABLE DELAY,**
38 **THE RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC OFFICIAL OR EMPLOYEE SHALL NOTIFY THE**
39 **COMPLAINANT OF THE REASON FOR THE DELAY AND THE ADJUSTED**
40 **PERIOD TO ACT ON THE COMPLAINT.**
41

42 **ALL HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL FACILITIES SHALL ADOPT STANDARD**
43 **PATIENT DISCHARGE PROTOCOLS, WHICH SHALL INCLUDE:**
44

- 45 a) IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF REQUIRED MEDICAL DOCUMENTS;
46 b) POSTING OF PATIENTS’ RIGHTS UNDER THIS ACT IN
47 CONSPICUOUS AREAS; AND
48 c) REFERRAL TO THE HOSPITAL’S MEDICAL SOCIAL SERVICE
49 OFFICE FOR INDIGENT OR FINANCIALLY INCAPACITATED
50 PATIENTS.
51

1 **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE PATIENT DISCHARGE PROTOCOLS**
2 **SHALL CONSTITUTE AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFENSE.”**

3
4 **SEC. 6.** Section 4 of Republic Act No. 9439 is hereby amended to read as
5 follows:

6
7 ~~“SEC. 4. [The Department of Health shall promulgate the necessary rules and~~
8 ~~regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.]~~ **THE RULES AND**
9 **REGULATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT**
10 **ENFORCEMENT OF THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT SHALL BE**
11 **FORMULATED BY THE DOH, JOINTLY WITH THE DSWD, DEPARTMENT OF**
12 **THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,**
13 **PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION, GSIS, SSS, AND THE**
14 **PCSO, IN CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES,**
15 **THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, AND SHALL BE**
16 **IMPLEMENTED WITHIN NINETY (90) DAYS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF**
17 **THIS ACT.**

18
19 **UNJUSTIFIED OR WILLFUL FAILURE OR REFUSAL OF THE CONCERNED**
20 **GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO PROMULGATE THE IMPLEMENTING RULES**
21 **AND REGULATIONS WITHIN THE SPECIFIED PERIOD SHALL SUBJECT**
22 **THE HEADS OF THESE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO ADMINISTRATIVE**
23 **PENALTIES UNDER APPLICABLE CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.**

24
25 **SHOULD THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS CONTAIN**
26 **PROVISIONS THAT ARE CONTRARY TO THIS ACT, THE HEADS OF THE**
27 **GOVERNMENT AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH PROVISION, WHEN**
28 **DONE IN BAD FAITH OR WITH GROSS NEGLIGENCE, SHALL BE HELD**
29 **ADMINISTRATIVELY LIABLE.”**

30
31 **SEC. 7.** If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other
32 provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

33
34 **SEC. 8.** All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts
35 thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended
36 accordingly.

37
38 **SEC. 9.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the
39 *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

40
41 *Approved,*

FACT SHEET

House Bill No. 10923

(In substitution of House Bills Numbered 302, 1138, 6832, 7442, 7476, 8299, 9785, 9898, and 10135)

(As approved by the Committee on Health on February 11, 2026)

AN ACT

STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF PATIENTS AGAINST HOSPITAL DETENTION ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439, ENTITLED “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DETENTION OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS ON GROUNDS OF NONPAYMENT OF HOSPITAL BILLS OR MEDICAL EXPENSES”

Introduced by Representatives Ciriaco B. Gato, Jr., M.D., FPSO-HNS, Salvador A. Pleyto, Charisse Anne C. Hernandez, Dadah Kiram Ismula, Jose Manuel Tadeo “Chel” I. Diokno, Percival “Perci” Cendaña, Kaka J. Bag-ao, Jorge Daniel S. Bocobo, Arlyn P. Ayon, Ryan S. Recto, Jeffrey Soriano, Carmelo G. Lazatin, Jr., Leila M. De Lima, Antolin A. Oreta III, Milagros Aquino-Magsaysay, Eleanor C. Bulut-Begtang, Beverley Rose A. Dimacuha, Carl Nicolas C. Cari, Munir N. Arbison, Jr., Crispin Diego D. Remulla, Brian Poe, Katrina Reiko Chua-Tai, Reynante U. Arrogancia, Maria Rachel J. Arenas, Marlo C. Bancoro, Howard A. Guintu, Steve Chiongbian Solon, Audrey Kay T. Zubiri, Bernadette G. Escudero, Marlesa “Doc Marly” Hofer-Hasim, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Jurdin Jesus M. Romualdo, Edwin L. Cruzado, M.D., Jesus “Jess” R. Marquez, Solomon R. Chungalao, Henry “Indy” F. Oaminal, Jr., Johanne Monich G. Bautista, Atty. Jennifer “Karen” A. Lagbas, Arnan C. Panaligan, Leody “Odie” F. Tarriela, Sergio C. Dagooc, Janice Degamo, Gil “Kabarangay Jr” Acosta, Emmanuel L. Iway, Agatha “Agay” Cruz, Laarni Lavin Roque, Julius Cesar “Jay” V. Vergara, Elijah Rumbaoa San Fernando, Joseph “Jojo” L. Lara, Kristine Singson-Meehan, Giselle Mary L. Maceda, Kathryn Joyce F. Gorriceta, M.D., and Girlie E. Veloso

