

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **3146**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**  
**HON. GARY C. ALEJANO**

**Explanatory Note**

Republic Act 8504 or the "Philippine Aids Prevention and Control Act" was enacted in 1998. It seeks to promote public awareness about the causes, modes of transmission, consequences, and means of prevention and control of HIV/AIDS through a comprehensive nationwide educational and information campaign organized and conducted by the State. It is the State's response in order to control the spread of HIV infections among Filipinos.

18 years after its enactment, cases of HIV infections in the Philippines continue to increase. Based on the DOH's Epidemiology Bureau, there were 736 new HIV Ab sero-positive individuals reported to the HIV/AIDS & ART Registry of the Philippines. This figure is 10% higher compared to the same period last year with 667 cases. Very recently, in June of this year, a total of 841 new HIV cases were reported for the sixth month of 2016 in the latest HIV/AIDS Registry of the Philippines (HARP), bringing to an average of 26 the number of people diagnosed with HIV per day in the country from just an average of four in 2010, nine in 2012 and 17 in 2014.

The alarming incidence of increase in cases of HIV infection in our country raises question on whether or not RA 8504 has been effective in raising awareness of Filipinos with regard the spread of HIV/AIDS. It is therefore clear that there is a need to amend RA 8504 in order to strengthen the law and achieve its purpose of halting the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country.

This bill seeks to introduce the following reforms to RA 8504; a) the restructuring of the legal framework on HIV and AIDS; b) the delineation of roles and responsibilities of state institutions involved in HIV and AIDS response; c) the establishment of the National HIV and AIDS Plan, and; d) the strengthening of the stigma reduction mechanisms of the law.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

  
**HON. GARY C. ALEJANO**

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HON. GARY C. ALEJANO

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AN ACT

**STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV) AND ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS) PREVENTION, TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT, AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL HIV AND AIDS PLAN, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8504, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “PHILIPPINE AIDS PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT OF 1998”, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1       **SECTION 1. Title.** - This Act shall be known as the “Philippine HIV and  
2       AIDS Policy Act of 2016”.

3  
4       **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)  
5       and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) are public health concerns that  
6       have wide-ranging social, political, and economic repercussions. Responding to the  
7       HIV and AIDS epidemic is therefore imbued with public interest. Accordingly, the  
8       State shall:

9       (a) Establish policies and programs to prevent the spread of HIV and deliver  
10       treatment, care, and support services to Filipinos living with HIV in accordance with  
11       evidence-based strategies and approaches that follow the principles of human rights,  
12       gender-responsiveness, and meaningful participation of communities affected by the  
13       epidemic;

14       (b) Adopt a multi-sectoral approach in responding to the HIV epidemic by  
15       ensuring that local communities, civil society organizations, and persons living with  
16       HIV are at the center of the process;

17       (c) Remove all barriers to HIV and AIDS-related services by eliminating the  
18       climate of stigma that surrounds the epidemic and the people directly and indirectly  
19       affected by it; and,

(d) Positively address and seek to eradicate conditions that aggravate the spread of HIV infection, which include poverty, gender inequality, prostitution, marginalization, drug abuse and ignorance.

Respect for, protection of and promotion of human rights are the cornerstones of an effective response to the HIV epidemic. The meaningful inclusion and participation of persons directly and indirectly affected by the epidemic, especially persons living with HIV, are crucial in eliminating the virus. Thus, unless otherwise provided in this Act, the confidentiality, anonymity, and non-compulsory nature of HIV testing and HIV-related testing shall always be guaranteed and protected by the State.

Policies and practices that discriminate on the basis of perceived or actual HIV status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, economic status, disability and ethnicity hamper the enjoyment of basic human rights and freedom guaranteed in the Constitution and are deemed inimical to national interest.

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

(a) *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)* refers to a health condition where there is a deficiency of the immune system that stems from infection with HIV, making an individual susceptible to opportunistic infections;

(b) *Antiretroviral (ARV)* refers to the treatment that stops or suppresses viral replication or replications of a retrovirus like HIV, thereby slowing down the progression of infection;

(c) *Civil society organizations (CSOs)* refer to groups of nongovernmental and non-commercial individuals or legal entities that are engaged in non-coerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values;

(d) *Community-based research* refers to research study undertaken in community settings and which involve community members in the design and implementation of research projects;

(e) *Compulsory HIV testing* refers to HIV testing imposed upon an individual characterized by lack of consent, use of force or intimidation, the use of testing as a prerequisite for employment or other purposes, and other circumstances when informed choice is absent;

(f) *Discrimination* refers to unfair or unjust treatment that distinguishes, excludes, restricts, or shows preferences based on any ground such as sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, disability, ethnicity, and HIV status, whether actual or perceived, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons similarly situated, of all rights and freedoms;

(g) *Gender identity* refers to a person's internal and individual experience of gender that may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the person's sense of the body, which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical and other means, and experience of gender, among them, dress, speech, and mannerism;

(h) *Harm reduction* refers to evidence-based policies, programs and approaches that aim to reduce transmission of HIV and its harmful consequences on health, social relations and economic conditions;

(i) *High-risk behavior* refers to a person's frequent involvement in certain activities that increase the risk of transmitting or acquiring HIV;

(j) *Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)* refers to the virus, of the type called retrovirus, which infects cells of the human immune system - mainly CD4positiveT cells and macrophages-key components of the cellular immune system - and destroys or impairs the cells' function. Infection with HIV results in the progressive deterioration of the immune system, leading to immune deficiency;

(k) *HIV counseling* refers to the interpersonal, dynamic communication process between a client and a trained counselor, who is bound by a code of ethics and practice, to resolve personal, social, or psychological problems and difficulties, whose objective, in the context of an HIV diagnosis, is to encourage the client to explore important personal issues, identify ways of coping with anxiety and stress, and plan for the future (keeping healthy, adhering to treatment, and preventing transmission) and counseling in the context of a negative HIV test result that focuses on exploring the client's motivation, options, and skills to stay HIV-negative;

