

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 444



Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SCHOOL-BASED IMMUNIZATION OF TETRAVALENT DENGUE VACCINE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE PUBLIC

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 mandates that: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them";

WHEREAS, the Department of Health (DOH), in collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) has implemented an Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) in public elementary and secondary schools since 2013;

WHEREAS, the DOH has launched the School-Based Immunization Program (SBIP) on April 2016 to include tetravalent dengue vaccine for Grade 4 students or school children aged nine (9) years old and above from regions with the highest number of dengue cases, specifically those from the National Capital Region, Calabarzon, and Central Luzon;

WHEREAS, dengue is one of the leading causes of illness in the Philippines, which ranks 7th among countries with the highest average number of dengue cases reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) and 4th overall for the Asia Pacific region from 2004 to 2010¹;

WHEREAS, the initial dose of dengue vaccine was administered to selected public school students in the pilot regions using CYD-TDV, also known as Dengvaxia®, the world's first dengue-vaccine developed by Sanofi Pasteur, the vaccines division of Sanofi, which is the largest company in the world producing human vaccines;

WHEREAS, the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization has recommended the use of Dengvaxia®, which has been licensed by Mexico, Philippines, Brazil, El Salvador and Paraguay for use in individuals 9 to 45 years of old (9 to 60 years old in the case of Paraguay) living in dengue-endemic areas²;

WHEREAS, the DOH's launching of the program to vaccinate school children in select public schools drew ire of public health advocates, healthcare workers, academics, and civic organizations that questioned the apparent haste in the vaccination of children amidst the pendency of the vaccine's pre-qualification and completion of the study on patients, particularly on the phenomenon of "antibody dependent enhancement or ADE where dengue virus antagonize the hosts' antibodies to enhance its viral load and disease severity;

¹ Department Memorandum No. 2016-0096, Department of Health, February 24, 2016

² Dengue Vaccine Initiative, Statement on SAGE Dengue Vaccine Recommendations, Geneva, April 15, 2016

WHEREAS, the DOH, during the incumbency of Secretary Janette Garin, has assured the public about the safety of the vaccine based on the result of more than ten (10) years of efficacy and safety studies across ten (10) countries where dengue is endemic, including the Philippines³;

WHEREAS, a Sanofi report shows that over 489,000 students were vaccinated up to July, of which 928 "adverse events," about 0.18 percent, were reported out of which, 27 were classified as "serious events," including two deaths, "which are coincidental and not associated with the vaccine"⁴.

WHEREAS, DOH Secretary Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial has recently put the dengue vaccination program on hold pending another round of medical review and in view of the reports that Dengvaxia® has less than 50 percent protection against dengue serotypes 1 and 2, which are the most common circulating serotypes in the country;

WHEREAS, dengue is one of the leading causes of illness in the Philippines, which ranks 7th among countries with the highest average number of dengue cases reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) and 4th overall for the Asia Pacific region from 2004 to 2010⁵;

WHEREAS, in view of protecting the health and welfare of the public, particularly school children from dengue virus, it is imperative to look into the SBIP in order to recommend measures necessary to curb the burden of dengue disease in the country;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the House of Representatives to direct the Committee on Health to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the School-Based Immunization of Tetravalent Dengue Vaccine of the Department of Health for the purpose of protecting the health and welfare of the public.

Adopted,


ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.
4th District, Quezon

³ WHO stays out of dengue vaccine controversy, InterAksyon.com, April 5, 2016 (<http://interaksyon.com/article/126028/who-stays-out-of-dengue-vaccine-controversy>)

⁴ DOH frisks Sanofi's P3B dengue contract OK'd by Aquino govt, InterAksyon.com, September 19, 2016 (<http://interaksyon.com/article/132550/cocktales--doh-frisks-sanofis-p3b-dengue-contract-okd-by-aquino-govt>)

⁵ Department Memorandum No. 2016-0096, Department of Health, February 24, 2016