

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City  
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session  
House Bill No. **2798**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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<b>BILLS AND LEGISLATIVE SERVICE</b>	

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Introduced by **Hon. Sol Aragon**

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 provides:

SEC. 15. The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

The Philippines reportedly has one of the highest incidences of breast cancer in Southeast Asia. Breast cancer is allegedly the third leading cause of death in the Philippines and the number one type of cancer among Filipino women, often afflicting them during their most productive years. Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths among Filipino women in the country today.

An estimated three out of 100 Filipino women will reportedly contract the disease before age 75. The Philippine Society of Medical Oncology in 2012 cited that one out of 100 women dies before age 75. This complements the Department of Health and Philippine Cancer Society, Inc. report, which states that breast cancer is the most common cancer in the country, comprising 16 percent of the 80,000 new cancer cases in 2010.

In high-income countries such as Sweden, Japan and the US, the breast cancer survival rate is around 80%; in middle-income countries, about 60%. In low-income countries (such as the Philippines), women with breast cancer have an average survival rate of below 40%. The WHO attributes the low survival rates in less developed countries mainly to the lack of early detection programs, resulting in many women consulting their doctor when their

breast cancer is already in its advanced stage, as well as to the lack of adequate diagnostic and treatment facilities.

Fortunately, new treatments and improved reconstructive surgery are now available for women who have breast cancer. Because of the recent developments in science and technology, breast cancer patients have better choices than ever before.

Many women who have a mastectomy, either for prevention or treatment, have the option of having more surgery to rebuild the shape of the removed breast. Most women who undergo breast reconstruction report improved psychological, social, and sexual well-being, as well as satisfaction with the restored appearance of their breasts.

Hence, this bill seeks to raise awareness on the part of women to encourage early detection, and to educate breast cancer patients anticipating surgery, especially patients who are members of ethnic minority groups, regarding the availability and coverage of breast reconstruction, prostheses, and other options.

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

  
**HON. SOL ARAGONES**  
**Representative, Third District of Laguna**



1 from the age of 50 shall undergo annual mammography for free at government  
2 hospitals.

3 (c) All hospitals whether district or provincial shall have breast cancer  
4 screening capability and this information shall be cascaded to the barangay or  
5 community level.

6 SECTION 3. *Breast Reconstruction Education.* –

7 (a) *In General.* – The Secretary of Health shall provide for the planning and  
8 implementation of an education campaign to inform breast cancer patients anticipating  
9 surgery regarding the availability and coverage of breast reconstruction, prostheses,  
10 and other options, with a focus on informing patients who are members of ethnic  
11 minority groups.

12 (b) *Information to be Disseminated.* –

13 (1) *Specific Information.* – Such campaign shall include dissemination  
14 of the following information:

15 (A) Breast reconstruction is possible at the time of breast cancer  
16 surgery, or at a later time.

17 (B) Prostheses or breast forms may be available.

18 (C) The patient has a right to choose a provider of reconstructive  
19 care, including the potential transfer of care to a surgeon that provides  
20 breast reconstructive care.

21 (D) The patient may opt to undergo breast reconstruction some  
22 time after the time of breast cancer surgery for personal or medical

1 reasons, during treatment or after completion of all other breast cancer  
2 treatments.

3 (2) *Other Information.* – In addition to the information described in  
4 paragraph (1), such campaign may include dissemination of such other  
5 information (whether developed by the Secretary or by other entities) as the  
6 Secretary determines relevant.

7 (3) *Required Publication.* – The information required to be disseminated  
8 under paragraph (1) and any information disseminated in accordance with  
9 paragraph (2) shall be posted on the internet websites of relevant government  
10 agencies.

11 (4) *Restriction.* – Such campaign shall not specify, or be designed to  
12 serve as a tool to limit, the health care providers available to patients.

13 (c) *Consultation.* – In developing the information to be disseminated under this  
14 Act, the Secretary shall consult with appropriate medical societies and patient  
15 advocates related to breast cancer, breast reconstructive surgery, breast prostheses,  
16 and breast forms and with patient advocates representing ethnic minority groups.

17 (d) *Report.* – Not later than two years after date of effectivity of this Act and  
18 every two years after, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health of the  
19 Senate and the House of Representatives a report describing the activities carried out  
20 under this Act during the preceding two fiscal years, which shall include an evaluation  
21 of the extent to which such activities have been effective in improving the health and  
22 well-being of ethnic minority groups.

1           SECTION 4. *Funding.* – Philhealth coverage shall include the cost of  
2 screening, treatment, and rehabilitation of breast cancer. The amount necessary to  
3 cover this cost shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

4           SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof, is held  
5 invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise  
6 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

7           SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
8 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary  
9 to or is inconsistent with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or  
10 amended accordingly.

11           SECTION 7. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days  
12 after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,