

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



23 MAY 23 A9:58

SENATE

RECEIVED BY:

S. No. 2230

Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

**AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF OBESITY AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In line with the principle enunciated in Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which states - "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them," this bill aims to establish a comprehensive nationwide anti-obesity campaign to control and prevent obesity among Filipinos.

Worldwide, about 800 million individuals are affected by obesity, predisposing them to a higher risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and certain types of cancers. Alarmingly, obesity has also surfaced as a significant risk factor for severe disease during the COVID-19 pandemic, making individuals with obesity twice as likely to be hospitalized upon testing positive for COVID-19.

Obesity, traditionally perceived as a health concern primarily in high-income and developed countries, is now escalating in low and middle-income countries, including the Philippines. The Department of Science and Technology's Food and Nutrition Research Institute reports that around 27 million Filipinos are overweight and obese. Over the last two decades, the prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults has almost doubled, increasing from 20.2% in 1998 to 36.6% in 2019.

Concurrently, the rates of overweight and obesity among adolescents have more than doubled from 4.9% in 2003 to 11.6% in 2018¹.

If no proactive measures are undertaken, the overall rates of overweight and obesity are projected to continue rising, potentially resulting in over 30% of Filipino adolescents being overweight or obese by 2030, as stated in the "Landscape Analysis on Overweight and Obesity in Children, Philippines". Multiple reputable organizations including the Department of Health (DOH), National Nutrition Council (NNC), Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity (PASOO), Nutrition Center of the Philippines (NCP), World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have collectively raised the alarm over the escalating obesity rates in the Philippines².

I submit that it is crucial for the government, in line with its duty to look after the health of all Filipinos, to acknowledge obesity as a growing problem among us. With that recognition, it's high time that we come together to put proactive and comprehensive plans into action to curb this health issue.

Hence, I seek the immediate passage of this bill.


CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/philippines/press-releases/everybody-needs-act-curb-obesity>

² Ibid.

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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 “Anti-Obesity Act of
2 2023.”

3 *Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy.* – It is the declared policy of the State to protect
4 and promote the right to health of the people. Towards this end, a system for the
5 control and prevention of obesity among citizens shall be provided and the need for
6 a responsible diet established.

7 *Sec. 3. Obesity* – For the purpose of this Act, obesity shall refer to an excess
8 proportion of total body fat usually diagnosed when a person’s weight is at least
9 twenty percent (20%) more than his or her normal or ideal weight. It is usually
10 measured in body mass index (BMI), and is affected by, but not limited to, age,
11 gender, genetics, environmental factors physical activity, psychological factors illness
12 and medication.

13 *Sec. 4. National Anti-Obesity Campaign* – It is hereby mandated that there
14 shall be a National Anti-Obesity Prevention and Control Program to be implemented
15 by a multi-agency/multi-sectoral committee chaired the Department of Health. The

1 program shall be a multi-agency effort in controlling and preventing obesity in the
2 country. Among its component activities include:

- 3 1) Awareness and prevention programs;
- 4 2) Provisions for consultations at the nearest health centers; and
- 5 3) Conduct of information and education campaign on the prevention and
6 control of obesity.

7 The program shall be implemented by the Department of Health (DOH), Department
8 of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of the Interior and Local
9 Government (DILG), Department of Education (DepEd), as well as Local Government
10 Units (LGUs) with the assistance of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and
11 People's Organizations (POs).

12 *Sec. 5. Responsibilities of Government Agencies* – The following government
13 agencies, which shall jointly implement the National Anti-Obesity Prevention and
14 Control Program, shall be tasked to:

15 A. Department of Health:

- 16 1) Stimulate the development, improvement and implementation of new
17 strategies and interventions to improve our understanding of obesity, its
18 causes and its effects;
- 19 2) Design projects and studies to help identify ways to better describe the
20 impact of obesity and reduce medical complications;
- 21 3) Coordinate with the DepEd in the development of appropriate health
22 education strategy to inform the public on obesity prevention and control.
- 23 4) Encourage collaborative activities with the DOST, DepEd, NGOs, Pos and
24 other concerned sectors.

25 B. Barangay and other LGUs. – All Local Government Units shall be required to:

- 26 1) Allocate funds to support the implementation of the National Anti-Obesity,
27 Prevention and Control Program within their locality; and

- 1 2) Enact additional local ordinances that will support the National Anti-
2 Obesity, Prevention and Control Program and initiate programs in which
3 should include awareness campaign and other preventive measures.

4 The DILG shall ensure compliance of these responsibilities by the LGUs.

5 C. Department of Education

- 6 1) Strengthen anti-obesity education program through school health
7 teaching/curriculum;
- 8 2) Encourage collaborative activities and information-sharing with the DOH,
9 DILG, DENR, NGOs, Pos and other concerned sectors;
- 10 3) Integrate proper information and education in the relevant subjects in the
11 Elementary and High School levels, and
- 12 4) Implement other preventive actions that the Department of Health may
13 provide.

14 *Sec. 6. Assistance of NGOs and the Academe.* – The agencies tasked to
15 implement the anti-obesity program shall seek the assistance and participation of
16 NGOs in any of the following activities:

- 17 1) Community mobilization;
- 18 2) Health education/information dissemination;
- 19 3) Mass anti-obesity campaign;
- 20 4) Promotion of the anti-obesity campaign;
- 21 5) Surveillance/reporting of obesity cases; and
- 22 6) Any other activities geared towards the prevention of obesity.

23 *Sec. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Department of Health, in
24 coordination with the DILG, DepEd, NGOs and Pos shall issue the necessary rules
25 and regulation within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

26 *Sec. 8. Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to implement the provisions of
27 this Act shall be initially charged against the appropriations of the DOH, DILG and
28 DepEd under the General Appropriations Act. For the LGUs, the requirement shall be
29 taken from their Internal Revenue Allotment and other local funds. Thereafter, such

1 sums as may be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the
2 annual General Appropriations Act.

3 Sec. 9. *Separability Clause.* – In case any provisions of this Act is declared
4 unconstitutional, the other provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

5 Sec. 10. *Effectivity* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
6 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspaper of general
7 circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,