(l) *HIV and AIDS counselor* refers to any individual trained by an institution or organization accredited by the Department of Health (DOH) to provide counseling services on HIV and AIDS with emphasis on behaviour modification;

(m) *HIV and AIDS monitoring* refers to the documentation and analysis of the number of HIV/AIDS infections and the pattern of its spread;

(n) *HIV and AIDS prevention and control* refers to measures aimed at protecting non-infected persons from contracting HIV and minimizing the impact of the condition of persons living with HIV;

(o) *HIV-negative* refers to the absence of HIV or HIV antibodies upon HIV testing;

(p) *HIV-positive* refers to the presence of HIV infection as documented by the presence of HIV or HIV antibodies in the sample being tested;

(q) *HIV-related testing* refers to any laboratory testing or procedure done on an individual regardless of whether the person is HIV positive or negative;

(r) *HIV testing* refers to any facility-based or mobile medical procedure that is conducted to determine the presence or absence of HIV in a person's body. HIV testing is confidential, voluntary in nature and must be accompanied by counseling prior to, and after the testing, and conducted only with the informed consent of the person;

(s) *HIV testing facility* refers to any DOH-accredited in-site or mobile testing center, hospital, clinic, laboratory and other facility that has the capacity to conduct voluntary HIV counseling and HIV testing;

(t) *HIV transmission* refers to the transfer of HIV from one infected person to an uninfected individual, most commonly through sexual intercourse, blood transfusion, sharing of intravenous needles, and vertical transmission;

(u) *Key affected populations at higher risk of HIV exposure or key populations* refer to those groups of persons, as determined by the Philippine National AIDS Council whose behavior make them more likely to be exposed to HIV or to transmit the virus;

(v) *Laboratory* refers to an area or place, including community-based settings, where research studies are being undertaken to further develop local evidence base for effective HIV programs;

(w) *Medical confidentiality* refers to the relationship of trust and confidence created or existing between a patient or a person living with HIV and his attending physician, consulting medical specialist, nurse, medical technologist and all other health workers or personnel involved in any counseling, testing or professional care of the former. It also applies to any person who, in any official capacity, has acquired or may have acquired such confidential information;

(x) *Opportunistic infection* refers to illnesses caused by various organisms, many of which do not cause disease in persons with healthy immune system;

(y) *Partner notification* refers to the process by which the "index client", "source" or "patient", who has a sexually transmitted infection (STI) including HIV, is given support in order to notify and advise the partners that have been exposed to infection. Support includes giving the index client a mechanism to encourage the client's partner to attend counseling, testing and other prevention and treatment services. Confidentiality shall be observed in the entire process;

(z) *Person living with HIV* refers to any individual diagnosed to be infected with HIV;

(aa) *Pre-test counseling* refers to the process of providing an individual information on the biomedical aspects of HIV/AIDS and emotional support to any psychological implications of undergoing HIV testing and the test result itself before the individual is subjected to the test;



1 (bb) *Post-test counseling* refers to the process of providing risk-reduction  
2 information and emotional support to a person who submitted to HIV testing at the  
3 time the result is released;

4 (cc) *Prophylactic* refers to any agent or device used to prevent the  
5 transmission of a disease;

6 (dd) *Provider-initiated counseling and testing* refers to a health care provider  
7 initiating HIV anti-body testing to a person practicing high-risk behavior or  
8 vulnerable to HIV after conducting HIV pre-test counseling.

9 A person may elect to decline or defer testing such that consent is conditional;

10 (ee) *Routine HIV testing* refers to HIV testing recommended at health care  
11 facilities as a standard component of medical care. It is part of the normal standard of  
12 care offered irrespective of whether or not the patient has signs and symptoms of  
13 underlying HIV infection or has other reasons for presenting to the facility; Provided,  
14 That a patient may elect to decline or defer testing;

15 (ff) *Safer sex practices* refer to choices made and behaviors adopted by a  
16 person to reduce or minimize the risk of HIV transmission. These include postponing  
17 sexual debut, non-penetrative sex, correct and consistent use of male or female  
18 condoms, and reducing the number of sexual partners;

19 (gg) *Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)* refer to infections that are spread  
20 through the transfer of organisms from one person to another as a result of sexual  
21 contact;

22 (hh) *Sexual orientation* refers to a person's sexual and emotional attraction to,  
23 or intimate and sexual relationship with, individuals of different, the same, or both  
24 sexes;

25 (ii) Social protection refers to a set of policies and programs designed to  
26 reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labor markets, diminishing  
27 people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against  
28 hazards and interruptions/loss of income;

29 (jj) Stigma refers to the dynamic devaluation and dehumanization of an  
30 individual in the eyes of others which may be based on attributes that are arbitrarily  
31 defined by others as discreditable or unworthy and which result in discrimination  
32 when acted upon;

33 (kk) Treatment hubs refer to private and public hospitals or medical  
34 establishments accredited by the DOH to have the capacity and facility to provide  
35 anti-retroviral treatment;

36 (ll) *Vertical transmission* refers to the process of transmission during  
37 pregnancy, birth, or breastfeeding;

(mm) *Voluntary HIV testing* refers to HIV testing of an individual who, after having undergone pre-test counseling, willingly submits to such test;

(nn) *Vulnerable communities* refer to communities and groups suffering from vulnerabilities such as unequal opportunities, social exclusion, poverty, unemployment, and other similar social, economic, cultural and political conditions, making them more susceptible to HIV infection and to developing AIDS;

(oo) *Window period* refers to the period of time, usually lasting from two (2) weeks to six (6) months during which an infected individual will test “negative” upon HIV testing but can actually transmit the infection; and,

(pp) *Work place* refers to the office, premise or work site where workers are habitually employed and shall include the office or place where workers, with no fixed or definite work site, regularly report for assignment in the course of their employment.

