

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
HOUSE BILL No. 1619

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by Reps. **CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE, ANTONIO L. TINIO,**
EMMI A. DE JESUS, FRANCE L. CASTRO, ARLENE D. BROSAS,
ARIEL B. CASILAO, and SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

AN ACT
SETTING THE STARTING MONTHLY SALARY OF NURSES
TO TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P25,000) AND PROVIDING FOR BENEFITS
FOR NURSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This Bill aims to upgrade the minimum salary of nurses both in public and private sectors, and to ensure that mandated benefits are provided to encourage them to work in the country instead of going abroad.

The Philippine Nursing Act of 2002 or Republic Act No. 9173 provided for Salary Grade 15 as entry salary grade for public nurses all over the country. This was never implemented, with the government failing to allocate funds for its implementation.

Joint Resolution No. 4 or the 2009 Salary Standardization Law III (SSL III) pegs the salary grade of nurses to Salary Grade 11, altogether denying the nurses of the salary they should have received since 2002.

Executive Order No. 201 signed by President Benigno Aquino III on February 19, 2016 grants a total increase of P2,000.00, spread in four tranches in four years, for government employees with Salary Grades 1-13. For Nurse1 position with Salary Grade 11, the increase is P2,205 spread out in four years. From a basic salary of P18,549 monthly, it will become P19,077 for the first year of implementation with the additional P528-575 per year until it become P20,754 by the fourth year. The salary adjustment will give the nurses P17.60-19.17 basic salary increase per day.

LGU nurses under the devolved system are in worse situation with many not even receiving the last tranche of the SSLIII.

Meanwhile, nurses in the private sector receive roughly the minimum wage averaging between P9,000-12,000 while those in small clinics get even less. There are nurses in private sector who receive a pitiful P6,000-P9,000 per month, which is even lower than the mandated wage in National Capital Region at P 491/day¹ or P 10,802/month.

¹ <http://www.nwpc.dole.gov.ph/pages/ncr/cmwr.html>

This unjust situation is further aggravated by inadequate or non-implementation of benefits as mandated by Magna Carta of Public Health Workers or Republic Act No. 7305, such as overtime pay, night shift differential, on call pay, and hazard pay.

The family living wage for a family of six in the National Capital Region according to IBON Foundation is P1,086 per day or P32,580 per month. The present entry salary of nurses in the public sector is way below this amount.

Compared to other ASEAN countries, the salaries of Filipino nurses in the country are lower. In Thailand, an incoming Filipino nurse earns 40,000 baht or P54,360². Average Malaysian nurse salary is RM 28,130 annually or RM 2,348 monthly, equivalent to P28,485/month³. In Japan, nurses undergoing work-training receive an average monthly salary of 130,000 yen to 220,000 yen or roughly P66,000 and P113,000⁴. In Korea, monthly salary of a nurse is US \$ 1,504 or P66,552⁵. In Singapore, average monthly salary for a nurse is SGD 3,001 or P97,631⁶.

With these huge differences in salaries of nurses in the country, the current brain drain problem will surely worsen.

To rectify this gross neglect of the welfare of our nurses, and, to prevent the worsening of brain drain, we propose that the beginning salary for nurses in both public and private sector be set at P25,000 per month.

In this light, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Approved,


Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Party-list

² <http://www.bangkokpost.com/print/410343/>, computed at 1 baht=

³ http://www.payscale.com/research/MY/Job=Staff_Nurse/Salary, computed at 1 RM = Php 12.13

⁴ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/289623/pinoyabroad/news/japan-eyes-more-filipino-nurses-caregivers>

⁵ <http://www.worldsalaries.org/professionalnurse.shtml>, computed at US \$=Php44.25

⁶ <http://www.salaryexplorer.com/salary-survey.php?loc=196&loctype=1&job=874&jobtype=>, Conversion rate PHP/SGD = 32.533

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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 Nurses’ Salary Standardization and Benefits Act of 2016.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the Government’s concern and responsibility to provide adequate remuneration and benefits of health workers to enhance general welfare and to attract and retain its rightful share of talents with the end in view of fulfilling the state policy of providing essential health services to all Filipinos.

SECTION 3. *Setting of the Starting Salary for Nurses.* The present minimum monthly salary for nurses shall be upgraded to P25,000. Salaries of those occupying higher positions shall be adjusted accordingly. The minimum salary shall cover all nurses in public health facilities, whether nationally or locally-funded, and private health facilities and institutions.

SECTION 4. *Benefits.* Nurses in public and private sectors shall be provided with all applicable benefits prescribed under Magna Carta of Public Health Workers or Republic Act No. 7305, including overtime pay, night-shift differential, on-call pay; hazard pay subsistence allowance, housing facility or housing allowance free annual physical examination and free hospitalization.

SECTION 5. *Sanctions.* A fine of not less than five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000,000) and/or imprisonment of not less than one (1) year nor more than two (2) years shall be imposed upon violation of any of the provisions hereof.

Provided that, for violations committed by government agencies, juridical persons, including local government units or any other entity, the head of the agency and Board of Directors or executive officials of the agency shall assume full responsibility.

SECTION 6. *Refund and Compensation.* Any nurse found to have been a victim of violation of any section of this Act shall be entitled to back wages and full payment of unpaid benefits. In addition, he/she shall be entitled to refund of interest and attorney’s fees to be paid by the agency if he/she is forced to litigate.

SECTION 7. *Rules and Regulations.* The Department of Health and the Department of Budget and Management shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations of the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 8. *Appropriation.* The Government shall appropriate such amount as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act. Initial funds required for the implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the General Appropriations Act Miscellaneous Personnel Benefit Fund and other possible sources that may be determined by the Office of the President. The subsequent funds needed for national public health institutions shall be included in the General Appropriations Act in the allotment for the particular facility or institution. For devolved health agencies, funding shall be included in the annual budget allotment for the provincial and district hospitals and local health units.

For private health facilities, funding shall be included in the corporate budget.

SECTION 9. *Constitutionality.* Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity or constitutionality of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, letters of instructions, resolutions, orders, ordinances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

SECTION 11. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,