

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **6772**



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Introduced by Representatives Ria Christina G. Fariñas  
and Rudys Caesar G. Fariñas I

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill seeks to commemorate the lives and sacrifices of our local health workers who have died while on duty on the battle against the coronavirus by engraving their names on a memorial wall, which will be displayed in the Heroes' cemetery or the 'Libingan ng mga Bayani' to acknowledge their sacrifices in service to the Filipinos.

The year 2020 was supposed to be just like every year - a year of redemption and changes, however, in December 2019, a new and unresearched infectious disease shook the lives of everyone in the world - the 'Coronavirus Disease' or commonly known as 'COVID-19'. It is believed to emanate from both dead and live animals which can easily be transmitted to humans. Due to lack of proper handling and misinformation, different countries started to report its first cases and transmission became widespread through droplets of saliva or discharges. Sadly, up to this date, there is still no known vaccine or treatment for the virus.

The Philippines had its first confirmed case on January 30, 2020 when a 38-year old female Chinese national flew from Hongkong to the Philippines on January 21, 2020, as well as its first local transmission on March 7, 2020.<sup>1</sup> This has caused the increasing number of patients in treatment facilities all over the country. Front liners or our local health workers have been extremely working hard to not only attend to the needs of their patients but help them make full recovery. Some have already opted to stay in hospitals, despite the risk of infection, to limit the transmission to the public. While the police, the military and the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) personnel were assigned in different areas to assure health reminders were practiced and compliance of government's policies to limit transmission.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/philippines/emergencies/covid-19-in-the-philippines>

They have basically 'offered' their lives and time to fight an invisible enemy.

As of April 2020, a total of 35 health workers died due to the infectious disease.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, this number continues to rise.

Our local health workers are now considered as modern-day Heroes who selflessly devoted their lives to the service of the Filipinos. If health workers were only given protection, they would still be with us today continuously fighting alongside other health workers and providing services to the Filipinos.

The Heroes' Cemetery or the 'Libingan ng mga Bayani' is the final resting place of Philippine soldiers, war veterans, and citizens that may be considered as martyrs and heroes. According to Section 8 of G 161-375 guidelines of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), only specific individuals may be buried in the cemetery

*'Government dignitaries, statesmen, national artists and other deceased persons whose interment and re-interment has been approved by the commander-in-chief, Congress, or the Secretary of National Defense.'<sup>3</sup>*

Local health workers may not be as prominent as the President of the Philippines or the Secretary of National Defense but during the pandemic, they courageously fought an invisible virus which we may all consider as one of the hardest threats of all time.

Thus, this bill seeks to include our local health workers who are no longer with us to be memorialized as Heroes and commemorate them in the Heroes' cemetery or 'Libingan ng mga Bayani' through a memorial wall.



RIA CHRISTINA G. FARIÑAS



RUDYS CAESAR G. FARIÑAS I

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rappler.com/nation/255981-philippine-doctors-die-fighting-front-lines-vs-coronavirus-march-26-2020>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.rappler.com/nation/134509-heroes-cemetery-guidelines-afp>



Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6772

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Introduced by Representatives Ria Christina G. Fariñas  
and Rudys Caesar G. Fariñas I

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AN ACT  
DISPLAYING THE NAMES OF FALLEN MODERN-DAY HEROES DURING THE CORONAVIRUS  
(COVID) 19 PANDEMIC AT THE 'LIBINGAN NG MGA BAYANI' OR HEROES' CEMETERY

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

**Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the *Commemoration of Covid-19 Heroes Act of 2020*.

**Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – Article II Section 15 of the Constitution declares it the policy of the State “to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill consciousness among them”. It is further its policy to not only enhance the health system of the country but to also strengthen and encourage medical representatives who were called to serve the country during a pandemic. It is the State's obligation to acknowledge and memorialize the sacrifices and services of all health workers who died in the performance of their duty in service of the Filipinos.

**Sec. 3. Definition of Terms.** As used in this Act:

- (a) *Heroes* refer to all public health workers belonging in the medical and allied fields, the police, the military and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) personnel who were called to provide critical and urgent services, either civilian employees occupying regular, contractual, casual or part-time positions or those engaged through contract of service or Job orders proven to report physically at

their assigned treatment facilities and/or work stations, and died in the performance of their duty as part of the national initiative to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

(b) *Memorial Wall* refers to a polished stoned wall enumerating the engraved names of individuals sharing a commonality who died from a single cause to be commemorated.

**Sec. 4. *Installment of Memorial Wall in Libingan ng mga Bayani.*** - Names of all Heroes who selflessly risked their lives and health shall be engraved and displayed on a memorial wall in the Heroes' cemetery or the 'Libingan ng mga Bayani' to commemorate their sacrifices during the Coronavirus pandemic that affected the lives of many Filipinos.

**Sec. 5. *Implementing Agencies.*** - The Department of Health (DOH), the Department of National Defense (DND) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall promulgate the rules and regulations for the implementation of this Act.

**Sec. 6. *Appropriations.*** - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the Department of National Defense. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for the continued maintenance of the memorial wall shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**Sec. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** - The Department of National Defense, in coordination with the Department of Health and the Department of Interior and Local Government, in consultation with other government agencies shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

**Sec. 8. *Separability Clause.*** - If for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid; such parts not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

**Sec. 9. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

**Sec. 10. Effectivity Clause.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*