



## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 592

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BY REPRESENTATIVES RODRIGUEZ (R.), RODRIGUEZ (M.), SYJUCO,  
MARAÑON, EVARDONE, TEODORO AND HERRERA-DY

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### AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A NATIONAL FOLIC ACID EDUCATION PROGRAM TO PREVENT BIRTH DEFECTS

*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 “Folic Acid  
2 Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act”.

3           SEC. 2. *Promotion of the Beneficial Effects of Folic Acid in the*  
4 *Prevention of Birth Defects.* – The Department of Health shall carry out a  
5 program, directly or through special arrangements with other government  
6 agencies and other promotional entities engaged in public information  
7 activities, to provide education and training for health professionals and the  
8 general public for purposes of explaining the effects of folic acid in preventing  
9 birth defects and to encourage women of reproductive capacity to consume the  
10 appropriate amount of folic acid as a dietary supplement on a daily basis.

11           Pursuant thereto, the Secretary of Health may consult with the  
12 appropriate public or private entities, including national nonprofit and

1 nongovernment organizations, health professionals and health insurance and  
2 health plan providers, to ensure the success of such education and training  
3 program. In addition, the Secretary shall, directly or through partnership with  
4 other sectors, provide technical assistance to public and nonprofit private  
5 organizations to fulfill the mandate provided for in Sections 2 and 3 hereof.

6 *SEC. 3. Continuing Research and Study on the Effects of Folic Acid.*

7 – The Department of Health shall conduct continuing studies on the effects of  
8 folic acid to increase the understanding of the same on the health of the  
9 citizenry, especially its contribution to the prevention of birth defects, cleft lip  
10 and palate, and heart defects. It shall likewise conduct research with respect to  
11 such education and training, including identifying effective strategies for  
12 increasing the rate of consumption of folic acid by women of reproductive  
13 capacity. In addition, it shall provide for appropriate epidemiological activities  
14 regarding folic acid, birth defects and neural tube defects.

15 *SEC. 4. Evaluation of Program Implementation.* – The Secretary of  
16 Health shall cause the review of the program to evaluate the extent to which  
17 the activities carried out, pursuant to Sections 2 and 3 hereof, have been  
18 effective in fulfilling the goals of the program, including their effect on  
19 different sectors of the population. Methods of evaluation to be undertaken  
20 pursuant thereto may include surveys of knowledge and attitudes on the  
21 consumption of folic acid and on blood folate levels, and the complete and  
22 timely monitoring of infants who are born with neural tube defects.

23 *SEC. 5.* The Secretary of Health shall include in the Department's  
24 program the implementation of this Act, the funding of which shall be included  
25 in the annual General Appropriations Act.

26 *SEC. 6. Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held  
27 invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not  
28 otherwise affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

1           SEC. 7. *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. 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)  
6 days after its publication in the *Official Gazette*.

Approved,

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