

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3088

Introduced by Honorable Anna York P. Bondoc, MD

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to promote awareness on breastfeeding amongst couples seeking to get married, by mandating that all applicants for a marriage license receive instructions and information relative to breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

The backbone of a healthy nation is built on healthy infants and children. While building awareness on family planning and responsible parenthood is a step in the right direction towards such goal, a targeted and specific campaign must likewise be launched so that persons in the best position to ensure the health of Filipino children are equipped with accurate and updated information.

The 2002 Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding (Global Strategy) developed jointly by the World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Educational Fund recommends that all infants 0-6 months should be exclusively breastfed and that the same continue up to 2 years of age and even beyond. Similarly, the United Nations Children's Educational Fund has found that a breastfed child is three times more likely to survive infancy than one not breastfed.

In view of the forgoing, it becomes clear that a targeted and specific information and awareness campaign on breastfeeding and infant nutrition, alongside that of family planning and responsible parenthood and aimed at couples intending to be married, becomes critical and imperative for the future of this country.

This bill specifically seeks to address such necessity by requiring that couples applying for a marriage license be instructed and informed not just on family planning and responsible parenthood, but also on breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

In light of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this urgent bill is earnestly sought.


ANNA YORK P. BONDOC, MD
Representative
4th District, Pampanga

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**ACT TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT BREASTFEEDING AS AN ESSENTIAL
COMPONENT OF FAMILY PLANNING AND
RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

FAMILY SUPPORT FOR BREASTFEEDING ACT

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. This act shall be known as the "Family Support for Breastfeeding Act".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Principles and State Policies. - The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them. The State likewise recognizes the sanctity of family as a basic autonomous social institution.

The State upholds that preparation for responsible parenthood should start even prior to the celebration of marriage so as to allow prospective husband and wife ample time to consider their options and priorities. Towards this end, a comprehensive and effective responsible parenthood program should also include promotion of breastfeeding and proper infant nutrition as an inherent component of each child's right to enjoy, and each parent's responsibility to provide, the highest attainable standard of health.

Current governments efforts and programs aimed towards promoting breastfeeding as an optimal and cost-effective means of infant and young child nutrition should be formally incorporated into the family planning and responsible parenthood promotion and dissemination mechanism set forth in Presidential Decree No. 965.

SEC. 3. Mandate. - The Office of Family Planning in every city and municipality is hereby mandated to give instructions and information not only pertaining to family planning and responsible parenthood but to extend the same to cover proper topics relative to breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

The city or municipal health officer shall continue to be assisted by the city or rural health nurse, members of the city or rural health unit, and such other personnel from different agencies of the government involved in efforts towards promotion of responsible parenthood.

SEC. 4. Certificate of Compliance. – Pursuant to Section 3 of Presidential Decree No. 965 no marriage license shall be issued by the Local Civil Registrar unless the applicants present a Certificate of Compliance issued by the Family Planning Officer certifying that they had duly received comprehensive instructions and information on family planning, responsible parenthood, breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

The instructions and information shall be given, and the certificate of compliance shall be issued, free of charge.

SEC. 5. Assistance of Government Agencies. – Agencies of the government shall assist the Family Planning Offices in order to further promote and support family planning and responsible parenthood. Towards this end, the Department of Health, the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Population Commission shall furnish each Family Planning Office with the proper information and resources on current studies and research related to family planning, responsible parenthood, breastfeeding and infant nutrition.

SEC. 6. Assistance from the Private Sector. – The Family Planning Office may request volunteer doctors, nurses or other duly-licensed health professionals or health care workers to assist in giving the instructions and information mandated by this act: *Provided*, That in no event shall anyone promote, endorse, market or do any act tending to promote or endorse any commercially-produced and/or commercially-sold product or any paid medical, health or wellness service.

SEC. 7. Separability Clause. – The provisions of this Act are hereby deemed distinct and separable from each other. If any provision hereof be declared invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the other provisions which shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 8. Repealing Clause. – Sections 2 and 3 of Presidential Decree No. 965 are hereby amended accordingly. All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect ninety (90) days following its publication in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,