

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2913



Introduced by Rep. Precious Hipolito Castelo

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Philippine authorities said the poison in a batch of candy that sent nearly 2,000 children to hospital in 2016 was likely a common germ from dirty hands. An erstwhile Health Secretary once appealed for better hygiene standards in the food industry, as she announced test results indicating a bacterium found in human skin and hair likely contaminated the sweets. "This could be they did not wash their hands, or their sweat dripped into the candy, or the candy touched their armpits, or they didn't wash up after going to the bathroom," she said in a statement.

At least 1,925 people, mostly children in the Southern Philippines were hospitalized in July of 2016, with stomach cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea, and other illnesses after eating fruit-flavored candy. Poor enforcement of food safety regulations has been blamed for past cases of food poisoning in the Philippines. The health secretary acknowledged that the government has had a tough time enforcing food safety rules in small towns, where businesses prepare candy, rice cakes and other sweets in their home kitchens. "These backyard industries are not regulated by the FDA," she said.

Hence, this measure seeks to create the food safety administration in order to laser-focus on the food safety issues and stave off the occurrence of food poisoning in the future.

The immediate passage of this bill is thus earnestly prayed for.


PRECIOUS HIPOLITO CASTELO

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AN ACT
CREATING THE OFFICE OF FOOD SAFETY ADMINISTRATION AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Food Safety Administration Act."

SEC. 2. There is hereby created the Food Safety Administration under the Office of the Department of Health to ensure food safety throughout the Philippines.

SEC. 3. The creation of such office shall be determined and undertaken by the Department of Health, which is hereby authorized to delineate its specific functions from those of the Food and Drugs Administration.

SEC. 4. The amount needed to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be charged against the 2019 appropriations of the Department of Health. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the effective implementation of this measure shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 5. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,