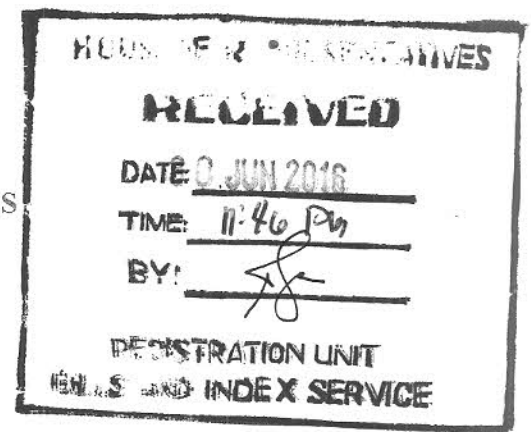


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 765



Introduced by **DIWA Party-list Representative Emmeline Y. Aglipay – Villar**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In order for the State to truly protect families, mothers, and children, measures must be put into effect that target those with the most need. This bill seeks to establish a Maternal and Infant Health Home Visiting Program for pregnant women below the age of 21 years old and families with infants up to the age of one (1), belonging to the low-income bracket. Younger pregnant women usually fail to comply with the additional nutritional requirements the pregnancy demands, and this is because they lack guidance -- which is why they are specially targeted by this bill.

Maintaining the health of the pregnant mother is crucial, not just for preventing maternal mortality, but also preventing infant mortality and ensuring a good nutritional foundation for a healthy child. Iron and calcium deficiencies contribute significantly to maternal deaths.¹ The Lancet Maternal and Child Nutrition Series confirms that anemia is a risk factor for maternal deaths, because of hemorrhage, which is the leading cause of maternal deaths. Calcium deficiency also increases the risk of pre-eclampsia, the second leading cause of maternal deaths. Addressing these two mineral deficiencies during pregnancy can significantly reduce maternal deaths.

Mothers who do not receive the proper nutrition while pregnant usually give birth to babies who are Small for their Gestational Age (SGA). 32 Million babies are born Small for their Gestational Ages and fetal growth restriction causes 800,000 deaths each year in the first month of life—more than a quarter of all newborn deaths.² Fetal growth restriction and suboptimum breastfeeding cause more than 1.3 Million deaths, or 19.4 % of all deaths of children younger than 5 years old, representing 43.5% of all nutrition-related deaths.³

¹ www.thelancet.com The Lancet Maternal and Child Nutrition Series

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

With this bill, a re-filing of House Bill No. 338 of the 16th Congress by Rep. Sol Aragoes, we hope to reduce maternal and infant mortality and decrease malnutrition by educating mothers regarding how to take care of themselves while pregnant and how to take care of their babies during the first year of their life.

Emmeline Y. Villar

EMMELINE Y. AGLIPAY – VILLAR
Representative, DIWA Party-list

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The Secretary shall require health centers to designate an appropriate health professional or a qualified nonprofessional acting under the supervision of a health care professional who shall deliver maternal and child health services in the home of eligible individuals.

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Introduced by **DIWA Party-list Representative Emmeline Y. Aglipay – Villar**

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH HOME VISITING PROGRAM

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the “Maternal and Infant Health Home Visiting Program Act.”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the declared policy of the State to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this policy, the State must provide pre-natal and postnatal maternity care services in the home of pregnant women in order to protect their health as well as the future health and well-being of their newborn children.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. -For purposes of this Act, the term:

- (A) “Secretary” refers to the Secretary of the Department of Health; and
- (B) “Low income” means, with respect to an individual or family with an income determined to be below the income official poverty line defined by the Department of Budget and Management

SECTION 4. Eligibility of Individuals. - A pregnant woman who is below 21 years of age, or families with an infant up to the age of one (1), belonging to the low-income bracket, shall be eligible to receive maternal and infant care services provided under this Act.

SECTION 5. Establishment of Maternal and Infant Health Home Visiting Program. -

The Secretary shall require health centers to designate an appropriate health professional or a qualified nonprofessional acting under the supervision of a health care professional who shall deliver maternal and child health services in the home of eligible individuals.

SECTION 6. Maternal and Child Health Services. - The maternal and child health services, which may be provided in the home to eligible individuals, shall include the following:

- (A) Instruction and counseling regarding future health care for the woman and her child;
- (B) Nutrition counseling;
- (C) Counseling and education concerning all aspects of prenatal care, childbirth and motherhood;
- (D) General family counseling, including child and family development counseling; and
- (E) Medical care or referral for medical care for the woman and her child.

SECTION 7. Prohibition on Abortion. - Any maternal and child health services which shall be made available under this Act shall not advocate, promote, or encourage abortion.

SECTION 8. Separability Clause. - If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law of the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. Repealing Clause. - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 10. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,