

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. **1180**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE PIA S. CAYETANO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill designates every third week of November as "National Consciousness Week Against Counterfeit Medicines" in order to draw and raise public attention and awareness about counterfeit medicines and the urgency to control its proliferation.

The proliferation of counterfeit medicines is a serious public health concern not only in the Philippines but worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that "counterfeiting of medicines is present in all countries and is thought to represent 10% of the global medicines trade."¹ In 2009, 20 million pills, bottles and sachets of counterfeit and illegal medicines were seized in a five-month operation across China and south-east Asia.² The Food and Drug Administration estimates that a total of P5.9-million worth of unregistered and counterfeit medicines were seized in the country in 2015 as of October of the same year.³

Despite the passage of Republic Act No. 8203 or the "Special Law on Counterfeit Drugs," this serious threat to public health continues to exist and may potentially harm thousands of Filipinos.

An individual who takes a counterfeit drug may be at risk for a number of dangerous health consequences, including death. With counterfeits, patients may experience unexpected side effects, allergic reactions, or worsening of their medical condition that could result in death.

This bill mandates a comprehensive public education and awareness program on counterfeit medicines to help enlighten people about this serious concern and push for the strict implementation of the laws aimed to curb the proliferation of counterfeit medicines. A focal point of this program is an information campaign about the importance of protecting Filipinos from the harmful effects of counterfeit medicines.

For the health and protection of our people, immediate approval of this bill is sought.

Pia S. Cayetano
PIA S. CAYETANO

¹ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2006/pr09/en/>

² <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/88/4/10-020410/en/>

³ <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/manila/local-news/2015/11/23/doh-sounds-alarm-over-fake-medicine-443075>

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AN ACT
DECLARING EVERY THIRD WEEK OF NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR AS
"NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS WEEK AGAINST COUNTERFEIT MEDICINES"

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as "National Consciousness
2 Week Against Counterfeit Medicines Act."

3
4 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – In line with the principles and mandates set by the
5 Philippine Constitution that "the State shall protect and promote the right to health of
6 the people and instill health consciousness among them" (Article 2, Section 15) and
7 that "the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health
8 development" (Article 13, Section 11), the third week of November of every year
9 throughout the Philippines shall be known under the name of "National Counterfeit
10 Medicines Consciousness Week."

11
12 **SEC. 3. *Public Education and Awareness Program.*** – To ensure the meaningful
13 observance of the week as herein declared, a comprehensive public education and
14 awareness program shall be undertaken on the proliferation and dangers of
15 counterfeit medicines which poses detrimental effects to health of patients. The
16 program shall specifically discuss the sources, common characteristics, and effects
17 of counterfeit medicines, including the urgent need for reporting of incidents to the
18 Bureau of Food and Drugs and the strict enforcement of R.A. 8203, otherwise known
19 as "The Special Law on Counterfeit Drugs."

20
21 **SEC. 4. *Inter-Agency and Multi-Sectoral Effort.*** – The Department of Health shall
22 lead in the implementation of the comprehensive public education and awareness
23 program on counterfeit medicines through a collaborative inter-agency and multi-
24 sectoral effort at all levels. It shall particularly ensure widespread and expeditious
25 public information about the proliferation and dangers of counterfeit medicines.

26
27 **SEC. 5. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
28 in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,