## ARTICLE I

### Philippine National AIDS Council

**SEC. 4. *Establishment of the Philippine National AIDS Council.*** –The Philippine National AIDS Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, is hereby created and shall be the policy-making, planning, coordinating and advisory body of the Philippine National HIV and AIDS Program. It shall be an agency attached to the DOH.

In situations where a gap in the national response has been identified, the Council may catalyze or develop the intervention required for endorsement to appropriate government agencies.

**SEC. 5. *Functions.*** - The Council shall perform the following functions:

(a) Develop the National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan in collaboration with relevant government agencies and CSOs;

(b) Ensure the operationalization and implementation of the National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan;

(c) Coordinate with government agencies and other entities mandated to implement the provisions of this Act;

(d) Develop and ensure the implementation of the guidelines and policies provided in this Act, including other policies that may be necessary to implement the National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan;

(e) Monitor the progress of the epidemic;

(f) Monitor the implementation of the National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan, undertake mid-term assessments and evaluate its impact;

(g) Mobilize sources of fund for the National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan;

(h) Coordinate, organize, and work in partnership with foreign and international organizations regarding funding, data collection, research, and prevention and treatment modalities on HIV and AIDS, and ensure foreign-funded programs are aligned to the national response;

(i) Advocate for policy reforms to Congress and other government agencies to strengthen the country's response to the epidemic; and,

(j) Submit an annual report to the Office of the President, Congress, and the members of the Council.

**SEC. 6. *Membership, Composition, Appointment, Quorum and Term of Office.*** - The following member agencies and CSOs shall be represented in the Council:

(a) The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH);

(b) The Secretary of the Department of Education (DepED);

(c) The Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);

(d) The Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);

(e) The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);

(f) The Secretary of the Department of Justice (DOJ);

(g) The Secretary/Director-General of the Department of Budget and Management/ National Economic and Development Authority;

(h) Four (4) members of the League of City Mayors, each one representing the local government unit (LGU) with the highest number of HIV and AIDS cases in the National Capital Region, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao;

(i) Two (2) representatives from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) which have expertise in standard setting and service delivery;

(j) Seven (7) representatives from NGOs working for the welfare of identified key populations; and,

(k) A representative of an organization of persons living with HIV.

Except for the ex officio members, the other members of the Council shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The heads of government agencies may be represented by an official duly designated by their respective agencies. The



members of the Council shall be appointed not later than thirty (30) days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The presence of the Chairperson or the Vice Chairperson of the Council, and at least seven (7) other Council members and/or permanent alternates shall constitute a quorum to do business, and a majority vote of those present shall be sufficient to pass resolutions or render decisions. The Secretary of Health shall be the permanent Chairperson of the Council. However, the Vice Chairperson shall be elected from the government agency members, and shall serve for a term of six (6) years.

Members representing the CSOs shall serve for a term of three (3) years, renewable upon recommendation of the Council for a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms.

**SEC. 7. Secretariat.** - The Council shall be supported by a Secretariat consisting of personnel with the necessary technical expertise and capability that shall be conferred permanent appointments, subject to Civil Service rules and regulations. The Secretariat shall be headed by an Executive Director, who shall be under the direct supervision of the Chairperson of the Council.

The Secretariat shall perform the following functions;

- (a) Coordinate and manage the day-to-day affairs of the Council;
- (b) Assist in the formulation, monitoring, and evaluation of the National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan and policies;
- (c) Provide technical assistance, support, and advisory services to the Council and its external partners;
- (d) Assist the Council in identifying and building internal and external networks and partnerships;
- (e) Coordinate and support the efforts of the Council and its members to mobilize resources;
- (f) Serve as the clearing house and repository of HIV and AIDS-related information;
- (g) Disseminate updated, accurate, relevant, and comprehensive information about the epidemic to Council members, policy makers, and the media;
- (h) Provide administrative support to the Council; and,
- (i) Act as spokesperson and representative for and in behalf of the Council.

**SEC. 8. National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan.** - A six (6)-year National Multi-Sectoral HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan or an AIDS Medium-Term Plan (AMTP) shall be formulated and periodically updated by the Council. The AMTP shall include the following:

- 1 (a) The country's targets and strategies in addressing the epidemic;
- 2 (b) The prevention, treatment, care and support, and other components of the
- 3 country's response;
- 4 (c) The six (6)-year operationalization of the program and identification of the
- 5 government agencies that shall implement the program, including the designated
- 6 office within each agency responsible for overseeing, coordinating, facilitating and/or
- 7 monitoring the implementation of its AIDS program from the national to the local
- 8 levels; and,
- 9 (d) The budgetary requirements and a corollary investment plan that shall
- 10 identify the sources of funds for its implementation.
- 11

12 **SEC. 9. National HIV and AIDS and STI Prevention and Control Program**

13 **of the DOH.** - The existing National HIV and AIDS and STI Prevention and

14 Control Program (NASPCP) of the DOH, which is composed of qualified medical

15 specialists and support personnel with permanent appointments and with adequate

16 yearly budget, shall coordinate with the Council for the implementation of the health

17 sector's HIV and AIDS and STI response, as identified in the National Multi-Sectoral

18 HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan or the AMTP.

19

20 **SEC. 10. Protection of Human Rights.** - The country's response to the HIV

21 and AIDS phenomena shall be anchored on the principles of human rights and human

22 dignity. Public health concerns shall be aligned with internationally-recognized

23 human rights instruments and standards.

24 Towards this end, the members of the Council, in cooperation with CSOs and

25 in collaboration with the DOJ and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), shall

26 ensure the delivery of nondiscriminatory HFV and AIDS services by government and

27 private HIV and AIDS service providers. Further, the DOH and the CHR, in

28 coordination with the Council, shall take the lead in developing redress mechanisms

29 for persons living with HIV to ensure that their civil, political, economic and social

30 rights are protected.

