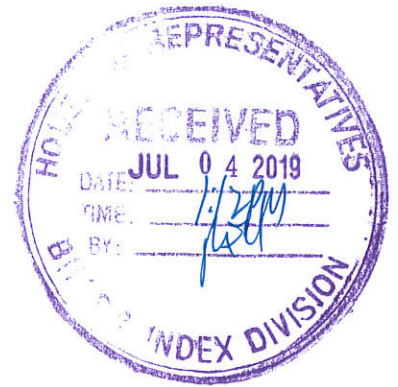


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1394



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ALFRED VARGAS

EXPLANATORY NOTE


The World Health Organization has observed that the major causes of death in low income countries can be treated effectively with simple essential medicines. However, these medicines are often unavailable, non-accessible, or unaffordable.

A 2011 study identified insufficient access to low cost, safe, and quality essential medicines as one of the issues confronting the Philippine health system. It observed that these essential medicines are available only 33% of the time. It also claimed that medicines covered by PhilHealth are often not available in authorized outlets. Thus, many low-income patients are either left untreated or faced with high, out-of-pocket expenses for medicines.

This bill seeks to improve the Filipinos' access to medicines by establishing a drugstore in every barangay in the country, to be known as the *Botika sa Barangay*. The proposed *Botika sa Barangay* shall offer the essential medicines listed by the Philippine National Drug Formulary. In addition, the Department of Health is tasked to prioritize the establishment of *Botika sa Barangay* in economically-depressed barangays.

Through this initiative, we are giving the less fortunate better chances of survival from curable ailments, thereby contributing to the improvement of their holistic well-being.

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


ALFRED VARGAS

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BARANGAY DRUGSTORES,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "BOTIKA SA BARANGAY"

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 "Botika sa Barangay Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. Towards this end, the State shall provide adequate social services and endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to every barangay at affordable cost.

SEC. 3. Botika sa Barangay. - The Department of Health shall, within sixty (60) days after the approval of this Act, undertake a three-year program for the establishment of barangay drugstores or Botika sa Barangay (BSB) in every barangay, giving priority to barangays on the basis of population, poverty incidence, extent of medical health care and/or services, geographical conditions, financial and other socio-economic factors and such other considerations as may be deemed necessary in undertaking the program within the context of national plans and policies on social services, health and medical care.

SEC. 4, Establishment Priority. - The Department of Health (DOH) shall, in the establishment of the BSB, undertake prior consultations with the Municipal Development Council concerned; *Provided*, That in the establishment of the BSB, highest priority shall be given to those economically depressed barangays. Existing BSBs shall be maintained and shall be covered by relevant provisions of this Act.

SEC. 5. Drugs Available. - The BSB shall make available, only those drugs included in the "core list" of the national drug formulary, and the names thereof listed in their respective generic and trade names made available to the public.

SEC. 6. Botika sa Barangay Aide. - Sale of medicines at the BSB shall be facilitated by an aide, known as the Botika sa Barangay Aide, who shall be chosen by and trained under the direction of the Municipality or City Health Office, in close coordination with the Punong Barangay and head of the Barangay Health Center.

SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Guidelines. - The Secretary of Health shall issue the necessary rules and guidelines as may be needed to fully implement the provisions of this Act. In addition, the DOH shall also embark on a sustained promotional campaign to increase the community's awareness of the BSB through its personnel, non-governmental organizations, barangay official and the print and broadcast media.

SEC. 8. Repealing Clause. - All laws, presidential decrees and other executive issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. Effectivity. -This Act shall take effect upon fifteen (15) days after complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,