

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH (17<sup>th</sup>) CONGRESS

First Regular Session

House Bill No. **4323**



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**Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The first 1,000 days of a child is the period from pregnancy to the first two years of birth. The provisions of nutrition, water sanitation and hygiene programs and services are necessary during this period and if sustained these have proven to make children 10 times more likely to overcome threatening diseases, complete 4.6 more grades of school and go on to earn up to 50% more in wages as adults.


Studies conducted by UNICEF have proven that undernutrition is the underlying cause of almost half (45%) of child deaths in the world, amounting to 95 child deaths per day in the Philippines. Undernutrition is also associated with up to 3% GDP losses, stunting the lives of many Filipinos. State policy interventions to improve maternal and child nutrition and care during the first 1,000 days window bear investments both in the quality of human life of individuals as well as economic growth and productivity for the Philippines.

The following are concerns under the 1,000 days period of the child's development: a) Pregnant and lactating mothers need to have access to enough food nutrients such as IFA daily supplements and iron-rich foods

with iodized salt to prevent anemia and fetal brain damage; b) every infant needs to be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life, without fluids, milk or water; c) every child 6-24 months needs to be fed age-appropriate, nutrient-dense complementary food with increased quantity, density and frequency as the child ages; d) Every child needs to be protected against diseases caused by undernutrition through full immunization and annual vitamin A supplementation and deworming projects; e) all pregnant women needs access to safe water and clean toilets and can practice good hygiene contributes to reducing maternal anemia and maternal environment enteropathy; f) all health facilities should have safe water supply and clean functional toilets with hand-washing facilities contributes to safe deliveries of mother and children; g) open defecation should be eliminated and safe disposal of children's feces should be ensured to reduce infections and ensure a cleaner living environment;

The aforementioned needs can be addressed and administered to our Filipino mothers and children through a strengthened and responsive program at the health facility or local level. Facility-based services and community support from prenatal care to breastfeeding to immunization and promotion and management of nutrition all need to be developed, coordinated and capacitated immediately.

Through the right nutrition during the first 1,000 days, the society's long-term health, stability and prosperity can be shaped and fulfilled.



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**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CARE  
PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF TO PROTECT  
FILIPINO MOTHER AND CHILDREN FROM UNDERNUTRITION**

*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 "First 1,000  
Days Act of 2016."

**SECTION 2.** *Declaration of Policy.* -It is hereby declared the policy of  
the State: (a) To equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the  
unborn from conception. (b) To recognize the right of the child to the  
enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, and the duty of the  
State to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such  
health care services.

For purposes of this act, the "first 1,000 days of a child" shall be known as the period from pregnancy (270 days) to the first two years of the child's birth (180 days for the first six months, 550 days until the child's second birthday);

**SECTION 3.** *The First 1000 Days Program* – The Department of Health (DOH) shall, in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the National Nutrition Council (NNC), and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute-Department of Science and Technology (FNRI-DOST), develop a comprehensive health care program for the 1,000 days developmental period, addressing the prenatal, postnatal and nutritional needs and services of pregnant women and their children to be implemented and distributed in every barangay's health care unit.

**SECTION 4.** *Program Content.* – The comprehensive maternal and child health care program will communicate a common understanding for undernutrition, its economic impact and evidence-based solutions. It will administer services to eligible mothers and children covered by the 1,000 days period including the following:

- 4.1 Prenatal care educational services shall include pregnancy tracking and risk identification of complications, nutritional status identification, micro-nutrient supplementation, use of iodized salt and fortified food, oral health, prevention of neonatal tetanus, aid in preparation of birth plans and assistance to PhilHealth enrolment;
- 4.2. Prenatal facility-based services in the management of complications in pregnancy such as the provision of essential intrapartum and newborn care (EINC) and mother-baby friendly initiative services;
- 4.3. Educational services, counselling and facilities for the promotion and prioritization of breastfeeding; and lactation support for women about to return to work, women with infants in the workplace and in the informal sector
- 4.4. Expanded programs for immunization;
- 4.5. Non-fragmented nutritional surveillance and micronutrient supplementation for high-risk infants, children during the 6 months to 59 months period, for nutritionally at-risk mothers;

4.6. Water, sanitation, hygiene and deworming projects;

4. 7. Growth and development monitoring and promotion;

**SECTION 5. *Nutrition Officers.*** - To significantly develop Nutrition Service Delivery,

5.1 Municipal Nutrition Action Officers shall officially be made full-time positions, with corresponding qualifications, for all local government units such that quality of service delivery can be improved and accountability can be clearly defined;

5.2 Barangay Nutrition Scholars shall be promoted to official *plantilla* positions with no more than three (3) being appropriated to each barangay, provided that they have undergone the training and passed the qualifications, for all local government units such that quality and quantity of service delivery can be improved and accountability can be clearly defined;

**SECTION 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Health shall, in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior and Local Government, and Secretary of Social Welfare and Development and representatives of recognized women's and children's organizations and academic communities, promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the effectivity of this Act.

**SECTION 6. *Appropriation.*** - To carry out the provisions of this Act, such amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury.

**SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.*** - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

**SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.*** - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with any provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

**SECTION 9. *Effectivity Clause.*** -This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

**Approved,**