31

## 32 **ARTICLE II**

### 33 **Education and Information**

34

35 **SEC. 11. Prevention Program.** - There shall be an HIV and AIDS

36 prevention program that shall educate the public on these and other sexually

37 transmitted infections, with the goal of reducing risky behavior, lowering

38 vulnerabilities, and promoting the human rights of persons living with HIV. The

Council shall promote and adopt a range of measures and interventions, in partnership with CSOs that aim to prevent, halt, or control the spread of HIV in the general population, especially among the key populations and vulnerable communities. These measures shall likewise promote the rights, welfare, and participation of persons living with HIV and the affected children, young people, families and partners of persons living with HIV.

The HIV and AIDS prevention programs shall be age-appropriate and based on up-to-date evidence and scientific strategies, and shall actively promote:

(a) Safer sex practices among the general population, especially among key populations;

(b) Safer sex practices that reduce risk of HIV infection;

(c) Universal access to evidence-based and relevant information and education, and medically safe, legally affordable, effective and quality treatment;

(d) Sexual abstinence and sexual fidelity; and,

(e) Consistent and correct condom use.

**Sec. 12. Education in Learning Institutions.** - Using standardized information and data from the Council, the DepED, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), shall integrate basic and age-appropriate instruction on the causes, modes of transmission and ways of preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections in their respective curricula taught in public and private learning institutions, including alternative and indigenous learning systems. The learning modules shall include human rights-based principles and information on treatment, care and support to promote stigma reduction.

The DepED, the CHED and the TESDA shall ensure the development and provision of psychosocial support and counseling in learning institutions for the development of positive health, promotion of values and behavior pertaining to reproductive health in coordination with the DOH. For this purpose, funds shall be allocated for the training and certification of teachers and school counselors.

**SEC. 13. Education as a Right to Health and Information.** - HIV and AIDS education and information dissemination shall form part of the constitutional right to health.

**SEC. 14. Education in the Workplace.** - All public and private employers and employees shall be provided with standardized basic information and instruction on

HIV and AIDS, including topics on confidentiality in the workplace and reduction or elimination of stigma and discrimination.

The DOLE for the private sector and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) for the public sector shall implement this provision. The members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) shall likewise be provided with standardized basic information and instruction on HIV and AIDS by the DOH in partnership with appropriate agencies.

**SEC. 15. *Education for Filipinos Going Abroad.*** - The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) shall, in coordination with the Commission on Filipino Overseas, the DOLE and the Council, ensure that all overseas Filipino workers, including diplomatic, military, trade, labor officials, and personnel and their families to be assigned overseas, shall undergo or attend a seminar on HIV and AIDS, and shall be provided with information on how to access on-site HIV-related services and facilities before certification for overseas assignment.

**SEC. 16. *Information for Tourists and Transients.*** - Educational materials on the causes, modes of transmission, prevention, consequences of HIV infection and list of HIV counseling and testing facilities shall be adequately provided at all international and local ports of entry and exit. The Department of Tourism (DOT), the DFA, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) and the Bureau of Immigration, in coordination with the Council and stakeholders in the tourism industry, shall lead in the implementation of this section.

**SEC. 17. *Education in Communities.*** - The DILG, the League of Provinces, the League of Cities and the League of Municipalities, through the Local HIV and AIDS Council (LAC) or the Local Health Boards and, in coordination with the Council, shall implement a locally-based, multi-sectoral community response to HIV and AIDS by raising awareness about it and ways to curtail its transmission.

Gender and Development (GAD) funds and other sources may be utilized for these purposes.

The DILG, in coordination with the DSWD, shall also conduct age-appropriate HIV and AIDS education for out-of-school youths.

**SEC. 18. *Education for Key Populations and Vulnerable Communities.*** - To ensure that HIV services reach key populations at higher risk, the Council, in collaboration with the LGUs and CSOs engaged in HIV and AIDS programs and projects, shall support and provide funding for HIV and AIDS education programs,

1 such as peer education, support groups, outreach activities and community-based  
2 research that target these populations and other vulnerable communities. The DOH  
3 shall, in coordination with appropriate agencies and the Council, craft the guidelines  
4 and standardized information messages for peer education, support group and  
5 outreach activities.

6  
7 ***SEC. 19. Prevention in Prisons and in Other Closed Settings.*** – All prisons,  
8 rehabilitation centers and other closed-setting institutions shall have comprehensive  
9 STI, HIV and AIDS prevention and control program that includes HIV education and  
10 information, HIV counseling and testing, and access to HIV treatment and care  
11 services. The DOH shall, in coordination with the DILG, the DOJ, and the DSWD,  
12 develop HIV and AIDS comprehensive program and policies which include the HFV  
13 counseling and testing procedures.

14 Persons living with HIV in prisons and in other closed settings shall be  
15 provided HIV treatment, which includes ARV drugs, care and support in accordance  
16 with the national guidelines. Efforts should be undertaken to ensure the continuity of  
17 care at all stages, from admission or imprisonment to release. The provision on  
18 informed consent and confidentiality shall also apply in closed settings.

19  
20 ***SEC. 20. Information on Prophylactics.*** - Appropriate information shall be  
21 attached to or provided with every prophylactic offered for sale or given as a  
22 donation. Such information shall be legibly printed in English and Filipino, and  
23 contain literature on the proper use of the prophylactic device or agent, its efficacy  
24 against HIV and STI, as well as the importance of sexual abstinence and mutual  
25 fidelity.

26  
27 ***SEC. 21. Misinformation on HIV and AIDS.*** - Misinformation on HIV and  
28 AIDS, which includes false and misleading advertising and claims in any of the  
29 multimedia or the promotional marketing of drugs, devices, agents or procedures  
30 without prior approval from the DOH through the Food and Drug Administration  
31 (FDA) and without the requisite medical and scientific basis, including markings and  
32 indications in drugs and devices or agents, purporting to be a cure or a fail-safe  
33 prophylactic for HIV infection, shall be prohibited.



