EXPLANATORY NOTE

One of the most important indicators of development is the survival of children beyond the years that they are most likely to succumb to disease and illness. Proper interventions introduced by the government, if implemented well, may reduce a large fraction of childhood deaths.

The Philippines has achieved modest gains in reducing infant mortality. In 2013, it was recorded that 18.19 deaths occurred per 1,000 live births in the country. In 2014, it was reduced to 21.45 per 1,000 live births. Although the country was able to reduce infant mortality, it was able to do so at a very slow pace.

This bill seeks to rapidly decrease the incidence of infant mortality in the country by requiring the Department of Health (DOH), the local government, state universities and colleges, and civil society to work together in determining certain criteria in fighting infant mortality.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III
Representative
Magdalo Para sa Pilipino Party-List
AN ACT
TO ESTABLISH AN INFANT MORTALITY PROGRAM TO REDUCE THE RATE OF INFANT MORTALITY IN THE COUNTRY PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

Section 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Infant Mortality Initiative Act".

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of health of the people, including the rights of children to survival, and to develop healthy and fully as individuals.

Sec. 3. Definition of Terms. - As used in this section, the term -

(1) "Coalition" means a national or local health coalition or consortium;
(2) "Department" means the Department of Health;
(3) "FIMR" means a fetal and infant mortality review committee;
(4) "Infant mortality" means the death of a live-born infant within 364 days after the infant's birth; and
(5) "Infant mortality rate" means the number of infant deaths per 1,000 annual live births.

Sec. 4. Objectives of this Act. - The objectives of this Act includes:

(1) Determining the significant social, economic, cultural, safety, and health system factors that exist in communities all over the country related to infant mortality through a practice collaborative approach using perinatal;
(2) Developing a series of interventions and policies that address these factors to improve the service systems and community resources;
(3) Participating in the implementation of community-based interventions and policies that address problems in infant mortality rates; and
(4) Assessing the progress of interventions.

Sec. 5. Administration of the Infant Mortality Initiative. - The Infant Mortality Initiative shall be administered through a collaboration among the Department of Health,
which shall act as the lead agency in implementing this Act, the Dept. of Interior and Local
Government, Local Government Units and their respective local health coalitions, and public
universities or colleges having expertise in public health. A local community shall develop
an interdisciplinary team to serve as part of a local-wide practice collaborative. Both
perinatal periods of risk and fetal infant mortality reviews may be used. A case review shall
be conducted by each participating coalition using professional in-house staff or through
contracts with an outside professional Public universities or colleges having expertise in
public health shall provide technical assistance in developing a standard research
methodology based on the fetal and infant mortality review method. Public universities or
colleges having expertise in public health shall assist each participating coalition in
determining the selection of comparison groups, identifying data collection and housing
issues, and presenting findings and recommendations. A single methodology for the reviews
conducted through the initiative shall be used by each participating coalition. The department
shall distribute funding to each coalition that participates in the initiative through annual
grants that are subject to specific appropriations by the Legislature.

Sec. 6. Functions of the Infant Mortality Initiative. - Each participating coalition
shall:

(1) Develop an interdisciplinary team to oversee the process in its
   local
   Community;

(2) Use perinatal periods of risk methodology when appropriate to
   examine
   infant deaths in its community; or

(3) Use a modified FIMR approach to examine infant deaths in its community
   by:
   (a) Creating a case review FIMR team that may include
       obstetricians, neonatologists, perinatalists, pathologists,
       registered nurses, social workers, hospital and clinic
       administrators, social service agencies, researchers, citizens and
       consumers, and other experts considered necessary to conduct a
       standardized review of infant mortality;

   (b) Hiring or contracting with professional staff that may include
       licensed nurses and social workers to abstract and present
       individual case reviews that omit identifying information regarding
       infant deaths compared to live births to the case review team;

   (c) Developing abstracts of sample infant mortalities and comparative
       live births that omit identifying information and that identify
       social, economic, cultural, safety, and health system factors that
       are associated with infant mortality rates in each community. The
       number of abstracted cases that must be conducted by each
       participating coalition shall be determined by a standard research
       methodology developed in conjunction with a public
       university or college having expertise in public health; and
(d) Presenting abstracts that omit identifying information to its case
review team at least quarterly for their review and discussion.

4) Develop findings and recommendations for interventions and policy changes to
reduce racial disparities in infant mortality.

Sec. 7. Grant Awards. - The Department shall award annual grants, subject to
specific appropriations by the Legislature. The Department shall award at least one grant to a
coalition representing urban communities and at least one grant to a coalition
representing rural communities. Grant awards shall be given to those coalitions
representing communities with the least infant mortality rates.

Sec. 8. Evaluation and Reports. - The Department shall conduct an annual
evaluation of the implementation of the initiative describing which areas are participating in
the initiative, the number of reviews conducted by each participating coalition, grant
balances, and recommendations for modifying the initiative. All participating coalitions shall
produce a report on their collective findings and recommendations by January 1, 2010, to the
President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Secretary of
Health.

Sec. 9. Immunity. - Each participating coalition, its case review team members, and
professional staff are immune from liability pursuant to this Act.

Sec. 10. Implementing Rules. - The Department of Health shall develop the
implementing rules and regulations necessary to effectively implement the provisions of this
Act, in collaboration with other concerned agencies of the government, thirty (30) days after
the effectivity of this Act.

Sec. 11. Authorization of Appropriation. - For the purposes of this Act, the sum of
Twenty Million Pesos (P 20,000,000) for the current fiscal year shall be allotted to the
Department of Health for the proper carrying out of this Act, and such other sums as may be
necessary for each succeeding fiscal year.

Sec. 12. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared
unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in
full force and effect.

Sec. 13. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or other
issuance or parts thereof inconsistent with the provision of this Act are hereby repealed,
amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 14. 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,