

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 20**



Introduced by Reps. **CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,**  
**ANTONIO L. TINIO, EMMI A. DE JESUS,**  
**FRANCE L. CASTRO, ARLENE D. BROSAS,**  
**ARIEL B. CASILAO, and SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**

**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID  
OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE IMMINENT TRANSFER AND ABOLITION OF  
DR. JOSE FABELLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WHICH MAY RESULT TO  
DISLOCATION, DISRUPTION, AND REDUCTION OF HEALTH SERVICES  
INTENDED FOR POOR PATIENTS**

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital Medical Center ( hereafter Fabella Hospital, for brevity) was targeted for transfer by June 9, 2016, as announced by Fabella Hospital Chief Dr. Esmeraldo Ilem Fabella on April 5, 2016. Fabella Hospital reportedly did not pass the ISO accreditation and the structure has many cracks. Hence, the Department of Health (DOH) Assistant Secretary for Hospital Operations ordered them to immediately vacate Fabella Hospital. In June 10, 2016 joint press briefing, the DOH and Fabella Hospital management announced that there is no stopping in the transfer of hospital operations from its present location at the Old Bilibid Compound in Manila to the Lung Center of the Philippines (LCP) in Quezon City as well as in other Manila-based hospitals including San Lazaro Hospital, Philippine General Hospital, and National Center for Geriatric Health;

**WHEREAS**, the Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) has also demanded Fabella Hospital to immediately vacate the Old Bilibid Compound through a letter addressed to the Fabella Hospital Medical Center Chief dated September 4, 2015. HGC said that it is mandated to market and sell the Old Bilibid Compound to recover the government's financial exposure to the failed Urban Renewal and Infrastructure Development Project;

**WHEREAS**, for 96 years, Fabella hospital has been providing services to poor mothers and babies. Originally established in 1920 as a Maternity House, it was expanded to a 700-bed capacity hospital primarily mandated to provide health services to indigent patients in need of obstetrical, gynecological and pediatric treatment.<sup>1</sup> It is one of the most affordable maternity hospitals which accounts for 20% of babies delivered in Metro Manila. In 2015, the World Health Organization recognized the hospital "as a role model of the World Health Organization-Western Pacific

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.coa.gov.ph/2010\\_AAR/NGAs/ES/DJMH\\_ES2010.pdf](http://www.coa.gov.ph/2010_AAR/NGAs/ES/DJMH_ES2010.pdf)

Region Office for its essential newborn care programs, which have been proven to reduce infant morbidity and mortality”<sup>2</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, the imminent transfer and abolition of Fabella Hospital could have dire consequences especially with regards to maternal health. Maternal Mortality Rate remains high at 221/100,000 live births, far from the 52/100,000 live births targeted for Millennium Development Goal 2015;

**WHEREAS**, the order to immediately vacate and transfer was opposed by hospital employees, health workers and patients because it will displace more than 2,000 patients daily including mothers and babies, and some 1,000 nurses, doctors, and health workers of Fabella Hospital. The DOH claimed that the reduction in patient services and bed occupancy are merely remedial measures and that the security of tenure of health workers are assured as they will be recalled and new ones will be hired once its new building is completed by May 2017. Yet, health workers see that this scheme is, in fact, tantamount to the abolition of the hospital services, as Fabella will not be functioning anymore as one distinct hospital. According to the Alliance of Health Workers, the abolition of Fabella Hospital is, in reality, linked to the plan to privatize public hospitals and services;

**WHEREAS**, according to the health workers, the structural weakness of the hospital was already known and announced by the Fabella Hospital Director in 2007. According to the DOH Report on the Transfer and Modernization of Fabella, the DPWH Task Force on Building Inspections conducted an ocular survey in 2010 and recommended further structural evaluation. In 2016 a structural investigation conducted by private engineering firm ESCA, Inc. revealed that the Fabella buildings require immediate strengthening to avoid damage to life and property in the event of a major earthquake. Throughout the years, instead of repairing the hospital, the government pushed forth with its plan to transfer and “modernize” the hospital. The government has not allotted a separate capital outlay fund in the National Budget for Fabella Hospital for the years 2011, 2013, and 2015. This may have contributed to the deterioration of the hospital facilities and structure;

**WHEREAS**, the Fabella Hospital, in reality, has been slated to be transferred and privatized since 1995 with Proclamation No. 542 “Authorizing the Development of the Old Bilibid Prison Compound for Mixed Housing and Commercial Purposes” signed by Pres. Fidel V. Ramos. This was amended by Proclamation No. 661 signed in 2004 by Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, transferring the Development Project of the Old Bilibid Compound to the Home Guaranty Corporation. Since 2002 there were plans to transform Fabella Hospital into a private Women’s Medical Center and/or transfer the services of Fabella Hospital in the Lung Center Compound;

**WHEREAS**, under former Pres. Aquino’s “Kalusugan Pangkalahatan” and Public Private Partnership program, the DOH in 2013 bared the plan for Fabella Hospital Transfer and Redevelopment. Based on DOH Report in June 2016, the 6-floor, 700-bed capacity teaching and training hospital inside the DOH Compound involved total project cost of P 2.00025 billion. The contracts for phase 1 and phase 2 of the project were awarded to J.D. Legaspi Construction and were targeted to be completed by April 2017 and December 2017, respectively<sup>3</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, instead of the abolition and privatization of Fabella Hospital, the health workers and patients recommend the onsite development of the hospital using public funds and the awarding

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<sup>2</sup> Villa, Jet (March 5, 2015), Interaksyon.com; Retrieved 7 April 2015

Narang, Sonia (March 11, 2015) PRI. Retrieved 7 April 2015;

“Official Website of Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital”. Retrieved 2007-06-19, as cited by AHW Media Briefer re Fabella Hospital Abolition, May 2016

<sup>3</sup> Letter of DOH Health facility Development Bureau to DJMH Director Dr. Ruben Flores dated September 22, 2015

of the lot in the Old Bilibid Compound being occupied by the hospital. The DOH is opposed to onsite development as retrofitting will supposedly cost P300 million and will take three (3) years to be completed;

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for Congress to investigate the matter as it will imperil the services for mothers and babies of the biggest “Paanakan ng Bayan”. The issue is a matter of life and death for many poor patients who will be displaced if Fabella Hospital will be abolished;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Health conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the transfer and abolition of Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital, which may result to dislocation, disruption, and reduction of health services intended for poor patients.

*Adopted,*

  
**Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**  
*Bayan Muna Party-list*

  
**Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO**  
*ACT Teachers Party-list*

  
**Rep. EMMI A. DE JESUS**  
*Gabriela Women's Party*

  
**Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO**  
*ACT Teachers Party-list*

  
**Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS**  
*Gabriela Women's Party*

  
**Rep. ARIEL B. CASILAO**  
*Anakpawis Party-list*

  
**Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**  
*Kabataan Party-list*