

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 298

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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REGISTRATION UNIT BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE	

Introduced by Representatives
Horacio P. Suansing, Jr. and Estrellita B. Suansing

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to strengthen the barangays by providing adequate support to barangay officials and volunteer workers and improve the provision of line government services to the people by providing incentives and benefits, as well as, equipping them with the necessary training to enable them to efficiently and effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities.

The thrust of this measure is to undertake a much needed reform in barangay governance anchored in the following:

1. Financial empowerment of Barangay Officials and Volunteers

To deload some of the financial pressure that barangay officials face, this bill proposes that national government should subsidize the honorarium of 1 Barangay Health Worker (BHW) and no more than 20 tanods in each barangay. Based on data from the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the total number of BHWs throughout the country is 183,389 while the total number of tanods is 443,972. The honorarium for barangay day care centers (42,384 in total throughout the country), for their part, should continue to be covered by the city/municipal government. This way, the honorarium for these mentioned barangay volunteer workers do not have to compete anymore for the allocated share (i.e. 55%) of personnel services in the barangay's Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA); the budget for personnel services can instead be maximized for the salary of the punong barangay and the kagawads as well as the honorarium only for the Barangay Nutrition

Scholars (34,861 in total throughout the country) and the members of the Lupon ng Tagapamayapa (345,853 in total throughout the country). Together with the increasing trend of the IRA, barangays will have more resources at their disposal to financially empower its officials and volunteers.

Subsidizing the honorarium of BHWs and tanods has the added benefit of insulating these important barangay frontliners from local politics. Unlike city and municipal career positions that remain regardless of who the elected leaders are, almost all barangay workers and volunteers are replaced when barangay leadership changes. Since the honorarium for BHWs and tanods will be coming from the national government, - through the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), in particular - will have a stake in guaranteeing that effective BHWs and tanods, respectively, get to stay and are not arbitrarily removed by newly elected barangay officials.


2. Capacity building for Barangay Officials and Volunteers


The bill likewise seeks to ensure that appropriate training and seminars will be provided to empower barangay officials and volunteers to effectively exercise their duties. Protecting barangay volunteer workers in particular as they perform their tasks is also important, which takes the form of guaranteeing their access to free legal services when needed and facilitating their coverage under PhilHealth.

The proposed reforms under this bill conform to the principle of local autonomy as enshrined in the Constitution and to the operative principles of decentralization as declared in the Local Government Code of 1991. These reforms are needed more than ever, as we seek to ensure that the growth of the country has experienced in recent years is truly felt, especially by those at the margins of society. Barangay officials and volunteers, as the face of government for most of our people, require the financial empowerment and capability building championed by this bill to be effective agents of public service.

This measure has been filed during the 16th Congress as House Bill No. 6443 and considered approved by the Committee on Local Government. Thus, a study on the matter has been done.

In view of the foregoing, immediate approval of the bill is earnestly sought.


HON. HORACIO P. SUANSING, JR.
2nd District, Sultan Kudarat


HON. ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING
1st District, Nueva Ecija

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AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE BARANGAYS THROUGH SUPPORT FOR BARANGAY
OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEER WORKERS

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the ***“Barangay***
2 ***Officials and Volunteer Workers Incentives and Benefits Act of 2016.”***

3 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the
4 State to strengthen the barangays by providing adequate support to barangay
5 officials and volunteer workers and improve the provision of line government
6 services to the people at the barangay level. The State acknowledges the need
7 to provide incentives and benefits on order to properly compensate and equip
8 our barangay officials and volunteer workers with the necessary training and
9 enable them to efficiently carry out their mandated tasks for the great benefit of
10 our people.

11 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act, the following terms
12 shall mean:

13 a) *Barangay Officials* refer to officials enumerated under Section 387
14 (a) of Republic Act No. 7160 as amended, otherwise known as the
15 Local Government Code of 1991 namely the punong barangay,
16 sangguniang barangay members, sangguniang kabataan
17 chairperson, secretary and treasurer;
18

- 1 b) *Volunteer Workers* refer to Barangay Health Workers and members
2 of the Barangay Tanod Brigade;
3
4 c) *Barangay Health Worker (BHW)* refers to a person who has
5 undergone training programs under any accredited government
6 and non-government organization and who voluntarily renders
7 primary health care services in the community after having been
8 accredited to function as such by the local health board in
9 accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the Department of
10 Health (DOH); and
11
12 d) *Barangay Tanods* refer to all duly appointed members of the
13 barangay tanod brigades, which shall number not more than
14 twenty (20) in each barangay as prescribed under the Local
15 Government Code of 1991.

16 **SEC. 4. Honorarium of BHWs and Barangay Tanods.** – In order to
17 ease the financial burden on our barangay volunteer workers, one (1) BHW in
18 each barangay and barangay tanods, which shall not be more than twenty (20)
19 in each barangay, shall receive a monthly honorarium of at least Five hundred
20 pesos (₱500.00) chargeable against the budget of the Department of Health
21 (DOH) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG),
22 respectively: *Provided*, That barangays may opt to give additional honorarium
23 equally to all barangay volunteer workers, which shall be charged against the
24 local budget of each barangay: *Provided, further*, That nothing herein contained
25 shall diminish or remove the honorarium already granted to volunteer workers
26 before the effectivity of this Act.

27 **SEC. 5. Other Incentives and Benefits of Barangay Officials and**
28 **Volunteer Worker.** – In recognition of their services, the national government
29 shall, in addition to financial benefits, provide barangay officials and volunteer
30 workers with the following incentives and benefits:

- 31 a) Training and workshops on how to effectively exercise their duty
32 provided by the DILG for Barangay Tanods and DOH for BHWs, and
33 such other training fit for barangay officials and volunteer workers;
34
35 b) PhilHealth coverage for BHWs, which shall include medical
36 examination and treatment in government hospitals, and fully
37 subsidized by the national government through the DOH: *Provided*,

1 That indigent barangay volunteer workers shall be covered through
2 the full national subsidy scheme; and

- 3
4 c) Free legal services from the government lawyers or the Public
5 Attorney's Office (PAO) for cases arising out of or in connection with
6 performance of their duties as such: *Provided*, That such legal services
7 shall continue, even after the expiration of the term of barangay
8 officials, until its final disposition.

9 **SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The Department of
10 Interior and Local Government, in consultation with the National Liga ng mga
11 Barangay, and the Department of Health, shall issue the necessary rules and
12 regulations to implement this Act.

13 **SEC. 7. *Separability Clause.*** – If any of the section or provision of this
14 Act is held invalid, all other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid
15 and effective.

16 **SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** – Section 393 of the Local Government Code
17 of 1991, Republic Act No. 7883 otherwise known as the “*Barangay Health*
18 *Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995*” and all laws, decrees, orders,
19 rules and regulations which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed,
20 amended or modified accordingly.

21 **SEC. 9. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
22 publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

23 ***Approved,***