

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*First Regular Session* )



23 FEB 27 P3:24

**SENATE**

RECEIVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

S. No. 1929

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Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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**AN ACT  
ESTABLISHING A CANCER MEDICINE AND TREATMENT ASSISTANCE FUND  
FOR INDIGENT AND UNDERPRIVILEGED FILIPINOS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution is clear on its declaration with regard to the primacy of health: "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 underprivileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."<sup>1</sup>

Cancer is the third leading cause of morbidity and mortality in the Philippines, and the leading causes of cancer related deaths in the country are lung, liver, breast, colon cancers and leukemia.<sup>2</sup> It is outranked only by communicable and cardiovascular diseases, claiming one death for every two new cases within a year, while cancer, which afflicts 189 per 100,000, kills four Filipinos every hour or 103 every day.

The incidence and mortality rate of cancer in the Philippines has been increasing in the past decades. This trend is expected to continue if organized and sustained specialized care and preventive measures against cancer are not initiated.

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<sup>1</sup> Article XIII, Section 11, 1987 Philippine Constitution

<sup>2</sup> Uicc. Cancer and the Universal Health Care in the Philippines

Based on data gathered, the chemotherapy for cancer patients may cost from Php 20,000.00 to Php 120,000.00 per session, depending on the type of cancer. The cost of treatment by radiation, or even examination by MRI, is burdensome even to middle-income patients, and often beyond the reach of the poor.

This is why cancer has gained a reputation as the disease for the rich. The painful truth is that it can afflict anybody, regardless of economic status.

Considering that one of the goals of the national economy is a more equitable distribution of opportunities and raising the quality of life for all, especially the underprivileged, it is high time that those who are less in life be given the lifeline to fight the cancer disease despite their lack of resources.

In view of the foregoing, I recommend the approval of this measure.

  
**CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

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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 “Cancer Medicine and  
2 Treatment Fund for Filipinos”.

3           Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby a policy of the State to protect and  
4 promote the right to health of the people and to adopt and implement a system of  
5 effecting the delivery of free medicine and free treatment to indigent and  
6 underprivileged cancer patients.

7           Sec. 3. *Establishment of a Php 10 Billion Cancer Fund and Free Medicine*  
8 *Assistance Program.* – There is hereby created a Ten Billion Cancer Fund that can be  
9 availed by indigent and underprivileged cancer patients. For the purpose, a Cancer  
10 Treatment Program, hereinafter referred to as the “Program,” is established and to  
11 be administered by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Philhealth) through  
12 its accredited government hospitals in each particular congressional district, to be  
13 known as the health district.

14           The program shall be limited to indigent and underprivileged cancer  
15 patient beneficiaries to be identified by the Philhealth in close coordination with the

1 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health  
2 (DOH) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

3 The Philhealth, jointly with the DSWD, DOH and DILG and the relevant  
4 private groups including the association of hospitals and medical institutions and  
5 groups of patients, shall prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary  
6 to carry out the provision of this Act within six (6) months from the effectivity  
7 hereof.

8 *Sec. 4. Appropriations.* – There is hereby appropriated the sum of Ten Billion  
9 Pesos (P10,000,000,000.00) for the implementation of the Program. The National  
10 Government shall subsequently include in the budget of the Department of Health in  
11 the General Appropriations Act such amount as may be necessary to carry out the  
12 objectives of this Act.

13 *Sec. 5. Repealing clause.* – All provisions of laws, orders, decrees, including  
14 rules and regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and/or modified  
15 accordingly.

16 *Sec. 6. Effectivity.* – This shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in  
17 at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*