

S. B. No. 68

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR ALAN PETER "COMPAÑERO" S. CAYETANO

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**AN ACT**  
**STRENGTHENING OUR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM THROUGH THE**  
**APPOINTMENT OF SUFFICIENT BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN CITIES AND**  
**MUNICIPALITIES AND ELEVATING THEIR STATUS FROM VOLUNTEERS TO JOB**  
**ORDER, CONTRACTUAL, CASUAL, OR REGULAR EMPLOYEES AND FURTHER**  
**STRENGTHENING THE BARANGAY HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER**  
**PURPOSES**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The significant role of Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) in the health sector paves the way for a better primary health care in our country. During the pandemic, our BHWs around the country were notably at the forefront of response against the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) where they served as the bridgeway of communication between the health centers and constituents through door-to-door delivery of medicines, assistance in the vaccination drives, participation in contact tracing efforts, among others. Their invaluable service and contribution in strengthening primary health care leads to a lesser on curative health spending for the government.

The Philippine Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. Towards this, the State shall develop 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 underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children.

These policies emphasize the need for a strong and robust primary healthcare system in our country. This was especially highlighted in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, wherein our health care system was quickly overloaded and our healthcare workers overworked and exhausted. It showed that one of our greatest challenges is the lack of adequate healthcare workers, facilities and equipment, especially in remote areas.

Considering that health care services have been devolved to the Local Government Units (LGU) pursuant to the Local Government Code of 1991, the LGUs are given the fundamental duty to continue to strengthen the capacity of our Primary

Healthcare System, which must necessarily begin by looking at the people who carry it out.

As frontliners of our Primary Healthcare System, our Barangay Health workers (BHWs) must be given sufficient incentives, benefits and most of all just compensation for all the hard work they have done for us. The goal of improving the Primary Healthcare System necessarily carries with it the responsibility of taking care and supporting those in charge of implementing the same.

The Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Mandanas vs. Ochoa*<sup>1</sup> clarified that the share of Local Government Units (LGU) of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) does not exclude other national taxes like customs duties.<sup>2</sup> With the implementation of the *Mandanas-Garcia* ruling in 2022, it is projected that LGUs, individually and collectively, will have a 27.61% increase in their shares of the IRA. Therefore, there's an additional source of funds for the salaries and benefits of Barangay Health Workers who have tirelessly sacrificed for their community, especially during this pandemic. In light of this, the LGUs, as a matter of policy, should endeavor to hire Barangay Health Workers as casual workers, or on a contractual and job order basis, and then eventually as regular employees once the *Mandanas-Garcia* ruling is fully implemented.

The City of Taguig shows its support towards our BHWs through multiple incentives. Aside from their regular salary, they receive bonuses, and other benefits like training, overtime pay, and hazard pay. We have elevated their status to be formally employed under our LGU as Job Order (JO) and Casual Employees. Such benefits should not be limited only in Taguig because all the Filipinos deserve the best social services. We should start properly compensating, assisting, and building up the skills of our health workers, because they are our backbone for the efficient delivery of our overall health system.

As previously filed during the 18th Congress of the Philippines, this bill reiterates and expresses the importance of ensuring that Barangay Health Workers are integrated into the LGUs' organization as Job Order, Contractual, Casual, or Regular Employees and given proper compensation for their work, in recognition of their indispensable role in our Primary Healthcare System.

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

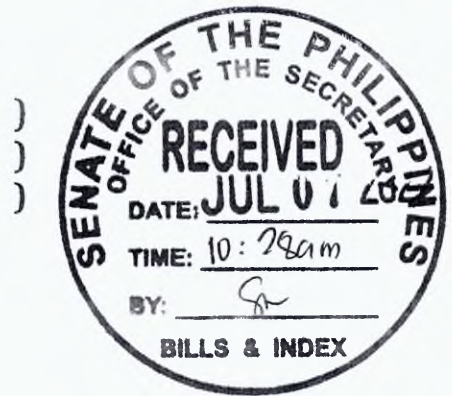


**ALAN PETER "COMPAÑERO" S. CAYETANO**

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<sup>1</sup> G.R. No. 199802, July 3, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.constitutionalreform.gov.ph/ufaqs/what-is-mandanas-ruling/>



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*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 “*Mahal Ko, Barangay*  
2 *Health Worker Ko Law*”.

