FIFTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
FIRST REGULAR SESSION)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Rufus B. Rodriguez and Representative Maximo B. Rodriguez, Jr.

House Bill No. 1405

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article II, Section 12 mandates the State to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this provision, the State must provide prenatal and postnatal maternity care services in the home of pregnant teenagers in order to protect their health as well as the future health and wellbeing of their newborn children.

Pregnancy among unmarried teenagers is one of the most difficult and far-reaching social problems in our country today. This is generally prevalent among women aged 15-24 who are from the low-income bracket. Since it is at this stage where they are supposed to be enjoying their lives, their pregnancies are often considered untimely or unwanted. Hence, maturity and preparedness required of every parent are often times, wanting.

The Department of Health provides for free prenatal and postnatal consultations designed to reduce the incidence of maternal and infant mortality. But due to several reasons, one of which is the financial difficulty encountered by the pregnant unmarried teenagers, pre-natal and post natal services have been ignored.

This bill seeks to improve and expand the availability of, and access to, needed comprehensive maternity care services that enable pregnant adolescents to obtain proper care and to assist pregnant adolescents and adolescent parents to become productive independent contributors to family and community life.

The early passage of this bill therefore is highly recommended

RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ

MAXIMO B. RODRIGUEZ, JR.

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH HOME VISITING PROGRAM

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. ***Short Title.***- This Act shall be known as the ***"Maternal and Infant Care Act."***

SEC 2. ***Declaration of Policy.*** - It is the declared policy of the State to equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. In line with this policy, the State must provide prenatal and postnatal maternity care services in the home of pregnant women in order to protect their health as well as the future health and wellbeing of their newborn children.

SEC 3. ***Definition of Terms.*** - For purposes of this Act, the term:

(a) "Secretary" refers to the Secretary of the Department of Health.

(b) "Low income" means, with respect to an individual or family with an income determined to be below the income official poverty line defined by the National Economic and Development Authority.

SEC 4. ***Eligibility of Individuals.*** - A pregnant woman not more than 21 years old, or families with an infant up to the age of one (I), belonging to the low-income bracket shall be eligible to receive maternal and infant care services provided under this Act.

SEC ***5. Establishment of Maternal and Infant Health Home Visiting Program. -***

The Secretary shall require health centers to designate an appropriate health professional or a qualified nonprofessional acting under the supervision of a health care professional who shall deliver maternal and child health services in the home of eligible individuals.

SEC 6. *Maternal and Child Health Services*. - The maternal and child-health services which may be provided in the home to eligible individuals shall include the following:

(a) instruction and counseling regarding future health care for the woman and her child;

(b) nutrition counseling;

(c) counseling and education concerning all aspects of prenatal care, childbirth, and motherhood;

(d) general family counseling, including child and family development; and

(e) medical care or referral for medical care for the woman and her child.

SEC 7. *Prohibition on abortion*. - Any maternal and child health service which shall be made available under this Act shall not advocate, promote, or encourage abortion.

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

SEC 9. *Repealing Clause.-* Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC 10. *Effectivity Clause.-* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.