## Preventive Measures, Safe Practices and Procedures

**SEC. 22. *Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention.*** - The Council, in coordination with the DOH, LGUs, and other relevant government agencies, private sector, CSOs, faith-based organizations, and persons living with HIV, shall support preventive measures that shall focus on the positive roles of persons living with HIV. Such preventive measures shall include the following:

(a) Creation of rights-based and community-led behavior modification programs that seek to encourage HIV risk reduction behavior among persons living with HIV;

(b) Establishment and enforcement of rights-based mechanisms to strongly encourage newly tested HIV-positive individuals to conduct partner notification and to promote HIV status disclosure to sexual partners;

(c) Establishment of standard precautionary measures in public and private health facilities;

(d) Accessibility of ARV treatment and management of opportunistic infections; and,

(e) Mobilization of communities of persons living with HIV for public awareness campaigns and stigma reduction activities.

The enforcement of this section shall not lead to or result in the discrimination or violation of the rights of persons living with HIV.

**SEC 23. *Harm Reduction Strategies.*** - The DILG and the DOH, in close coordination with the Dangerous Drugs Board and in partnership with the key affected population, shall establish a human rights and evidenced-based HIV prevention policy and program for people who use and inject drugs.

The presence of used or unused condoms, other safer sex paraphernalia and sterile injecting equipment shall not be used as basis to conduct raids or similar police operations in sites and venues of HIV prevention interventions. The DILG and the DOH, in coordination with the Dangerous Drugs Board, shall establish a national policy to guarantee the implementation of this provision.

**SEC. 24. *Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission.*** - The DOH shall implement a program to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission that shall be integrated into its maternal and child health services.

1           **SEC. 25. *Standard Precaution on the Donation of Blood, Tissue, or Organ.***

2   - The DOH shall enforce the following guidelines on donation of blood, tissue, or  
3   organ;

4           (a) A donation of tissue or organ, whether gratuitous or onerous, shall be  
5   accepted by a laboratory or institution only after a sample from the donor has been  
6   tested negative for HIV;

7           (b) All donated blood shall also be subject to HIV testing. HIV-positive blood  
8   shall be disposed of properly and immediately; and,

9           (c) A second testing may be demanded, as a matter of right, by the blood,  
10   tissue, or organ recipients or their immediate relatives before transfusion or  
11   transplant, except during emergency cases.

12           Donations of blood, tissue, or organ testing positive for HIV may be accepted  
13   for research purposes only, and shall be subject to strict sanitary disposal  
14   requirements.

15  
16           **SEC. 26. *Standard Precaution on Surgical and Other Similar Procedures.*** -

17   The DOH shall, in consultation with concerned professional organizations and  
18   hospital associations, issue guidelines on precautions against HIV transmission during  
19   surgical, dental, embalming, body painting or tattooing that require the use of needles  
20   or similar procedures. The necessary protective equipment such as gloves, goggles  
21   and gowns shall be prescribed and required, and made available to all physicians and  
22   health care providers, tattoo artists, and similarly exposed personnel at all times.

23  
24                           **ARTICLE IV**

25                           **Testing, Screening and Counseling**

26  
27           **SEC. 27. *Voluntary HIV Testing.*** - As a policy, the State shall encourage  
28   voluntary HIV testing. Written consent from the person taking the test must be  
29   obtained before HIV testing. If the person is below fifteen (15) years of age or is  
30   mentally incapacitated, such consent shall be obtained from the child's parents, legal  
31   guardian or, whenever applicable, from the licensed social worker, licensed health  
32   service provider or a DOH-accredited health service provider assigned to provide  
33   health services to the child.

34           HIV testing and counseling shall be made available to a child who is fifteen  
35   (15) years old but below eighteen (18) years of age, who requests to undergo these  
36   procedures and counseling and other related services under any of the following  
37   conditions:

(a) The child expresses the intention to submit to HIV testing and counseling and other related services;

(b) Reasonable efforts were undertaken to locate, provide counseling to, and obtain consent of parents, but the parents are absent or cannot be located, or otherwise refuse to give their consent. In this case, consent shall be obtained from the child's legal guardian or, whenever applicable, from licensed social worker, licensed health service provider or a DOH-accredited health service provider assigned to provide health services to the child. The licensed social worker, health care provider or other health care professional shall determine if the child is "at higher risk of HIV exposure" as defined in this Act, and that the conduct of the testing and counseling is in the child's best interest and welfare; and,

(c) In every circumstance, proper counseling shall be conducted by a social worker, a health care provider or other health care professional accredited by the DOH or the DSWD,

**SEC. 28. Compulsory HIV Testing.** - Compulsory HIV testing shall be allowed only in the following instances:

(a) When it is necessary to test a person who is charged with any of the offenses punishable under Articles 264, 266, 335 and 338 of "The Revised Penal Code", as amended by Republic Act No. 8353, otherwise known as "The Anti-Rape Law of 1997";

(b) When it is necessary to resolve relevant issues under Executive Order No. 209, otherwise known as "The Family Code of the Philippines"; and,

(c) As a prerequisite in the donation of blood in compliance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 7170, otherwise known as the "Organ Donation Act of 1991", and Republic Act No. 7719, otherwise known as the "National Blood Services Act of 1994".

