

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. 5214

INTRODUCED BY REP. ALFRED VARGAS

AN ACT
MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT UNITS OF CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES TO PROVIDE
DIGITAL X-RAYS AND SPUTUM TESTING LABORATORIES IN THEIR
LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH CENTERS NATIONWIDE TO MAINTAIN FREE X-
RAY AND SPUTUM TEST SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITIES AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Tuberculosis remains a major health problem in the Philippines, according to the World Health Organization. It has been a nationwide leading cause of death and illness in the country. This airborne disease has already affected a million Filipinos, and has required actions from all sectors and care providers.

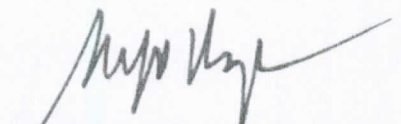
Despite having free anti-tuberculosis medication provided to the citizens, the country continues to be the third highest in prevalence rate of tuberculosis in the world. Moreover, the Philippines lags in diagnosis and precautionary measures. Although anti-tuberculosis drugs are available in national and local government health centers, patients still require overall treatments that include multiple tests such as x-rays, blood tests, chest radiograph, sputum smear, and rapid molecular Diagnostic Tests that are costly.

In accordance with Republic Act No. 10767, "An Act Establishing a Comprehensive Philippine Plan of Action to Eliminate Tuberculosis as a Public Health Problem and Appropriating Funds Therefor", it is the mandate of the State to promote the universal right to health and instill health consciousness among them. Republic Act 10767 states that:

"the State is mandated to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development. Towards the end, the State shall support and expand efforts to eliminate tuberculosis as a public health problem by increasing investments for its prevention, treatment and control, and adopting a multisectoral approach in responding to the disease."

This bill seeks to uphold this mandate by tackling barriers to public health services. Towards this end and to address this harrowing public health concern, this legislation moves to adopt a mandatory, comprehensive, and sustainable periodic x-ray and sputum test program for the detection and prevention of tuberculosis.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



ALFRED VARGAS

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

Section. 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the **"Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign Act of 2019."**

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the State to promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. Towards this end and to address a public health concern, the State shall adopt a mandatory, comprehensive, and sustainable periodic x-ray and sputum test program for the detection and prevention of tuberculosis.

Sec. 3. Mandate. - In line with Republic Act (RA) No. 10767, otherwise known as "the Comprehensive Tuberculosis Elimination Plan Act", the Department of Health, with the participation of all local government units, is mandated to provide free digital x-rays and sputum test services to all Filipinos of suitable age. For this purpose, every Cities or Municipalities shall establish in its locality at least one CENTER or facility that will serve exclusively as a laboratory facility for x-rays and sputum testing.

Sec. 4. Coverage. – All Filipinos who are of suitable age shall undergo x-ray and sputum test in the Center of their localities. The Department of Health, in consultation with all local government units nationwide, shall conduct a mandatory periodic x-ray and sputum test free of charge in their respective localities pursuant to this Act.

Sec. 5. Education and Information Campaign. – The Department of Health in coordination with the LGU shall conduct public information campaign on a regular basis about the benefits of x-ray and sputum test for the early detection, treatment, care and prevention of the disease which will help in the total elimination of tuberculosis as a public health problem in the country.

The DOH shall incorporate a sustainable program of conducting periodic x-ray and sputum test services to every individual of suitable age in the Philippine Comprehensive Plan of Action to Eliminate Tuberculosis.

Sec. 6. Continuing Education and Training of Health Personnel. – The Department of Health, with the assistance of local government units, academe, professional societies and nongovernmental organizations, shall undertake continuing information, education and training programs for all health personnel on the elimination or prevention of tuberculosis as a public health problem.

Sec. 7. Appropriations. – The amount necessary to carry out the implementation of this Act shall be chargeable against the excise taxes from tobacco products and the current year's appropriations of the Department of Health on the tuberculosis elimination program. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHIC) shall include x-ray and sputum test in their basic services under its benefit package.

Sec. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Department of Health, in consultation with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the DepEd, the CHED, the PIA, the non-government organizations and other concerned entities shall issue the implementing rules and regulations within ninety (90) days after the approval of this Act.

Sec. 9. Oversight Committee. – There is hereby created a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee (JCOC) on TB Eradication to conduct a regular review of the implementation of this Act which shall entail a systematic evaluation of the performance of concerned government agencies in the accomplishment of the objectives of this Act. The Committee shall be composed of the Chairpersons of the respective Committees on Health of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines who shall act as co-chairpersons of the Oversight Committee, and the chairpersons of the Committee on Local Government and the Committee on Appropriation of

both Houses as members thereof. The Oversight Committee shall commission the Department of Health and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation to have an independent study on the full implementation of this Act.

Sec. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If, for any reason, any part or provision of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Sec. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 12. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,