

SENATE
P.S. RES. NO. 706

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Manny B. Villar

RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMITTEES OF HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY AND LABOR, EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE 167 % REPORTED INCREASE IN THE PREMIUM CONTRIBUTIONS IMPOSED TO PHILHEALTH OFW-MEMBERS AS EMBODIED IN CIRCULAR 22 SERIES OF 2011, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF REMOVING APPARENT UNNECESSARY BURDEN AND IMPROVING THE PLIGHT OF OFW-MEMBERS.

Whereas, Section 9 of Article II of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines provides:

“Section 9. The State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all.”;

Whereas, while Section 15 thereof states:

“Section 15. The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them”

Whereas, Article XIII Section 11 states:

“Section 11. 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.”

Whereas, in light of the above Constitutional provisions, Republic Act 7875 otherwise known as “[t]he National Health Insurance Act of 1995” was passed on February 14, 1995 thereby creating Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Philhealth);

Whereas, previously, Overseas Filipino Worker-members are only required to pay a one-year Philhealth premium contribution of Php 900;

Whereas, on 15 December 2011, Philhealth issued Circular No. 022 series of 2011 with the subject “New Premium Contributions to the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) in Support for the Attainment of Universal Health Care and Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)” thereby increasing the premium contribution of members;

Whereas, the said circular provides:

“C. Individually Paying and Overseas Workers Programs.

Self employed individuals under the Individually Paying and Overseas Workers Programs shall pay the minimum annual premium contribution of Two thousand Four hundred Pesos (PhP 2,400) effective 01 July 2012: Provided, That:

1. For members who pay their contributions within the First Semester of CY 2012, the annual premium contribution shall be computed at an annual premium contribution of One thousand Two Hundred Pesos (Php 1,200.00)”;

Whereas, the above circular thereby increased the premium contribution of its members, particularly the premium to be shouldered by the OFWs, which increased more than double, or by as much as one hundred sixty seven percent (167%);

Whereas, OFW concerned groups point out Republic Act 10022 otherwise known as the Amended Migrant Workers Act of 2010, Section 4 thereof, which prohibits increases in government fees, it provides:

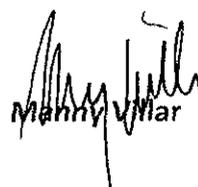
“Section 4. Government Fees, Administrative Costs and Taxes. All fees for services being charged by any government agency on migrant workers prevailing at the time of the effectivity of this Rule shall not be increased. All other services rendered by the DOLE and other government agencies in connection with the recruitment and placement of and assistance to migrant workers shall be rendered free. The administrative cost thereof shall not be borne by the worker.”;

Whereas, it is not uncommon for OFWs to be enrolled in separate medical insurance in their host country to cover bills, in case of hospitalization, incurred in the country of employment;

Whereas, considering that most of these OFWs spend time abroad to work, and the slim chance of use of Philhealth services in the Philippines, there is a need to study the soundness of the Philhealth premium increase due to apparent duplication of costs and potential non-use by these OFWs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to urge the Committees of Health and Demography and Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the 167 % reported increase in the premium contributions imposed to Philhealth OFW-members as embodied in Circular 22 series of 2011, with the end in view of removing apparent unnecessary burden and improving the plight of OFW-members.

Adopted,



Manny Villar