**SEC. 29. HIV Counseling and Testing.** - To ensure access to voluntary and confidential HIV testing, which shall include client-initiated HIV testing and routine provider-initiated testing, the DOH shall:

(a) Accredite public and private HIV testing facilities based on capacity to deliver testing services including HIV counseling: Provided, That only DOH-accredited HIV testing facilities shall be allowed to conduct HIV testing;

(b) Develop the guidelines for HIV counseling and testing, including mobile HIV counseling and testing and routine provider-initiated HIV counseling and testing that shall ensure, among others, that HIV testing is based on informed consent, is

1 voluntary and confidential, is available at all times, and provided by qualified persons  
2 and DOH-accredited providers;

3 (c) Accredit institutions or organizations that train HIV and AIDS counselors  
4 in coordination with the DSWD; and,

5 (d) Set the standards for HIV counseling and work closely with HIV and  
6 AIDS CSOs that train HIV and AIDS counselors and peer educators in coordination  
7 and participation of NGOs, government organizations (GOs) and Civil Society  
8 Organization-People Living with HIV (CSO-PLHIV).

9 All HIV testing facilities shall provide free pre-test and post-test HIV  
10 counseling to individuals who wish to avail of HIV testing, which shall likewise be  
11 confidential. No HIV testing shall be conducted without informed consent. The State  
12 shall ensure that specific approaches to HIV counseling and testing are adopted based  
13 on the nature and extent of HIV/AIDS incidence in the country.

14 The DOH shall also ensure access to routine HIV testing as part of clinical  
15 care in all health care settings.

## 16 17 **ARTICLE V**

### 18 **Health and Support Services**

19  
20 **SEC. 30. *Access to Treatment by Indigents.*** - The DOH shall establish a  
21 program that will provide free and accessible ARV treatment to all indigents living  
22 with HIV who are enrolled in the program. Free medication for opportunistic  
23 infections shall be made available to all indigents in the government treatment hubs.  
24 It shall likewise designate public and private hospitals to become satellite hubs with  
25 an established HIV and AIDS Core Team (HACT). A manual of procedures for  
26 management of PLHIV shall be developed by the DOH.

27  
28 **SEC. 31. *Economic Empowerment and Support.*** - Persons living with HIV  
29 shall not be deprived of any employment, livelihood, micro-finance, self-help, and  
30 cooperative programs by reason of their HIV status. The DSWD, in coordination with  
31 the DILG, the DOLE and the TESDA, shall develop enabling policies and guidelines  
32 to ensure economic empowerment and independence designed for persons living with  
33 HIV.

34  
35 **SEC. 32. *Care and Support for Persons Living with HIV.*** - The DSWD, in  
36 coordination with the DOH and the TESDA, shall develop care and support programs  
37 for persons living with HIV, which shall include peer-led counseling and support,  
38 social protection, welfare assistance, and mechanisms for case management. These

1 programs shall include care and support for the affected children, families and  
2 partners of persons living with HIV.  
3

4 **SEC. 33. *Care and Support for Overseas Workers Living with HIV.*** - The  
5 Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), in coordination with the  
6 DSWD, the DFA, the Commission on Filipino Overseas and the Bureau of  
7 Quarantine, shall develop a program to provide a stigma-free comprehensive  
8 reintegration, care and support program, including economic, social and medical  
9 support, for overseas workers, regardless of employment status and stage in the  
10 migration process.  
11

12 **SEC. 34. *Testing of Organ Donation.*** - Lawful consent to HIV testing of a  
13 donated human body, organ, tissue or blood shall be considered as having been given  
14 when;

15 (a) A person volunteers or freely agrees to donate one's blood, organ, or tissue  
16 for transfusion, transplantation, or research; and,

17 (b) A legacy and a donation are executed in accordance with Sections 3 and 4,  
18 respectively, of Republic Act No. 7170, otherwise known as the "Organ Donation Act  
19 of 1991".  
20

21 **SEC. 35. *HIV Anti-Body Testing for Pregnant Women.*** - A health care  
22 provider who offers pre-natal medical care shall routinely conduct HIV screening  
23 with an opt-out HIV testing for pregnant women. The DOH shall provide the  
24 necessary guidelines for health care providers in the conduct of the screening  
25 procedure.  
26

27 **SEC. 36. *Immunity from Suit for HIV Educators, Licensed Social Workers,***  
28 ***Health Workers and Other HIV and AIDS Service Providers.*** — Any person  
29 involved in the provision of HIV and AIDS services, including peer educators, shall  
30 be immune from suit, arrest or prosecution, and from civil, criminal or administrative  
31 liability, on the basis of their delivery of such services in HIV prevention, or in  
32 relation to the legitimate exercise of protective custody of children, whenever  
33 applicable. This immunity does not cover acts which are committed in violation of  
34 this Act.  
35

36 **SEC. 37. *Health Insurance.*** - The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation  
37 (PhilHealth) shall develop an insurance package for persons living with HIV that  
38 shall include coverage for inpatient and outpatient medical and diagnostic services,



1 including medication and treatment, and a set of benefits to the unborn and newborn  
2 child infected by their mothers. Additionally, it shall set a reference price for HIV  
3 services in government hospitals and conduct programs to educate the human  
4 resource units of companies on the PhilHealth package on HIV and AIDS.

5 The PhilHealth shall enforce confidentiality in the provision of these packages  
6 to persons living with HIV.

7 No person living with HIV shall be denied or deprived of private health  
8 insurance by a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) and private life insurance  
9 coverage by a life insurance company on the basis of the person's HIV status. The  
10 Insurance Commission shall enforce the provision of life insurance coverage by  
11 persons applying for such services and shall develop the necessary policies to ensure  
12 compliance.

13  
14 **SEC. 38. HIV and AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation.** — The DOH shall  
15 maintain a comprehensive HIV and AIDS monitoring and evaluation program that  
16 shall serve the following purposes:

17 (a) Determine and monitor the magnitude and progression of HIV and AIDS  
18 in the Philippines to help the national government evaluate the adequacy and efficacy  
19 of HIV prevention and treatment programs being employed;

20 (b) Receive, collate, process and evaluate all HIV and AIDS-related medical  
21 reports from all hospitals, clinics, laboratories and testing centers, including HIV-  
22 related deaths and relevant data from public and private hospitals, various databanks  
23 or information systems; Provided, That it shall adopt a coding system that ensures  
24 anonymity and confidentiality; and,

25 (c) Submit, through its Secretariat, an annual report to the Council containing  
26 the findings of its monitoring and evaluation activities in compliance with this  
27 mandate.

