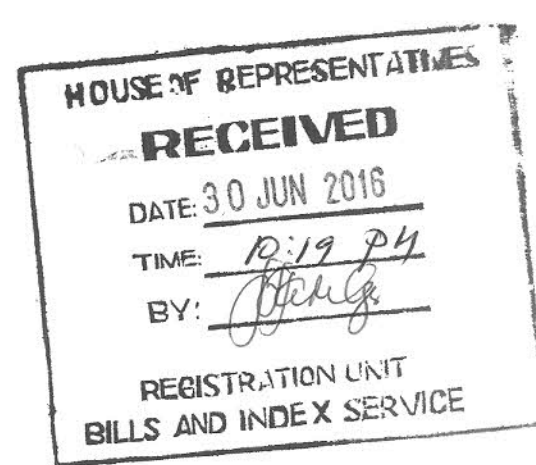


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 618



Introduced by **Rep. JOSEPH STEPHEN PADUANO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIII, Section 11 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that:

"The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."

However, the health sector is beset by the exodus of nurses and doctors seeking higher paying jobs abroad leading to poor delivery of health services in the country, especially in the rural areas. In 2009 alone, the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) reported that a total of 13,465 nurses and doctors were hired abroad. Nurse to patient ratio was estimated to be at 1:40 – 1:80 as opposed to the standard 1:20.

With this scenario, the role of barangay health workers (BHWs) has become crucial in the delivery of health services throughout the country. The importance of BHWs in the national health sector had been acknowledged through the enactment of Republic Act No. (RA) 7883, otherwise known as the Barangay Health Workers' Incentives and Benefits Act of 995. But the heroic role that BHWs play makes them deserving of much more than what they are receiving today.

Hence, this proposed measure aims to provide reasonable set of incentives to BHWs to compensate them for the work that they perform in making health services accessible to all. It will enhance the benefits provided to BHWs by virtue of RA 7883 by providing among others, a fixed honoraria and health and insurance coverage under the Philhealth and GSIS.

The passage of this proposed measure will not only grant due recognition to the valuable services that BHWs render but will hopefully encourage more people to serve as BHWs in their localities. Such increase in the number of BHWs would contribute positively to the goal of the government of providing a more effective delivery of health services and make health care accessible to all.

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


JOSEPH STEPHEN PADUANO

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 618

Introduced by Rep. JOSEPH STEPHEN PADUANO

AN ACT
GRANTING FIXED HONORARIA AND ADDITIONAL INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS
TO BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC
ACT NUMBERED 7883, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE BARANGAY HEALTH
WORKERS' INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS ACT OF 1995

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

SECTION 1. Section 6 of Republic Act Numbered (RA) 7883, otherwise known as the Barangay Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 6. Incentives and Benefits. – In recognition of their services, all accredited barangay health workers who are actively and regularly performing their duties shall be entitled to the following incentives and benefits:

- A) HONORARIA – ALL ACCREDITED BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS SHALL BE ENTITLED TO A MONTHLY HONORARIA OF THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00)
- B) [a] Hazard Allowance – Volunteer barangay health workers in rural and urban areas, exposed to situations, conditions, or factors in the work environment or place where foreseeable but unavoidable danger or risks exist which adversely endanger his health or life and/or increase the risk of producing adverse effect on his person in the exercise of his duties, to be validated by the proper authorities, shall be entitled to hazard allowance in an amount to be determined by the local health board and the local peace and order council of the local government unit concerned BUT IN NO CASE LESS THAN ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00).
- C) [b] *Subsistence Allowance* – Barangay health workers who render service within the premises of isolated barangay health stations in order to make their services available at any and all times, shall be entitled to subsistence allowance equivalent to the meals they take in the course of their duty, which shall be computed in accordance with prevailing circumstances as determined by the local government unit concerned BUT IN NO CASE LESS THAN ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00).
- D) COMPULSORY PHILHEALTH COVERAGE – ALL BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS WHO HAVE RENDERED AT LEAST SIX (6) MONTHS OF SERVICE SHALL BE ENROLLED IN THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE

PROGRAM TO RECEIVE AND AVAIL OF AN ADEQUATE PACKAGE OF PERSONAL HEALTH SERVICES THAT SHALL INCLUDE IN-PATIENT HOSPITAL CARE, OUT-PATIENT CARE, EMERGENCY AND TRANSFER SERVICES, AND OTHER SUPPLEMENTARY HEALTH BENEFITS AS MAY BE DEFINED BY THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION (PHIC) AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT (LGU) WHERE THEY RENDER SERVICES.

