

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
Second Regular Session

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 34



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Introduced by Honorable Representatives

**ARLENE D. BROSAS** (Gabriela Women's Party);  
**CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**, **EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT** and **FERDINAND R. GAITE** (Bayan Muna); **FRANCE L. CASTRO** (ACT Teachers); and **SARAH JANE I. ELAGO** (Kabataan)

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**JOINT RESOLUTION MANDATING THE IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION OF THE INCREASE IN THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION (PHILHEALTH) PREMIUM RATE AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**WHEREAS**, Section 10 of Republic Act 11223 or the Universal Healthcare Act signed by President Rodrigo R. Duterte on July 23, 2018 mandates the annual and incremental increase in the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (Philhealth) members' premium rate from 2.75 percent in 2019 to 5 percent in 2025;

**WHEREAS**, the Philhealth premium rate is set to increase from 3 percent to 3.5 percent for 2021, which translates to bigger cuts in the take-home pay especially of workers who are still reeling from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;

**WHEREAS**, the Philippine economy contracted for three consecutive quarters in 2020 – the first time in 35 years – while ordinary Filipinos continue to suffer from depressed incomes, worsening joblessness, and highly unstable and non-regular work arrangements;

**WHEREAS**, despite the passage of the Universal Healthcare Act and the subsequent mandated premium rate hikes, Philhealth members barely benefitted from the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) amid the raging COVID-19 pandemic;

**WHEREAS**, despite the declaration of a public health emergency and existence of a pandemic, the agency's existing packages for COVID-19 testing and treatment do not cover the full costs, thus failing to ease the financial pressure on cash-strapped beneficiaries;

**WHEREAS**, the state insurer remains embroiled in the P15-billion corruption scandal regarding the anomalous implementation of the Interim Reimbursement Mechanism (IRM) and the alleged procurement of overpriced information technology equipment;

**WHEREAS**, the P15 billion in IRM funds allegedly lost to corruption remains not fully accounted for despite the series of hearings conducted by the Senate and the House of Representatives;

**WHEREAS**, the agency has yet to account for 13 percent of the P14.97 billion released to healthcare institutions under the IRM, or around P2.97 billion, as of December 13, 2020;

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2021 General Appropriations Act (GAA) provides a P71.29-billion subsidy to the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP), which is on top of the contributions collected by Philhealth from its member-beneficiaries;

**WHEREAS**, Philhealth also has an estimated P200 billion in various investments in the private sector, which it has yet to account and report to Congress as promised by the agency during the deliberations on the 2021 national budget;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the House of Representatives and the Senate, to mandate the immediate suspension of the increases in the Philhealth premium rate for 2021 and for the succeeding years in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the still unresolved corruption allegations in the agency.

Adopted,

  
**ARLENE D. BROSAS**  
Gabriela Women's Party

  
**CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**  
Bayan Muna Partylist

  
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