



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 1617

BY REPRESENTATIVES RODRIGUEZ (R.) AND RODRIGUEZ (M.)

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MERCURY EXPOSURE INFORMATION PROGRAM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Mercury
2 Exposure Information Act of 2014”.

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – Pursuant to the 1987 Constitution,
4 the State hereby declares the policy of protecting and promoting the right to
5 health of the people and instilling health consciousness among them. Towards
6 this end, the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to
7 health development, which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and
8 other social services available to every Filipino at affordable cost.

9 SEC. 3. *Mercury Exposure Information Program.* – The Secretary of
10 Health shall, in consultation with other government agencies and nonprofit
11 private entities, including cooperative health extension services, design and
12 implement a Mercury Exposure Information Program to ensure that the public

1 is informed of the hazards and adverse effects of mercury exposure through the
2 consumption of fish and other seafood.

3 Under this program, the Secretary of Health shall issue a comprehensive
4 health advisory to the general public about the presence of methyl mercury in
5 fish and other seafood and its potential dangers to health, particularly to the
6 sensitive population or high risk group such as pregnant women and children.

7 The Secretary of Health shall provide:

8 (a) Medical information on the signs and symptoms, treatment and
9 prevention of mercury-related illnesses; and

10 (b) Reliable information on the mercury levels in fish and other
11 seafood, the safe dose and consumption limits with emphasis on limiting the
12 consumption of fish and other seafood with unsafe or high levels of mercury.

13 The health advisory shall be clear, concise and printed in English,
14 Filipino or any dialect that the Secretary of Health may deem appropriate to
15 effectively disseminate the information.

16 The health advisory shall be posted in the following areas:

17 (1) In the patient and client areas of all maternal and child health
18 hospitals, clinics, centers and similar offices; and

19 (2) In markets and business establishments where fish and other
20 seafood are sold for human consumption.

21 The Secretary of Health shall periodically update the health advisory.

22 SEC. 4. *Mercury Warning Consumer's Guide.* – A mercury warning
23 consumer's guide or manual on the potential dangers of exposure to mercury
24 shall be prepared and distributed by the Department of Health (DOH), in
25 coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
26 (DENR), to the following:

27 (a) Appropriate fisheries, wildlife and environmental law enforcement
28 agencies;

1 (b) All applicants for fishing license at the time the license is issued;
2 and

3 (c) The public upon request.

4 SEC. 5. *Sampling and Monitoring.* – The Secretary of Health shall
5 ensure that seafood methyl-mercury sampling and monitoring program are
6 conducted by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to assist in the
7 documentation of mercury levels in various fish species. The sampling
8 program shall be conducted to provide statistically valid monitoring data with
9 respect to mercury levels in fish and other seafood, including market-basket
10 studies, and the extent to which fish and other seafood with mercury levels in
11 excess of the acceptable level are sold in commerce. Such information, along
12 with information gathered by the DENR, shall be compiled into an annual
13 report to track changes in dietary exposure to mercury from fish and other
14 seafood.

15 SEC. 6. *Penalties.* – A fine of not less than Five thousand pesos
16 (P5,000.00) but not more than Ten thousand pesos (P10,000.00) shall be
17 imposed upon the head or official of any maternal and child hospital, clinic,
18 center or similar office who fails to post the consumer advisory on the hazards
19 of mercury exposure pursuant to Section 3 of this Act.

20 A fine of not less than Four thousand pesos (P4,000.00) but not more
21 than Eight thousand pesos (P8,000.00) shall be imposed upon the administrator
22 or operator of any market or business establishment that sells fish and other
23 seafood who fails to post the consumer advisory on the hazards of mercury
24 exposure pursuant to Section 3 of this Act.

25 SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60)
26 days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Health shall promulgate
27 the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

1 SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,
2 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation
3 contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed,
4 modified or amended accordingly.

5 SEC. 9. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
6 days after its publication in any national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

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