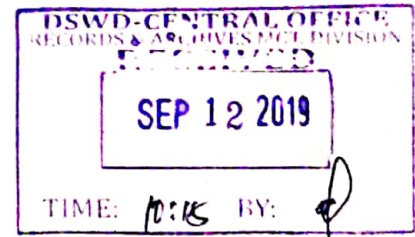




September 02, 2019

Honorable CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE T. GO
 Chairperson
 Committee on Health and Demography
 Senate of the Philippines
 GSIS Bldg., Pasay City



Dear **Senator Go**:

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) **supports Senate Bill No. 119** entitled, "*An Act Requiring All Government and Private Hospitals, Medical Centers, Clinics, Infirmaries and Puericulture Centers to Give Free Medical and Dental Assistance to Indigent Children*", or the "*Indigent Children Free Medical and Dental Services*" introduced by Senator Ma. Lourdes Nancy S. Binay.

We believe that the intention of the proposed measure is in consonance with the State's recognition of the need to promote the physical well-being of children, including their right to health and making health services adequate to all.

To contribute to the bill's enhancement, we are recommending the following:

1. **Sec. 3 – Indigent Children**, for consistency, use the **definition of a child as used in Republic Act No. 7610** entitled: "*Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act*", which reads:

"Children refers to person below eighteen (18) years of age or those over but are unable to fully take care of themselves or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition."

2. **Sec. 6 – Incentives for Private Hospital, Medical Center, Clinic, Infirmary and/or Puericulture Centers**

2.1 On **page 3, line 7**, to insert the word "**Registered**", which will be read as follows:

*"...shall secure a certification from the **registered** social worker assigned...."*

3. **Sec. 7 – Penal Clause**, to include a penal clause not only on those who shall refuse or fail without good cause to render appropriate assistance, but for those unscrupulous individual/ facility who will take advantage of this provision for their own gains.


1

4. Other Comments

- 4.1 To **reconcile** the provisions of the bill with other existing laws and rules pertaining to the provision of medical assistance and other related services by the government, to the children in need (e.g., Universal Healthcare Act).
- 4.2 Instead of the DSWD, the **Local Government Units (LGUs)** through the **Local Social Welfare and Development Office (LSWDO)** shall be the primary office responsible to implement the provisions of this Act in consideration of the devolved functions to the LGUs per Republic Act No. 7160 or the "Local Government Code of 1991".
- 4.3 To indicate **what constitutes medical treatment to be provided**, if this includes medicines and therapies appropriate funds thereof should be provided.
- 4.4 To cover the **indigent children with non-apparent disabilities**, such as autism spectrum disorder, developmental, intellectual and learning disability, which requires special assistance or accommodation compared to regular medications being provided to indigent children.
- 4.5 Children **identified in the Listahanan** should be automatically included.
- 4.6 **Grievance management process** must be clear and specified in the Bill.
- 4.7 To **consult the Council for the Welfare of Children** for their input on the proposed Bill.

For the Committee's consideration.

Very truly yours,



ROLANDO JOSELITO D. BAUTISTA

Secretary

Date: _____