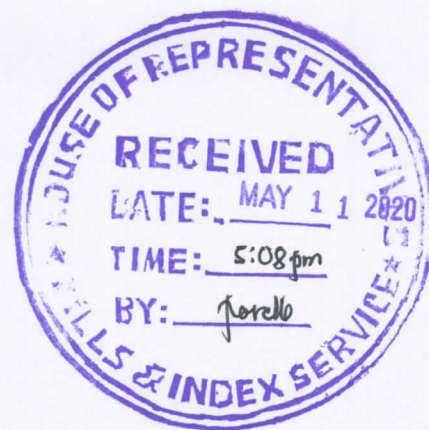


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6719



Introduced by Hon. Anthony Peter “Onyx” D. Crisologo

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A PANDEMIC, EPIDEMIC, OUTBREAKS AND
OTHER NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES COUNCIL

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The occurrence of Corona Virus Disease 2019 has challenged the capacity of the Philippines to combat Public Health Emergencies. It has shown the gaps that need to be remedied to allow for a more effective crisis management strategy, and has demonstrated the importance of early preparation, exhaustive data gathering, and sustained thorough assessment of the situation.

The welfare of the people during a national crisis is heavily dependent on the preparedness of the government. It is imperative to ensure that the policies in place are responsive to their needs, and that the existing strategic plans are constantly and efficiently developed, monitored, and evaluated.

This bill seeks to create a government body that will focus on the preparation of the country to face public health emergencies, and provide mandate to immediately mobilize all agencies concerned to control and manage the effects of health crises to the country.

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


ANTHONY PETER “ONYX” D. CRISOLOGO

Representative
First District, Quezon City

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*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 “*National Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Act of 2020.*”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy- It is hereby declared a policy of the state to guarantee the welfare of the people by ensuring its capacity to combat health issues that threaten the safety of its people. Therefore, the state shall devise a comprehensive national contingency plan that will strengthen its response to public health emergencies.

SECTION 3. Creation of Public Health Emergency Council- A Public Health Emergency Council is hereby created to spearhead the strategic planning of the country to address public health emergencies such as pandemics, epidemics, outbreaks, etc. The council shall be composed of the following:

- a. Secretary of the Department of Health as the Chairman of the Council;
- b. All Philippine Department Secretaries as members;
- c. Chairman of the National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Council (NDRRMC) as member;
- d. Three representatives from the business sector; and
- e. Other government agencies that the President and the Chairman of the Council may deem necessary.

SECTION 4. Roles and Responsibilities of the Council - The roles and responsibilities of the Council shall include the following:

- a. Monitor emerging national and international public health concerns;

b. Prepare the necessary measures when a national health emergency occurs, and develop three response timeframes: Immediate, Intermediate, and Extended:¹

1. Immediate - Initial assessment of the situation, identification of significant health response objectives, communication with all relevant medical and health agencies, ensuring the availability of facilities and stockpile of essential medical supplies that might be needed², and research and documentation of all necessary information,³

2. Intermediate - Review of the significance of the health response objectives in relation to the actual needs of the country after the initial assessment of all the information gathered during the Immediate Response; Development of response activities to address the concerns of the citizens; Provision of assistance and information to the people; Assessment of the existing monitoring systems of the country to establish an enhanced process of data collection and analysis;⁴

3. Extended - Continuation of the assessment of the situation and the effectivity of the response activities to fix the gaps in previous operations; Consultation and sharing of information and technology with other countries to learn from each other's experiences and initiatives in developing solutions to the Public Health Emergency.

c. Establish an elaborate **Information Dissemination Plan** to ensure that the public is informed;

d. Create mechanisms to ensure the adequate number of human resources in the country to combat the Public Health Emergency;

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Public Health Emergency Response Guide*. 2nd ed., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011, p.11.

² Magnusson, Roger. *Advancing the Right to Health: The Vital Role of Law*. University of Sydney, 2017, p. 166.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Public Health Emergency Response Guide*. 2nd ed., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011, pp. 12-21

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Public Health Emergency Response Guide*. 2nd ed., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011, pp. 23-30

e. Develop a strong and clear system of coordination and collaboration among agencies responding to the Public Health Emergency;

f. Submit a weekly report on the status of the Public Health Emergency to the Office of the President and Congress.

g. Prepare a **Post-Public Health Emergency Plan** to address economic setbacks and other longterm effects brought by the crisis.

SECTION 5. Appropriations - The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 6. Separability Clause - If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is held invalid, all other provisions not affected shall remain valid.

SECTION 7. Repealing Clause- All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or other issuances or parts thereof contrary to inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 8. Effectivity- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved