

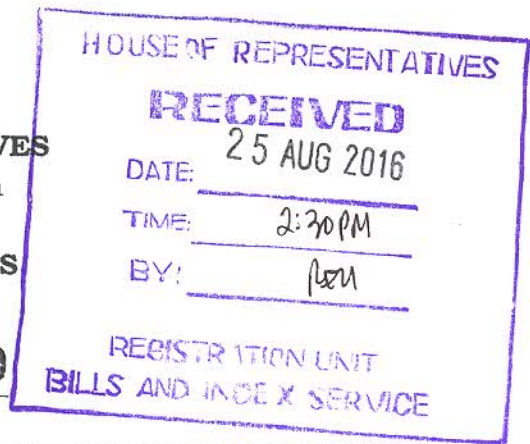
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Quezon City, Metro Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3339



Introduced by **Honorable Estrellita B. Suansing**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill provides for the establishment of the Farmers' Medical Center in the Municipality of Zaragoza, Province of Nueva Ecija, defining its powers and functions and appropriating funds therefor.

The country's agricultural sector plays a pivotal role in propelling economic growth and development and ultimately eradicating the incidence of poverty throughout the country. Through the years, the government has been embarking on vital programs and projects such as the agricultural modernization and agrarian reform to help farmers and farm workers become economically secure.

The establishment of the Farmers' Medical Center (FMC) further strengthens the government's commitment to the farmers and farm workers by providing for them a specialized institution that will render its services and facilities solely for their benefit. The FMC will function not only as a medical facility but will also engage in scientific research on diseases afflicting farmers, among others, and publishing such research; encourage and undertake the training of medical health workers; and encourage the formation of other organizations on the national, provincial, city, municipal or barangay level and to coordinate various efforts and activities for the purpose of achieving a more programmatic approach on the common problems plaguing our farmers.

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


ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING

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

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
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HOUSE BILL NO. 3339

Introduced by **Honorable Estrellita B. Suansing**

AN ACT

PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FARMERS' MEDICAL CENTER (FMC) TO BE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ZARAGOZA, PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIJA, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Creation of the Farmers Medical Center. – There is hereby created a corporate body, for the primary benefit of farmers, farm workers and their families to be known as the Farmers' Medical Center (FMC), hereinafter referred to in this Act as FMC, which is hereby categorized as a Government Owned or Controlled Corporation (GOCC).

SECTION 2. Board of Trustees. – The Farmers' Medical Center shall be administered by a Board of Trustees which shall be composed of nine (9) regular members. The appointive members of the Board of Trustees shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Board of Trustees shall elect a Chairman from among themselves, who shall be the presiding officer of the Board of Trustees. The Medical Director of the Farmers Medical Center shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 3. Composition of the Board. – The Board of Trustees shall be composed of the following members:

- a) Three (3) members from the Philippine Medical Association (PMA);
- b) Three (3) members from the academe particularly the Allied Medical Sciences;

- c) Three (3) members from the duly registered farming federations and cooperatives who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines upon recommendation of the Secretary of Agriculture.

Provided, That the Secretaries of Health, Agriculture and Social Welfare and Development or their duly designated representatives and the Chairperson of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes (PSCO) and the Chairperson of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) or their duly designated representative shall be *ex-officio* members of the Board.

SECTION 4. Term of Office and Compensation. – The regular members of the Board of Trustees shall serve for a term of four (4) years. In case of vacancy, the Board shall be filled by appointment by the President of the Philippines. The appointee shall only serve for the unexpired term of his predecessor.

The members of the Board of Trustees shall not be compensated but shall be entitled to receive per diems equivalent to three thousand pesos (P3,000.00) per Board of Trustees meeting. *Provided*, That the *ex-officio* members of the Board of Trustees shall not be compensated nor shall they be entitled to receive per diems for Board of Trustees meetings.

SECTION 5. Quorum of the Board of Trustees. – Six (6) regular members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum to transact business and any decision of such six (6) members on any matter duly presented to the Board of Trustees shall constitute a valid and binding act of the Farmers' Medical Center.

SECTION 6. Purposes and Objectives. – The purposes and objectives of the Farmers' Medical Center are as follows:

- 1) To construct, establish, operate and maintain a medical center for farmers, farm workers and their families;
- 2) To make medical facilities and equipment necessary for prevention and treatment of diseases accessible and provide chronic, long term, and palliative services available to patients and implement a community-based program, in close coordination with local government units, that promotes preventive healthcare.
- 3) To promote, encourage, and engage in scientific research on the prevention and care and/or treatment of common sickness and diseases among farmer patients and related activities, including sponsorship and conduct of relevant congresses, conventions, seminars and conferences;
- 4) To stimulate and/or underwrite scientific researches on the biological, demographic, social, economic, eugenic, physiological aspects of common or rare illnesses of patients; and gather, compile and publish the findings of such researches for public dissemination;

- 5) To facilitate and encourage the dissemination and exchange of ideas and information on the prevention, treatment, and control of such diseases; to arouse, enhance and develop public interest or awareness;
- 6) To encourage and/or undertake the training of physicians, nurses, medical technicians, health officers and social workers on the practical and scientific conduct and implementation of medical services and other related activities;
- 7) To encourage the formation of other organizations on the national, provincial, city, municipal or barangay level and to coordinate various efforts and activities for the purpose of achieving a more programmatic approach on the common problems relative to the objective herein enumerated; and
- 8) To extend medical services to the farmers, farm workers and their families, to help prevent, relieve or alleviate their sufferings and uplift their living conditions.

SECTION 7. Powers and Functions. – For the attainment and/or furtherance of the above mentioned purposes and objectives, the Farmers' Medical Center, as a corporate body, acting through its Board of Trustees, shall have all the powers and functions pertaining to a juridical person, and is therefore authorized, among other things:

- 1) To acquire, hold and own in any manner, property of whatever nature or description, and to dispose of such property under any mode of encumbrance or conveyance;
- 2) To enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every kind and for any purpose with any person, firm, association or corporation, whether public or private, domestic or foreign;
- 3) To mortgage, lease, sell, transfer, convey or otherwise dispose of its properties;
- 4) To solicit, receive donations, endowments, and funds in the form of contributions, whether cash or in kind, from both the public and private sectors;
- 5) To open such accounts in banks and other financial institutions and to disburse funds or invest the same as the Board of Trustees may direct or authorize to accomplish or advance the purpose or interest of the Farmers' Medical Center;

- 6) To invite foreign medical specialists and similar experts in the various medical fields to train the personnel or trainees or residents of the Farmers' Medical Center;
- 7) To send the personnel of the Farmers' Medical Center to research institutes, medical institutes or universities for advance training or observation and to attend international or regional conventions, conferences, congresses, and seminars as the Board may deem necessary to accomplish the purposes and objectives of the Farmers' Medical Center;
- 8) To adopt a set of by-laws, rules and regulations consistent with existing laws and the provisions of this Act to govern the administration and operation of the affairs of the Medical Center;
- 9) To establish, operate and maintain branches of Farmers' Medical Center in other key regions, provinces or cities as may be deemed necessary by the Board of Trustees in close consultation and coordination with the Secretary of Department of Health; and
- 10) To do such other acts and functions as may be necessary for or incidental to the accomplishment of the purposes and objectives of the Farmers' Medical Center.

SECTION 8. Property of the Farmers' Medical Center. – The property of the Farmers' Medical Center shall consist of the real, personal, mixed and other types of property, now owned or reserved for or may hereafter be given, acquired, transferred or conveyed to the Farmers' Medical Center by the Philippine government, its branches or instrumentalities, any foreign government, as well as by trust, foundations, corporations, or persons, alien or domestic, in order to carry out its purposes and objective as set forth in herein.

SECTION 9. Tax Exemptions. – All donations, contributions or endowments which may be made by entities or persons to the FMC shall be exempt from tax of any nature or kind. The importation of equipment and supplies by the FMC shall likewise be exempt from tax, duties and tariff of any nature or kind. Furthermore, the FMC shall be exempt from the payment of taxes, charges and fees being imposed by the government, its political subdivisions or instrumentalities, including local government units for equipment purchased for its use.

SECTION. 10. Government Contribution. – The government shall contribute the necessary land, building, equipment and facilities to the Farmers' Medical Center, and shall pay for such obligations for real, personal and mixed properties arising from such undertaking.

SECTION 11. Assistance from Government Offices. – The Farmers' Medical Center may call upon any department, bureau, office, agency or instrumentality of the Government, including government owned or controlled corporations such as but not limited to the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), for such assistance as it may need in the pursuit of its purposes and objectives;

SECTION 12. Appropriations. – The amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated as contribution of the National Government for the initial operations and maintenance of the Farmers' Medical Center, which shall be appropriated and included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Secretary of Health in consultation with the Secretaries of Social Welfare and Development and Agriculture shall issue the necessary rules and regulations within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 14. Auditing. – The books and accounts of the Farmers' Medical Center shall be subject to periodic auditing by the Chairman of the Commission on Audit or his duly authorized representative.

SECTION 15. Annual Report. – The Farmers' Medical Center shall render to the President of the Philippines, the Secretary of Health and the Congress of the Philippines, an annual report of its activities and recommendations.

SECTION 16. Effect of Dissolution of the Center. – If for any reason, the Farmers' Medical Center is dissolved, its property remaining at the time of such dissolution shall revert back to the Philippine government for disposition in accordance with existing laws.

SECTION 17. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, rules and regulations, issuances or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 18. Separability Clause. – If any part or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other parts or provisions hereof shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 19. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

Republic of the Philippines