

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez

House Bill No. 1847

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill was filed and approved by the House of Representatives during the 17th Congress.

Article II, Section 12 of the 1987 Philippines Constitution mandates the State to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this provision, the State must provide prenatal and postnatal maternity care services in the home of pregnant teenagers in order to protect their health as well as the future health and wellbeing of their newborn children.

Pregnancy among unmarried teenagers is one of the most difficult and far-reaching social problems in our country today. This is generally prevalent among women aged 15-24 who are from the low-income bracket. Since it is at this stage where they are supposed to be enjoying their lives, their pregnancies are often considered untimely or unwanted. Hence, maturity and preparedness required of every parent are often times, wanting.

The Department of Health provides for free prenatal and postnatal consultations designed to reduce the incidence of maternal and infant mortality. But due to several reasons, one of which is the financial difficulty encountered by the pregnant unmarried teenagers, pre-natal and post natal services have been ignored.

This bill seeks to improve and expand the availability of, and access to, needed comprehensive maternity care services that enable pregnant adolescents to obtain proper care and to assist pregnant adolescents and adolescent parents to become productive independent contributors to family and community life.

The early passage of this bill therefore is highly recommended


RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH HOME VISITATION PROGRAM

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. – This Act shall be known as the "**Expanded Maternal and Infant Care Act**".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is a 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 shall, in addition to maternity care services provided in health facilities, administer prenatal and postnatal maternity and infant care services under a home visitation program in order to protect the health and well-being of mothers and infants.

SEC. 3. Definition of Term. – As used in this Act, the term "poor" shall refer to income brackets that fall below the poverty threshold defined by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) based on the most recent Family Income 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. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,