



**ANG NARS POSITION PAPER ON HOUSE BILL No. 5445: AN ACT PROHIBITING HOSPITALS FROM
REQUIRING THE PAYMENT OF MONEY UPON REGISTERED NURSES WHO WANT TO GAIN
WORK EXPERIENCE AND PENALIZING ANY VIOLATION THEREOF**

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ANG NARS is an advocate organization ensuring and promoting the socio- economic- political- professional rights of nurses with the responsibility and accountability to provide safe quality nursing care to the Filipino people.

House Bill No. 5445 will not solve the salary and unemployment problems of nurses. It removes the fees of Non-Accredited Training Programs but strongly strengthens FALSE Volunteerism by further promoting and encouraging hospitals not to employ nurses; making them work without salaries, benefits, protection, and security of tenure.

Dr. Enrique T. Ona, the Secretary of the Department of Health, issued DOH Memorandum 2011-0238, "Termination of all Nurse Volunteer Programs", "Volunteer Programs for Nurses" and all similar or related programs in all DOH retained hospitals; and DOH Memorandum 2011-0262¹, entitled, "Elucidating the Conditions Fundamental to Department Memorandum 2011-0238 or the "Termination of all Nurse Volunteer Programs", Volunteer Programs for Nurses" and all similar or related programs in all DOH retained hospitals.

He said, "the current practice of registered nurses "volunteering" in hospitals to gain "work experience" and/or to obtain a certificate of work experience and for purposes of meeting requirements for employment abroad, is not consistent with the provisions of RA 9418 (Volunteer Act of 2007). In addition, many hospitals have implemented "nurse volunteerism" in the guise of "training programs" in order to justify the collection of "training fees", whereby such basic skills training puts no added value to the professional career of nurses".

Inasmuch as ANG NARS would like to support House Bill No. 5445 insofar as the corresponding penal provision therein stated, it is of our humble view that it will run contrary to the aforesaid DOH Memo and the movement of ANG NARS against FALSE VOLUNTEERISM. House Bill No. 5445 states that:

Sec. 1 defines:

(b) Nurse Trainee refers to a registered nurse undergoing training programs that are approved and accredited by the DOH in partnership with the PRC Board of Nursing. Those that are undergoing such training are allowed to be charged corresponding fees to be determined jointly by the DOH and the PRC Board of Nursing.

(c) Nurse Volunteers refer to registered nurses rendering "free" or unpaid services in hospitals without employer-employee relationship, and performing hospital duties with minimal supervision from regular staff nurses. Nurse volunteers may or may not receive trainings, depending on the institution where they render service.

Sec. 4. Prohibited Act – Any public or private hospital is hereby prohibited from rendering the payment of money upon registered nurses who are serving as nurse volunteers in order to gain work experience in hospitals and for employment purpose.

¹ Attached hereto, for your file, and reference, is the DOH Memorandum No. 2011-0238 and 2011- 0262.

A BSN graduate and who has passed the Nurse Licensure Exam should be called an RN (Registered Nurse), neither a trainee nor a volunteer. Any training provided by any institution should be a part of her/his employment and must be remunerated as stated in RA 9173, Nursing Act of 2002, Sec. 32.

Today, our nurses are exploited and abused because they are taken in as “nurse volunteers”, which is False Volunteerism. Exploitation is utilization of another person or group for selfish purposes. Abuse occurs when people mistreat or misuse other people, showing no concern for their integrity or innate worth as individuals, and in a manner that degrades their well-being.

Our **NURSES WANT TO WORK AND EARN A LIVING** but they are not paid for their services and others are forced to pay as trainees or volunteers, performing same responsibilities as regular staff. They hope to be included in the shortlist of applicants hoping to be given a regular position. *They are given certificates as trainees or volunteers, which are not accepted for employment locally and overseas.* This vicious cycle repeats with new batches of nurses.

Because they never run out of applicants, the major stakeholders, the hospital owners, hospital administrators, medical directors, governors and mayors do not open new positions for nurses, do not fill up vacated plantilla positions in order to save on salaries. They save for not paying the nurses and even earn from the training fees, part of their revenue generation schemes to augment operational budgets.

ANG NARS believes that nurses in public and private institutions are entitled to “equal pay for equal work of equal value”, and decent working environment. It advocates against FALSE Volunteerism and Non-Accredited Training Programs. Hospitals and any institutions must employ Nurses with “Tamang Trabaho” and “Tamang Suweldo”.

ANG NARS calls on these stakeholders to:

1. Uphold the Rights of Nurses and Stop Nurse Exploitation in all public and private healthcare institutions;
2. Full implementation and close monitoring of DOH Memorandum 2011-0238 and 2011-0262 both in private and public hospitals;
3. Make institutions, groups and individuals who are exploiting nurses answerable for their actions;
4. Prioritize National Health Funding, adequate to employ the hundreds of thousands of nurses badly needed by MILLIONS of sick and dying Filipinos;
5. Create and fill up all Nurse Plantilla positions in the country;
6. Guarantee the Regularization of all Nurses and remove all forms of Contractualization;
7. Full implementation of Salary Grade 15 of Sec. 32 of RA 9173;
8. Full implementation of the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers;
9. Provide humane and safe working conditions for Nurses;
10. Implement the ideal Nurse-Patient ratio of 1:12 (DOH Standards);
11. Send “Nurses to the Barangays” in proportion to the needs and quantity of its residents; and
12. Create built-in support systems and policies for public and private institutions, the DOH, Local Government Units, and stakeholders working towards finding solutions and opportunities for nurses nationwide.

**STOP EXPLOITATION OF NURSES!
TAMANG TRABAHO! TAMANG SUWELDO! TAMANG SOLUSYON!**

(Sgd.) NARS LEAH PRIMITIVA G. SAMACO-PAQUIZ
Founding President