E) INSURANCE COVERAGE – ALL BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS, WHO HAVE RENDERED AT LEAST SIX (6) MONTHS OF SERVICE, SHALL BE GRANTED INSURANCE COVERAGE BY THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM (GSIS) OR ANY ACCREDITED INSURANCE COMPANY IN AN AMOUNT OF NOT LESS THAN TEN THOUSAND PESOS (P10,000).

F) [c)] *Training, Education and Career Enrichment Programs* – X X X

G) [d)] *Civil Service Eligibility* – X X X

H) [e)] *Free Legal Services* – Legal representation and consultation services for barangay health workers shall be immediately provided by the Public Attorney's Office in cases of coercion, interference, and in other civil and criminal cases filed by or against barangay health workers arising out of or in connection with the performance of their duties as such. THE DOH SHALL ALSO ENDEAVOR TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA) WITH THE INTEGRATED BAR OF THE PHILIPPINES (IBP) TO ALLOW LAWYERS WHO WILL PROVIDE FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO BHWs WHICH WILL BE GRANTED AS A MANDATORY CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION (MCLE) CREDITS TO THE LAWYERS.

I) SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO DEPENDENTS OF BHWs – COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS TO ANY STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OR TESDA SCHOLARSHIPS SHALL BE GRANTED TO A MINIMUM OF TWO (2) CHILDREN OF ALL BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS WHO HAVE RENDERED AT LEAST ONE (1) YEAR OF SERVICE.

J) [f)] *Preferential Access to Loans* – X X X”

SEC. 2. The following additional sections are hereby inserted before Section 7 of RA 7883, to read as follows:

“SEC. 8. RETIREMENT AGE – THE MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE FOR BHWs SHALL BE SIXTY-FIVE (65) YEARS OLD. HOWEVER, AN OPTIONAL RETIREMENT SHALL BE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE REACHED THE AGE SIXTY (60) TO SIXTY-FOUR (64) YEARS OLD. ACCREDITED BHWs QUALIFIED UNDER THIS PROVISION CAN AVAIL OF THE RETIREMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE GSIS.

SEC. 9. BHW REGISTRY – THE CHDs SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE IN COLLECTING INFORMATION AND UPDATING THE BHW REGISTRY IN THEIR RESPECTIVE REGIONS AND SHALL SUBMIT AN UPDATED COPY TO THE DOH CENTRAL OFFICE EVERY YEAR. THE DOH CENTRAL OFFICE SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE IN MAINTAINING THE NATIONAL BHW

REGISTRY, WHICH SHALL BE THE REFERENCE OF AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE PROVISION OF INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS TO BHWs.

SEC. 20. COMMON PROVISIONS –

- A. PREMIUM FOR THE BENEFITS OF BHWs SHALL BE BORNE BY THE LGU CONCERNED: *PROVIDED*, THAT THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SHALL SUBSIDIZE FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF FOURTH, FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASS MUNICIPALITIES.
- B. ANY EXPENDITURE BY LGUs FOR THE BENEFITS OF BHWs SHALL BE EXEMPTED FROM THE FORTY-FIVE PERCENT (45%) LIMIT ON THE ALLOCATION FOR PERSONAL SERVICES OF LGUS.

SEC. 3. The consequent sections of RA 7883 are hereby renumbered accordingly.

SEC. 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* The Department of Health, in consultation with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Civil Service Commission (CSC), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) and the National Confederation of Barangay Health Workers, shall prepare within one hundred and eighty (180) days the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act. Rules and regulations issued pursuant to this section shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

SEC. 4. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared invalid, the remainder or any of this provision hereof not affected thereby shall remain in force and in effect.

SEC. 5. *Repealing Clause.* Any laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential issuances and other administrative rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 6. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,