## 28 29 **ARTICLE VI** 30 **Confidentiality**

31  
32 **SEC. 39. Confidentiality.** - The confidentiality and privacy of any individual  
33 who has been tested for HFV, exposed to HIV, has HIV infection or HIV and AIDS-  
34 related illnesses, or was treated for HIV-related illnesses shall be guaranteed. The  
35 following acts violate confidentiality and privacy:

36 (a) Disclosure of Confidential HIV and AIDS Information - Unless otherwise  
37 provided in Section 40 of this Act, it shall be unlawful to disclose, without written

1 consent, information that a person had HIV-related test and AIDS, has HIV infection  
2 or HIV-related illnesses, or has been exposed to HIV.

3 The prohibition shall apply to any person, natural or juridical, whose work or  
4 function involves the implementation of this Act or the delivery of HIV-related  
5 services, including those who handle or have access to personal data or information in  
6 the workplace, and who, pursuant to the receipt of the required written consent from  
7 the subject of confidential HIV and AIDS information, have subsequently been  
8 granted access to the same confidential information.

9 (b) Media Disclosure - It shall be unlawful for any editor, publisher, reporter  
10 or columnist, in case of printed materials, announcer or producer in case of television  
11 and radio broadcasting, producer and director of films in case of the movie industry,  
12 to disclose the name, picture, or any information that would reasonably identify any  
13 person living with HIV or AIDS, or any confidential HIV and AIDS information,  
14 without the prior written consent of their subject.

15  
16 **SEC. 40. Exceptions.** - Confidential HIV and AIDS information may be  
17 released by HIV testing facilities without written consent in the following instances:

18 (a) When complying with reportorial requirements of the national active and  
19 passive surveillance system of the DOH: Provided, That the information related to a  
20 person's identity shall remain confidential;

21 (b) When informing other health workers directly involved in the treatment or  
22 care of a person living with HIV: Provided, That such worker shall be required to  
23 perform the duty of shared medical confidentiality; and,

24 (c) When responding to a subpoena duces tecum and subpoena ad  
25 testificandum issued by a court with jurisdiction over a legal proceeding where the  
26 main issue is the HIV status of an individual: Provided, That the confidential medical  
27 record, after having been verified for accuracy by the head of the office or  
28 department, shall remain anonymous and unlinked and shall be properly sealed by its  
29 lawful custodian, hand delivered to the court, and personally opened by the judge:  
30 Provided, further, That the judicial proceedings shall be held in executive session.

31  
32 **SEC. 41. Release of HIV-Related Test Results.** — The result of any test  
33 related to HIV shall be released by the attending physician who provides pre- and  
34 post-test counseling only to the individual who submitted to the test. If the patient is  
35 below fifteen (15) years old, an orphan, or is mentally incapacitated, the result may  
36 be released to either of the patient's parents, legal guardian, or a duly assigned  
37 licensed social worker, whichever is applicable.

**SEC. 42. Disclosure to Sexual Partners.** - Any person who, after having been tested, is found to be infected with HFV, is strongly encouraged to disclose this health condition to the spouse or sexual partner prior to engaging in penetrative sex or any potential exposure to HIV. A person living with HIV may opt to seek help from qualified professionals including medical professionals, health workers, peer educators, or social workers to support him in disclosing this health condition to one's partner or spouse. Confidentiality shall likewise be observed. Further, the DOH, through the Council, shall establish an enabling environment to encourage newly tested HIV-positive individuals to disclose their status to sexual partners.

SEC. 43. *Duty of Employers, Heads of Government Offices, Heads of Public and Private Schools or Training Institutions, and Local Chief Executives.* -

It shall be the duty of private employers, heads of government offices, heads of public and private schools or training institutions, and local chief executives over all private establishments within their territorial jurisdiction to prevent or deter acts of discrimination against persons living with HIV, and to provide procedures for the resolution, settlement, or prosecution of acts of discrimination. Towards this end, the employer, head of office, or local chief executive shall:

(a) Promulgate rules and regulations prescribing the procedure for the investigation of discrimination cases and the administrative sanctions thereof; and,

(b) Create a permanent committee on the investigation of discrimination cases. The committee shall conduct meetings to increase the members' knowledge and understanding of HIV and AIDS, and to prevent incidents of discrimination. It shall also conduct the administrative investigation of alleged cases of discrimination.

## ARTICLE VII

### Discriminatory Acts and Practices

SEC. 44. The following are discriminatory acts and practices and shall be prohibited:

(a) Discrimination in the Workplace - The rejection of job application, termination of employment, or other discriminatory policies in hiring, provision of employment and other related benefits, promotion or assignment of an individual solely or partially on the basis of actual, perceived, or suspected HIV status;

(b) Discrimination in Learning Institutions - Refusal of admission, expulsion, segregation, imposition of harsher disciplinary actions, or denial of benefits or services of a student or a prospective student solely or partially on the basis of actual, perceived, or suspected HIV status;

(c) Restriction on Travel and Habitation. - Restrictions on travel within the Philippines, refusal of lawful entry to Philippine territory, deportation from the Philippines, or the quarantine or enforced isolation of travelers solely or partially on account of actual, perceived, or suspected HIV status is discriminatory; the same standard of protection shall be afforded to migrants, visitors and residents who are not Filipino citizens.

