



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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

22 JUL 13 P5:20

SENATE

RECEIVED BY:

S. No. 553

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Introduced by Senator **PIA S. CAYETANO**

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**AN ACT**  
**MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF ONE MIDWIFE FOR EACH BARANGAY, AND**  
**FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Currently, in the Philippines, health care professionals are sorely lacking and unequally distributed in rural and urban areas. Further, economic conditions, which exacerbate already stressful working environments, as well as lack of opportunities for professional development and the increasing cost of education in the field of medicine, has led to the migration of doctors and nurses.<sup>1</sup> This offers a great potential for midwives to augment the need for professional healthcare practitioners, especially in rural areas.

Midwives comprise one of the largest occupational groups in the public and private health system in the country. They work in the private or public sector in hospitals, birthing clinics, barangay health stations, or rural health units. In the rural areas, they are sometimes the first professionals that patients come in contact with in the health system. In fact, midwives are currently implementing public health programs in many areas.

Addressing infant and maternal mortality is an important aspect of healthcare, and requires a national and even global effort to ensure that proper health care is made available to both mother and child during and after birth. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), there were 1,458 registered maternal deaths in the country in

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<sup>1</sup> Baclig, C. E. (2021, June 9). PH health workers: A pandemic of big work, small pay. *Philippine Inquirer*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1443920/ph-health-workers-a-pandemic-of-big-work-small-pay>.

2019,<sup>2</sup> and in 2017, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) estimated that the Philippines' maternal mortality ratio (MMR) is at 121 per 100,000 live births. While this is significantly lower than the global MMR in 2020, which is 152 deaths per 100,000 live births, this is still well above Sustainable Development Goal Target 3.1 of reducing global maternal mortality rates to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030.<sup>3</sup> The PSA also registered 21,723 infant deaths in the country in 2019,<sup>4</sup> and in 2020, UNICEF estimated the country's infant mortality rate at 21 deaths per 1,000 live births.<sup>5</sup>

The premises above show the urgency of addressing infant and maternal mortality deaths, especially in areas where there is a shortage of health personnel. This bill, which the undersigned first filed during the 14th Congress, mandates that there should be one midwife in each barangay. Although the recommended ratio is one midwife for every 5,000, most midwives currently cater to the needs of 10,000 to 30,000 individuals in their catchment area. Recognizing the importance of primary health care and the presence of midwives in the country, especially in the rural areas, the bill further seeks to increase the number of midwives in a barangay where there is a population of more than 5,000. This will enable the midwives to provide quality and efficient health care services.

Indeed, midwives play a key role in delivering patient-focused services that are accessible, affordable, and appropriate to the needs of patients, as individuals, and their families. The midwifery profession is central to the delivery of an effective health service, particularly in the rural areas.

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

  
PIA S. CAYETANO

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<sup>2</sup> Philippine Statistics Authority. (2021, January 5). *Registered Deaths in the Philippines, 2019*. <https://psa.gov.ph/press-releases/id/163734>

<sup>3</sup> Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (n.d.). *Maternal Mortality*. <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/goalkeepers/report/2021-report/progress-indicators/maternal-mortality/>

<sup>4</sup> Philippine Statistics Authority. (2021, January 5). *Registered Deaths in the Philippines, 2019*. <https://psa.gov.ph/press-releases/id/163734>

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF. (n.d.). *Philippines*. <https://data.unicef.org/country/phl/>



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**MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF ONE MIDWIFE FOR EACH BARANGAY,**  
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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 “*Midwife to the Barangay*  
2 *Act.*”

3           Sec. 2. *Statement of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and promote  
4 the right to health of the people. The State shall provide appropriate programs and  
5 measures to provide access to affordable and quality health and social services,  
6 especially in rural areas. The services of midwives, as front liners in the country’s  
7 health care delivery system, are essential in achieving the State’s health policy,  
8 especially with regard to pre-natal and post-natal maternal, and newborn, care.  
9 Toward this end, this Act shall mandate the appointment of midwives for each  
10 barangay to increase access to health care services for the people, especially the  
11 underprivileged.

