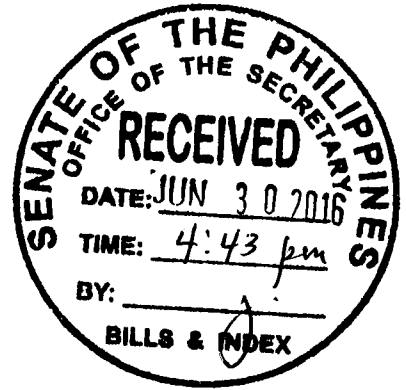


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



SENATE
S.B. No. 136

Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

AN ACT
TO PROTECT FILIPINO MOTHERS AND CHILDREN FROM MALNUTRITION BY
ESTABLISHING A MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CARE PROGRAM
APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE

A child's first 1,000 days—the period covering the 9 months of a mother's pregnancy and her child's first two years—has been dubbed a "window of opportunity." This period is extremely crucial to a child's fair start in life. As a 2015 Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) policy brief emphasized:

"...[The first 1,000 days] is when nutrition trumps genetics and a person's potential is maximized. Getting proper nutrition in the first 1,000 days is crucial for physical growth of children, a pathway out of poverty for poor households, and a driver of growth for countries. It prevents more than one-third of child deaths per year, improves school attainment by at least one year, increases wages by 5 to 50 percent, reduces poverty because well-nourished children are 33 percent more likely to escape poverty as adults, empowers women to be 10 percent more likely to run their own business and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty."

Unfortunately, many are unaware of this. Programs for antenatal and postnatal care—as well as for newborn health and nutrition—may be in place, but more priority and policy focus must be dedicated to ensuring that our pregnant mothers and newborns receive proper nutrition. Thus, a more comprehensive policy regime is needed.

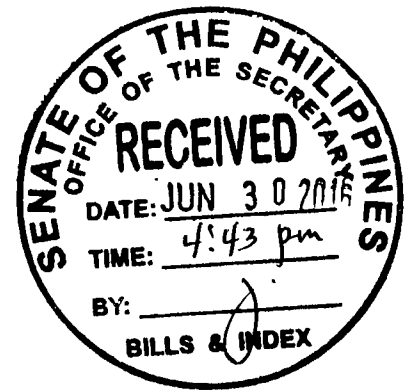
According to UNICEF, such a policy regime should – 1) ensure the nutrition of pregnant mothers and adolescent girls; 2) mainstream improved breastfeeding practices and 3) improved complementary feeding practices; 4) provide improved protection against undernutrition and disease to children between 6 and 24 months; and 5) ensure proper feeding of children who are sick and undernourished. Support to barangay health volunteers including training courses are likewise sought to be put in place to help ensure the effective implementation the interventions during the child's first 1,000 days.

The foregoing measure outlines and aims to establish a *First 1,000 Days Program* in every barangay. Such program lays the proper foundation for the country's future growth and development.

Hence, its swift passage is earnestly sought.

SONNY ANGARA

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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 "**First 1,000 Days Act.**"

2
3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** It is hereby declared the policy of the State: (a) to equally
4 protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception; (b) to recognize the
5 right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, and the duty of
6 the State to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care
7 services. It is likewise declared that timely interventions during the first 1,000 days be
8 undertaken to address issues of malnutrition on children aged 0-2 years old such as stunting
9 and wasting as well as improve the welfare of pregnant and lactating mothers nationwide

10
11 For purposes of this Act, the "First 1,000 Days" refers to the period starting from Day
12 One of a woman's pregnancy, until the child reaches the age of two years.

13
14 **SEC. 3. Establishing a First 1000 Days Program in every barangay.** The Department of
15 Health (DOH) shall, in coordination with the Department of Interior and Local Government
16 (DILG), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), National Nutrition Council
17 (NNC), and Food and Nutrition Research Institute – Department of Science and Technology
18 (FNRI – DOST), develop a comprehensive health care program for pregnant and lactating
19 women as well as the health and nutrition of their newborn children from 1 to 1,000 days, in
20 every barangay.

21
22 **SEC. 4. Program Content.** The maternal and child health care services which may be provided
23 to eligible individuals during the 1,000-day period shall include the following:

- 24
25 1. **Vaccinations and Nutritional Supplements:** Necessary vaccinations for infants and
26 nutritional supplements shall be provided free by the Department of Health.

- 1
- 2 2. **Check-ups:** Regular check-ups during and after pregnancy for the mother and child
3 shall be mandated and administered by the Barangay Health Centers.
4
- 5 3. **Counseling:** Pre-natal and ante-natal counseling shall be administered by the
6 Department of Health and the Local Government Units (LGUs). These shall include
7 topics on: (a) the importance of clean water, sanitation and hygiene; (b) proper nutrition;
8 (c) pre-natal and ante-natal health care; (d) the importance of exclusive breast feeding;
9 (e) treating malnourished children with special and therapeutic foods; (f) general family
10 counseling, including child and family development; and (g) timely intervention through
11 safe, appropriate and high-quality complementary food.
12
- 13 4. **Public Information Drive:** Information on nutrition, pregnancy, pre-natal and post-natal
14 care, breast feeding, and proper hygiene and sanitation shall be disseminated in schools
15 and barangays health centers through different types of media.
16
- 17 5. **Monitoring:** A National Monitoring System shall be implemented to monitor the overall
18 status of infants and their mothers and to know the success and areas of improvement
19 of the program.
20
- 21 6. **Breastfeeding Stations:** All hospitals and workplaces nationwide shall establish
22 lactation stations pursuant to RA 10028 or the "Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act
23 of 2009". In workplaces, breastfeeding breaks shall be provided for working
24 breastfeeding mothers. Human milk banks shall also be established in health institutions.
25

26 **SEC. 5. Interventions.** The First 1,000 Days Program includes the provision of the following
27 interventions:

- 28 1. Ensuring nutrition for pregnant mothers and adolescent girls
- 29 2. Improved breastfeeding practices (0-6 months)
- 30 3. Improved complementary feeding practices (7-24 months)
- 31 4. Improved protection against undernutrition and disease (6-24 months)
- 32 5. Improved feeding of children who are sick and undernourished
33

34 **SEC. 6. Barangay Health Volunteers.** The DOH, in coordination with the LGUs, shall provide
35 more support and assistance to Barangay Health Volunteers such as the Barangay Health
36 Workers (BHWs) and Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS). A series of practical and effective
37 training courses shall also be made available to upgrade their skills and competence in the
38 implementation of this Act.
39

40 **SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of
41 this Act, the Secretary of Health shall, in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior and Local
42 Government, and Secretary of Social Welfare and Development and representatives of

1 recognized women's and children's organizations and academic communities, promulgate rules
2 and regulations necessary for the effectivity of this Act.

3
4 **SEC. 8. Appropriations.** To carry out the provisions of this Act, such amount as may be
5 necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury. Thereafter, the
6 amount necessary for the continuous operation of the Program shall be included in the annual
7 appropriation of the DOH.

8
9 **SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional,
10 the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and
11 subsisting.

12
13 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of
14 instruction, administrative order, rule and regulation contrary to or inconsistent with any
15 provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

16
17 **SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at
18 least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

19
20 Approved,