Committee Referral: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Committee Chairperson: REP. CIRIACO B. GATO, JR., M.D., FPSO-HNS

OBJECTIVE:

- To protect and promote the right to health of Filipinos by ensuring that health services are available and accessible to them by prohibiting the detention of patients who have recovered or have been adequately attended to, for reason of nonpayment of hospital bills or medical expenses.

KEY PROVISIONS:

- Renders unlawful for any hospital, medical clinic, or any other similar facility, to detain or to otherwise cause, directly or indirectly, the detention of patients, including the newborn child in the case of maternity patients, who are ordered discharged or to be transferred to another hospital by the attending physician, or who may have died, for reasons of nonpayment, in part or in full, of hospital bills, medical expenses, or professional fees;
- Expands the coverage of Republic Act No. 9439, entitled “An Act Prohibiting the Detention of Patients in Hospitals and Medical Clinics on Grounds of Nonpayment of Hospital Bills or Medical Expenses” to include the prohibition to detain the relatives, representatives, or caregivers of such patients, in exchange for allowing the patient to leave the hospital, medical clinic, or any other similar facility;
- Exempts from coverage patients who stayed in private rooms unless they were compelled to be admitted to a private room despite expressly requesting a non-private room with basic accommodations because: (a) no non-private room was available in the hospital, medical clinic, or any other similar facility, and (b) the attending physician deemed it to be in the best interest of the patient due to the seriousness and urgency of the case;
- Provides that patients who are discharged by the attending physician or who expressly wish to leave the hospital, medical clinic, or any other similar facility, but are financially incapable of settling, in part or in full, their hospitalization expenses, including professional fees and medicines, shall be allowed to leave with the right to demand the immediate issuance of the corresponding medical certificate, discharge summary, and other pertinent papers required for their release, upon the execution of a promissory note covering the unpaid obligation;
- Requires that the promissory note shall be secured by any or a combination of the following:
 - (a) a mortgage over real or personal property;
 - (b) a contract of guaranty whose maker shall be jointly and severally liable with the patient for the unpaid obligation;
 - (c) a deed of assignment of the loan proceeds or benefits entitlement from the Social Security System (SSS) or the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS);
 - (d) a guarantee letter from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO); and
 - (e) a guarantee letter from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) or the Department of Health (DOH), in the case of financially incapacitated patients;
- Provides that no promissory note shall be required of indigent patients who have been endorsed by the medical social services office of the hospital, medical clinic, or any other similar facility, to the DSWD and the DOH: *Provided*, That in such cases, a guarantee letter from the DSWD or the DOH

sufficient to cover the amount due shall be submitted in lieu of a promissory note;

- Requires that in all cases, the medical certificate, discharge summary, prescriptions, and other documents necessary for the processing of claims or benefits shall be issued without delay and without requiring full or partial payment;
- Mandates the DOH and the DSWD to ensure that patients covered shall have access to the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients, the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations, and other medical assistance programs of the government to cover unpaid hospitalization bills, medical expenses, or professional fees;
- Mandates the DOH to establish a grievance and redress mechanism for patients and their families who are unlawfully detained in hospitals, medical clinics, or similar facilities, due to non-payment, in part or in full, of hospital bills, medical expenses, or professional fees; and
- Provides for penalties for violation thereof.

RELATED LAWS:

- Republic Act No. 9439, entitled “An Act Prohibiting the Detention of Patients in Hospitals and Medical Clinics on Grounds of Nonpayment of Hospital Bills or Medical Expenses”
- Republic Act No. 10932, otherwise known as the “Anti-Hospital Deposit Law”
- Republic Act No. 11057, otherwise known as the “Personal Property Security Act”
- Republic Act No. 11223, otherwise known as the “Universal Health Care Act”
- Republic Act No. 11463, otherwise known as the “Malasakit Centers Act”
- DOH Administrative Order No. 2000-51A (Implementing Guidelines on Classification of Patients and on Availment of Medical Social Services in Government Hospitals)
- DOH Administrative Order No. 2008-0001 (Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9439)
- DOH Administrative Order No. 2024-0006 (Revised Guidelines on the Implementation of the Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients (MAIFIP) Program)
- DSWD Memorandum Circular No. 2022-16 (Revised Guidelines on the Implementation of the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation)