

29 January 2020

**SEN. CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE T. GO**  
Chairperson  
Committee on Health and Demography  
Senate of the Philippines  
GSIS Bldg., Financial Center, Diokno Blvd., Pasay City

**Dear Sen. Go:**

We are pleased to submit the Department's comments and recommendations on Senate Bill No. 392, entitled:

**“An Act Mandating the Appointment of Barangay Health Workers in Barangays, Providing for Their Duties and Responsibilities, Compensation and Benefits, and for Other Purposes”**

This is without prejudice to the Department's submission of additional comments.

With my best regards.

Very truly yours,



**RAMON M. LOPEZ**  
Secretary

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

DTI Position on

**Senate Bill No. 392**

**“An Act Mandating the Appointment of Barangay Health Workers in Barangays, Providing for Their Duties and Responsibilities, Compensation and Benefits, and for Other Purposes”**

The Department recognizes the intentions of the bill that give importance to the crucial role of Barangay Health Workers<sup>1</sup> (BHWs) in providing primary health care services in the community. The grant of compensation and benefit package, including security of tenure to BHWs will ensure that their services are continuously provided as needed by the community.

While there is already an existing legislation that mandates the grant of benefits and incentives to accredited BHWs for voluntary health services rendered to the community, Republic Act 7883 or The Barangay Health Workers' Benefits and Incentives Act of 1995 does not include the BHWs' security of tenure. The benefits spelled-out in the law are only limited to hazard allowance, subsistence allowance, training and education and career enrichment programs (TECEPS), civil service eligibility,<sup>2</sup> free legal services, and preferential access to loan. Implementation of the RA 7883 is funded by the local government units' (LGUs) budget. As of 2009, there are 196,562 active accredited BHWs in the country.<sup>3</sup>

The DTI views that one of the intentions of the bill to accredit BHWs is aligned with the mandate of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), specifically in expanding and strengthening of the coverage of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and in recognizing the competency of their TVET graduates. We also recognize that the bill included TESDA as an implementing agency as barangay health workers should pass training provided for and be certified by TESDA.

Furthermore, the Department also opines that when it comes to the competency assessment of BHWs, TESDA, along with the Department of Health (DOH)

---

<sup>1</sup> BHW is a person who has undergone training programs under any accredited government and non-government[al] organization and who voluntarily renders primary health care services in the community after having been accredited to function as such by the local health board in accordance with the guidelines promulgated by the DOH. Retrieved from: <https://www.doh.gov.ph/faqs/What-is-Barangay-Health-Worker> on 15 January 2020

<sup>2</sup> A second grade eligibility shall be granted to BHWs who have rendered (5) years continuous service as such, provided that should the BHW become a regular employee of the government, the total number of years served as BHW shall be credited to his/her service in computing retirement benefits Retrieved from: <https://www.doh.gov.ph/faqs/What-are-the-incentives-and-benefits-of-BHWs-under-the-Implementing-Rules-and-Regulations-IRR-of-R.A.-7883> on 15 January 2020

<sup>3</sup> Latest available data retrieved from <https://www.doh.gov.ph/faqs/What-is-the-number-of-BHWs-nationwide> on 15 January 2020



should be the lead agencies, as mandated by the law. Lastly, given that BHWs are considered government workers, we defer to the inputs and recommendations of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) in terms of the organizational arrangements that will ensure the security of tenure for BHWs.

Lastly, DTI would also like to highlight Section 4 of the bill, which states:

Section	Comment
<p><b>Section 4. Appointment and Qualifications</b> – <i>There shall be appointed in each barangay such number of BHWs as the DOH shall determine and recommend in consideration of the number of households in a barangay; Provided, That the total number of BHWs per barangay shall not be less than three (3), nor more than one percent (1%) of the barangay’s total population.</i></p>	<p>The DOH, in coordination with DILG and respective LGUs must determine a way to efficiently assess the actual number of BHWs to be deployed per barangay. Conditions on how many will be placed in a locality must first have needs assessment to identify gaps in the primary care delivery. Criteria that can be considered include: population, age group, health facilities available, prevalence of diseases in the area, etc. Simply stating one percent (1%) should have a basis as plantillas for BHWs will be requested.</p>

The Department would like to reiterate its support to the passage of the bill that aims to institutionalize and strengthen primary health care at the barangay level by establishing the necessary support mechanisms through the upgrade of incentives and benefits of BHWs.

*Rizalyn Day*

**Bureau of Trade & Industrial Policy Research**

**29 January 2020**

Ref: BTIPR-012020-

/jmaj