This bill seeks to establish a maternal and infant health home visitation program in the country. This has already been approved by the House of Representatives on its 3rd and final reading in the 17th Congress. However, it has not yet ripened into a law. On account of its importance in protecting the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception, this bill is respectfully filed.

Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “(t)he State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights”. Section 12, Article II thereof also provides that “the State recognizes the sanctify of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception...”

The constitutional mandate prescribing protection of the mother and the unborn from the State is unequivocal. Today, the prevalence of early pregnancy among minors, as young as twelve years of age, is very alarming. Young mothers, unmarried as they are, indubitably expose themselves to the challenges of rearing their children at their juvenile age. Without government intervention, the risk of maternal and infant mortality is high especially to families of the poor and the marginalized.

Through the maternal and infant health home visitation program, the mother and the child will be given better protection and an opportunity to a healthy life.
In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

ATTY. TYRONE D. AGABAS
Representative
6th District, Pangasinan
Republic of the Philippines

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3857

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Introduction by Representative TYRONE D. AGABAS

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH HOME VISITATION
PROGRAM

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

1 SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the “Expanded Maternal
2 and Infant Care Act”.

3 SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is a policy of the State to equally protect the
4 life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this
5 policy, the State shall, in addition to maternity care services provided in
6 health facilities, administer prenatal and postnatal maternity and infant care
7 services under a home visitation program in order to protect the health and
8 well-being of mothers and infants.

9 SEC. 3. Definition of Term – As used in this Act, the term “poor” shall refer to
10 income brackets that fall below the poverty threshold defined by the
11 Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) based on the most recent Family Income
12 and Expenditure Survey (FIES).
SEC. 4. Establishment of Maternal and Infant Health Home Visitation Program. - The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) 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 render maternal and infant care services in the home of eligible individuals.

SEC. 5. Eligibility to Avail of Home Visitation Services. - A pregnant woman not more than twenty-one (21) years old, or families with an infant up to the age of one (1) year, belonging to the low-income brackets below the poverty threshold shall be eligible to receive the maternal and infant care services provided under this Act.

Sec. 6. Maternal and Infant Health Services. – The maternal and infant care services that shall be provided in the home of eligible individuals shall include the following:

(a) Instruction and counseling concerning all aspects of prenatal care, childbirth, and motherhood;

(b) Nutrition counseling;

(c) General family counseling, including child and family development; and

(d) Physical examination or referral for further medical care for a mother and/or infant.

Sec. 7. Prohibition on Abortion. – Any maternal and infant care service which shall be made available under this Act shall not be construed to advocate, promote, or encourage abortion.

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

SEC. 10. **Effectively.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,