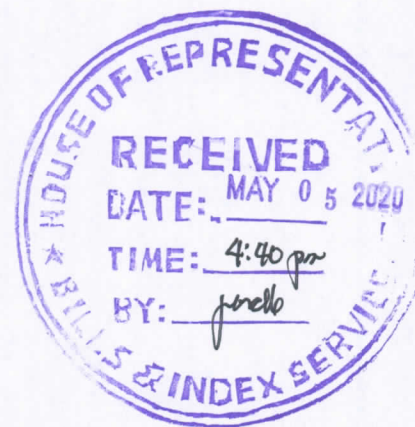


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 827



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)

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH TO CONDUCT AN URGENT REVIEW, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11223 OR THE UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE ACT IN LIGHT OF COMPLAINTS OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS REGARDING PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION'S (PhilHealth) MANDATORY PREMIUM COLLECTION AND PREMIUM RATE HIKE, AND TO SUSPEND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF RA 11223 AND ITS RULES AND REGULATIONS PENDING REVIEW OF THE LAW

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11223, otherwise known as the Universal Healthcare Act and signed by President Rodrigo Duterte on February 20, 2019, classifies migrant workers as direct contributors and thereby mandates them to pay monthly contributions to the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Philhealth);

WHEREAS, Section 10 of RA 11223 also imposes a Philhealth premium hike for all direct contributors through a percentage-based contribution system starting from 2.75 percent premium rate of the contributor's monthly salary in 2019 and rising incrementally to 5 percent by 2024;

WHEREAS, Philhealth issued PhilHealth Circular No. 2020-0014 on April 2, 2020 ordering overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to pay the 3 percent monthly premium for 2020 without employer counterpart, with the initial premium payment fixed at P2,400;

WHEREAS, according to the circular, members who fail to pay the premium in time shall be required to pay all missed contributions with monthly compounded interest;

WHEREAS, an online petition, which was started in April 30, made rounds in social media urging Philhealth to scrap its directive to increase the mandatory contribution of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to 3% of their monthly salary for the year 2020;

WHEREAS, the online petition also assailed PhilHealth Circular No. 2020-0014, for being unfair and inhumane, saying that OFWs and their dependents are already struggling amid the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, the petition has already garnered over 410,000 signatures as of the resolution's writing and the support of around 200 Filipino migrants' groups around the world;

WHEREAS, PhilHealth should not be allowed to impose a premium rate hike, considering that it has P97 billion reserve funds and net income of P11.6 billion in 2018, not to mention its investment portfolio at P149 billion;

WHEREAS, Filipino workers abroad are already struggling due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This directive from the national insurance agency is inhumane, with its insistence on the hefty 3% premium rate plus interest for missed payments;

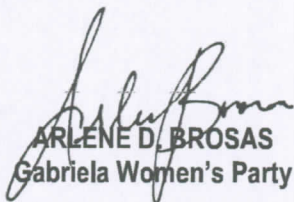
WHEREAS, overseas Filipino workers have hardly benefitted from Philhealth in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic since they are already covered by insurance programs and state-funded benefits abroad;

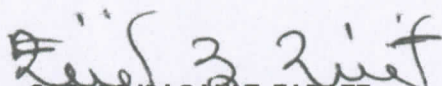
WHEREAS, the Office of the President has not yet sent a formal communication to Philhealth regarding President Rodrigo Duterte's directive to suspend the premium rate hike

WHEREAS, there is a need to urgently review the Universal Health Care Law, along with its Implementing Rules and Regulations, with the goal of repealing the incremental premium rate hike for direct contributors, as well as the classification of migrant workers as direct contributors;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the House Committee on Health conduct an urgent review, in aid of legislation, of Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Healthcare Act in light of complaints of overseas Filipino workers regarding Philhealth's mandatory premium collection and premium rate hike, and to suspend the implementation of relevant provisions of RA 11223 and its rules and regulations pending review of the law.

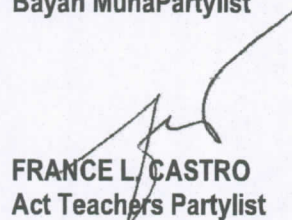
Adopted,


ARLENE D. BROSAS
Gabriela Women's Party


CARLOS ISAGANIT. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Partylist


FERDINAND R. GATE
Bayan Muna Partylist


RUFEMA C. COLLAMAT
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FRANCE L. CASTRO
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