Restrictions on housing or lodging solely or partially on the basis of actual, perceived, or suspected HIV status;

(d) Inhibition from Public Services - Prohibition on the right to seek an elective or appointive public office solely or partially on the basis of actual, perceived, or suspected HIV status;

(e) Exclusion from Credit and Insurance Services - Exclusion from health, accident, or life insurance, credit and loan services, including the extension of such loan or insurance facilities, of an individual solely or partially on the basis of actual, perceived, or suspected HIV status: Provided, That the person living with HIV has not misrepresented the fact to the insurance company or loan or credit service provider upon application;

(f) Discrimination in Hospitals and Health Institutions - Denial of health services, or be charged with a higher fee, on the basis of actual, perceived, or suspected HIV status; and,

(g) Denial of Burial Services - Denial of embalming and burial services for a deceased person who had HIV and AIDS or who was known, suspected or perceived to be HIV-positive.

**SEC. 45. Penalties.** - The corresponding penalties shall be imposed upon:

(a) Any person who commits the prohibited act under Section 21 of this Act shall upon conviction, suffer the penalty of imprisonment of two (2) months to two (2) years, without prejudice to the imposition of fines and administrative sanctions, such as suspension or revocation of professional or business license;

(b) Any person who violates the last paragraph of Section 23 of this Act shall, upon conviction, suffer the penalty of imprisonment of one (1) year to five (5) years and a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00): Provided, That the law enforcement agents found guilty shall be removed from public service;

(c) Any person who knowingly or negligently causes another to get infected with HIV in the course of the practice of profession through unsafe and unsanitary practice and procedure shall, upon conviction, suffer the penalty of imprisonment of

1 six (6) years to twelve (12) years, without prejudice to the imposition of fines and  
2 administrative sanctions, such as suspension or revocation of professional license.

3 The permit or license of the business entity and the accreditation of the HIV  
4 testing centers may be cancelled or withdrawn if these establishments fail to maintain  
5 safe practices and procedures as may be required by the guidelines formulated in  
6 compliance with Sections 25 and 26 of this Act;

7 (d) Any person who violates Section 36 of this Act shall, upon conviction,  
8 suffer the penalty of imprisonment of six (6) months to five (5) years and/or a fine of  
9 not less than One hundred thousand pesos (Php100,000.00) but not more than Five  
10 hundred thousand pesos (Php500,000.00); Provided, That if the person who violates  
11 this provision is a law enforcement agent or a public official, administrative sanctions  
12 may be imposed in addition to imprisonment and/or fine, at the discretion of the  
13 court;

14 (e) Any person, natural or juridical, who denies life insurance coverage of any  
15 person living with HIV in violation of Section 37 of this Act shall, upon conviction,  
16 suffer the penalty of imprisonment of six (6) months to five (5) years and/or a fine of  
17 not less than fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) but not more than five hundred  
18 thousand pesos (P500,000.00), at the discretion of the court, and without prejudice to  
19 the imposition of administrative sanctions such as fines, suspension or revocation of  
20 business permit, business license or accreditation, and professional license;

21 (f) Any person, natural or juridical, who violates the provisions of Section 39  
22 of this Act shall, upon conviction, suffer the penalty of imprisonment of six (6)  
23 months to five (5) years and/or a fine of not less than Fifty thousand pesos  
24 (Php50,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00), or  
25 both imprisonment and fine, at the discretion of the court, and without prejudice to  
26 the imposition of administrative sanctions such as suspension or revocation of  
27 business permit, business license or accreditation, and professional license;

28 (g) Any person, natural or juridical, who shall violate any of the provisions in  
29 Section 44 shall, upon conviction, suffer the penalty of imprisonment of six (6)  
30 months to five (5) years and/or a fine of not less than Fifty thousand pesos  
31 (P50,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00), at the  
32 discretion of the court, and without prejudice to the imposition of administrative  
33 sanctions such as fines, suspension or revocation of business permit, business license  
34 or accreditation, and professional license; and,

35 (h) Any person who has obtained knowledge of confidential HIV and AIDS  
36 information and uses such information to malign or cause damage, injury or loss to  
37 another person shall face liability under Articles 19, 20, 21, and 26 of the new Civil  
38 Code of the Philippines.



1 Fines and penalties collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the  
2 National Treasury.

3  
4 **SEC. 46. Appropriations.** - The amount needed for the initial implementation  
5 of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations for the DOH. Thereafter, such  
6 sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be  
7 included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

8 The funding requirement needed to provide for the health insurance package  
9 and other services for persons living with HIV as stated in Section 37 hereof shall be  
10 charged against the PhilHealth's corporate funds.

11  
12 **SEC. 47. Transitory Provision.** - The personnel designated by the DOH as  
13 Secretariat of the Council under Section 7 of this Act shall be absorbed as permanent  
14 personnel to fill the positions of the Secretariat as provided in this Act.

15  
16 **SEC. 48. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - The Council, within ninety  
17 (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, shall promulgate the necessary rates and  
18 regulations for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

19  
20 **SEC. 49. Repealing Clause.** - Republic Act No. 8504, otherwise known as the  
21 "Philippine AIDS Prevention and Control Act of 1998", is hereby repealed.

22 All decrees, executive orders, proclamations and administrative regulations or  
23 parts thereof, particularly in Republic Act No. 3815, otherwise known as "The  
24 Revised Penal Code"; Republic Act No. 8353, otherwise known as "The Anti-Rape  
25 Law of 1997"; Executive Order No. 209, otherwise known as "The Family Code of  
26 the Philippines"; Republic Act No. 7719, otherwise known as the "National Blood  
27 Services Act of 1994"; Republic Act No. 9165, otherwise known as the  
28 "Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002"; and Republic Act No. 7170,  
29 otherwise known as the "Organ Donation Act of 1991", inconsistent with the  
30 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

31  
32 **SEC. 50. Separability Clause.** - If any provision or part of this Act is declared  
33 unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full  
34 force and effect.

35  
36 **SEC. 51. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
37 complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,