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4           **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to protect and  
5 promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among  
6 them. It is therefore the responsibility of the State to adopt an integrated and  
7 comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make  
8 essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at  
9 affordable cost.

10  
11           The State recognizes the importance of primary healthcare in ensuring the  
12 health and well-being of our communities, the direct responsibility for which has now  
13 been assumed by local governments, pursuant to the Local Government Code of 1991,  
14 as amended.

15  
16           As the frontliners of our primary healthcare, the State recognizes the vital role  
17 of Barangay Health Workers and the need to provide them with security of tenure,  
18 adequate benefits and just compensation, consistent with the principle of equal pay  
19 for equal work and work of equal value.

20  
21           **SECTION 3. Definition.** – The term “Barangay Health Worker” refers to a  
22 person who has undergone training programs under any accredited government and  
23 non-government organization and who renders primary health care services in the  
24 community after having been accredited to function as such by the local health board  
25 in accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the Department of Health (DOH)  
26 and appointed by the city or municipal mayor, as the case may be.  
27

1           **SECTION 4. Ideal Ratio of Barangay Health Workers.** – The DOH shall issue  
2 the guidelines as to the ideal number of Barangay Health Worker-to-population ratio.  
3 Such a number should be sufficient to allow the city or municipality to satisfactorily  
4 deliver primary healthcare to its constituents.  
5

6           **SECTION 5. Barangay Health Workers as employees of the Local**  
7 **Government Units (LGU).** – The city or municipality shall hire the Barangay Health  
8 Workers as job order, casual, contractual, or regular employees.  
9

10           Barangay Health Workers currently serving the city or municipality and  
11 receiving allowances therefrom shall be given preference in the hiring by the city or  
12 municipality under this Act.  
13

14           **SECTION 6. Compensation and Benefits.** – Barangay Health Workers hired  
15 pursuant to this Act shall receive all the compensation and benefits given by the city  
16 or municipality to its Job Order, Contractual, Casual, or Regular Employees.  
17

18           **SECTION 7. Special Barangay Health Workers Assistance Program.** – The  
19 DOH, in coordination with the Department of the Interior and Local Government  
20 (DILG), shall create a *Special Barangay Health Workers Assistance Program*, providing  
21 additional financial and technical assistance, training and other support to selected  
22 LGUs for their Barangay Health Workers. This program shall prioritize assistance to  
23 LGUs that have no or less capacity to give regular and adequate salaries/allowances  
24 to its Barangay Health Workers for the next ten (10) years, as determined by the DOH  
25 and DILG.  
26

27           **SECTION 8. Appropriation.** – The amount needed for the implementation of  
28 this Act shall be charged against the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) shares of the  
29 cities and municipalities, particularly the additional funds to be received once the  
30 *Mandanas-Garcia* Ruling has been fully implemented.  
31

32           The amount necessary for the initial implementation of the Special Barangay  
33 Health Workers Assistance Program shall be charged to the current appropriation of  
34 the DOH. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for its continued implementation  
35 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.  
36

37           **SECTION 9. Implementing Rules and Regulations** – The Department of the  
38 Interior and Local Government (DILG), in coordination with the Department of Health  
39 (DOH), shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, prepare the  
40 Implementing Rules and Regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.  
41

42           **SECTION 10. Separability Clause.** – If any part or provision of this Act is  
43 declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts hereof not affected thereby shall  
44 remain valid.  
45

46           **SECTION 11. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, acts, presidential decrees,  
47 executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or  
48 contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed  
49 accordingly.  
50

1           **SECTION 12. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
2 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*