12           Sec. 3. *Ratio of Midwives to the Barangay.* – All barangays shall be equipped  
13 with one (1) midwife: *Provided,* That if the population of a barangay exceeds five  
14 thousand (5,000), the number of midwives shall be increased, as may be determined  
15 by the Department of Health (DOH).

16           Sec. 4. *Role of Midwives to the Barangay.* – All Midwives to the Barangay are  
17 mandated to ensure that mothers and infants, in their respective jurisdictions, are  
18 given quality and essential health care services, including, but not limited to, pre-natal

1 and post-natal care, breastfeeding support, providing information on the importance  
2 of immunization, and ensuring that infants are given the proper vaccines as provided  
3 in the DOH Expanded Program on Immunization, and proper care and nutrition of both  
4 the mothers and the infants, and such other duties as shall be determined by the DOH.

5       *Sec. 5. Appointment of Midwives to the Barangay.* – Every city, first and  
6 second-class municipality, in accordance with the Local Government Code of  
7 Philippines, shall appoint a midwife in their respective barangays: *Provided,* That for  
8 third to sixth class municipalities under first and second class provinces, the province  
9 shall appoint a midwife in every clustered barangay: *Provided further,* That for third  
10 to sixth class municipalities under third to sixth class provinces, the DOH, through its  
11 center for health development, shall appoint a midwife in every clustered barangay.  
12 DOH shall immediately determine which areas are in need of midwives. Priority in  
13 appointments shall be given to remote areas where there are no existing health care  
14 professionals providing for the health care services of the population and areas which  
15 have high maternal mortality rate.

16       *Sec. 6. Qualifications of Midwives to the Barangay.* – The DOH shall provide for  
17 the qualifications of the Midwife to the Barangay, who shall, as much as possible,  
18 come from the same barangay or municipality where he or she will be appointed.

19       *Sec. 7. Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care.* – The DOH shall ensure  
20 that the midwives are equipped with appropriate training on Basic Emergency  
21 Obstetric and Newborn Care. It shall also determine, subject to guidelines that it may  
22 issue, the need to further provide these midwives with training on Comprehensive  
23 Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care.

24       *Sec. 8. Recruitment.* – The DOH shall formulate strategies and policies related  
25 to attracting and recruiting the following:

- 26           (a) high school graduates to study midwifery in accredited institutions, and  
27           (b) barangay health workers, through a ladderized education program, to  
28           pursue midwifery.

29       The DOH shall also ensure their placement in areas in need of midwives and  
30 barangay health workers.

31       *Sec. 9. Educational and Career Advancement.* – The DOH shall develop  
32 strategies and guidelines for the continuing education and career advancement of

1 midwives, including the implementation of programs under Republic Act No. 10647,  
2 otherwise known as the "*Ladderized Education Act of 2014*," and empower them to  
3 pursue higher learning, which will help augment the delivery of health care service in  
4 the barangays and in the country.

5       Sec. 10. *Compensation and Benefits.* – All Midwives to the Barangay shall be  
6 appropriately compensated by the DOH or the LGUs, whichever is applicable, and shall  
7 be entitled to all the benefits provided in Republic Act No. 7305, otherwise known as  
8 the "*Magna Carta of Public Health Workers.*"

9       Sec. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DOH, in cooperation with  
10 the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Civil Service Commission, and  
11 other concerned government agencies and non-government organizations, shall  
12 formulate and promulgate, within ninety days (90) from its effectivity, the rules and  
13 regulations necessary to implement this Act.

14       Sec. 12. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement the provisions  
15 of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the DOH. For the LGUs, the  
16 requirements shall be taken from their National Tax Allotment and other local funds.  
17 Thereafter, such funds as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this  
18 Act shall be included in the appropriations of the DOH and the respective LGUs.

19       Sec. 13. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act shall be held  
20 unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions thereof which are not affected thereby  
21 shall continue to be in full force and effect.

22       Sec. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, and other  
23 presidential issuances which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed,  
24 amended or modified accordingly.

25       Sec. 15. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect immediately after its publication  
26 in the Official Gazette or in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

*Approved,*