

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session



HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1225

Introduced by Representatives Stella Luz A. Quimbo and Jesus "Bong" C. Suntay

**RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS TO
ALLOCATE AN ADDITIONAL ONE BILLION PESOS (P1,000,000,000) FOR
THE IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH
PROGRAM UNDER THE BUDGET OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. Article XIII, Section 11 of the same directs the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost;

WHEREAS, by the virtue of Section 2 of Republic Act No. 11036 or the Mental Health Act, the state affirms the basic right of all Filipinos to mental health as well as the fundamental rights of people who require mental health services;

WHEREAS, during the budget hearing of the Department of Health (DOH), conducted by the House Committee on Appropriations on 18 September 2020, it was stipulated that the budget for the National Mental Health Program in the National Expenditure Program for Fiscal Year 2021, as a portion of the budget for non-communicable diseases, amounts to P615 million, equivalent to about P5.69 per capita;

WHEREAS, the budget per capita for 2021 is even lower than the budget per capita of P12.19 for the same program in 2017, prior to the enactment of the Mental Health Act, and is grossly insufficient to respond to the mental health needs of the Filipinos, especially the Filipino youth;

WHEREAS, Section 42 of the same directs the creation of a Mental Health Division in the DOH;

WHEREAS, according to the DOH, the Department is still awaiting the release of the Notice of Organization, Staffing and Compensation Action from the Department of the Budget and Management for the hiring of additional personnel to man the mental health division;

WHEREAS, in August 2020, the National Center for Mental Health reported a huge increase in suicide-related calls to their hotline amid the COVID-19 pandemic, from an average of 33 calls monthly from January to March 2020, to 66, 80, 112, and 115 calls monthly in April, May, June, and July of the same year, respectively;¹

WHEREAS, a few weeks ago, the Department of Education confirmed a COVID-19 related suicide case of a child which led the Department to strengthen its psychosocial support program;²

WHEREAS, there is need for an additional allocation of funds amounting to One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000) in order to restore the spending for the National Mental Health Program to 2017 levels, adjusting for inflation;

WHEREAS, there is a need to immediately create the Mental Health Division of the DOH pursuant to the Mental Health Act;

WHEREAS, there is a grave necessity for the expedient and adequately funded implementation of the National Mental Health Program to provide the needed medical, scientific, psychiatric, psychosocial and neurologic services to the Filipinos, especially at a time of distress caused by the current health crisis, large economic decline, and high unemployment rate, among others;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives that the Committee on Appropriations allocate an additional One Billion Pesos (P1,000,000,000) through the General Appropriations Act of 2021 to fund the implementation of the National Mental Health Program under the budget of the DOH, for a total program budget of One Billion Six Hundred Fifteen Million Pesos (P1,615,000,000).

RESOLVED, FURTHER, that the House of Representatives enjoins the DOH to immediately and fully implement all provisions of the Mental Health Act.

Adopted,


STELLA LUZ A. QUIMBO, PHD


ATTY. JESUS "BONG" C. SUNTAY

¹ Esgeurra, D. (2020, August 26). *NCMH reports spike in suicide-related calls amid COVID-19 pandemic*.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1327373/ncmh-reports-spike-in-suicide-related-calls-amid-covid-19-pandemic>.

² Aguilar, K. (2020, September 1). *Mental health of students, teachers a 'big challenge' amid pandemic – DepEd chief*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1329506/deped-confirms-one-student-died-by-suicide-says-mentalhealth-a-big-challenge-amid-pandemic>