



PAMBANSANG SAMAHAN NG MGA NARS NG PILIPINAS, INC.

(PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION, INC.)

Member, INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES

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THE PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION'S POSITION PAPER ON THE JOINT RESOLUTION 36 May 14, 2009

The Philippine Nurses Association reaffirms its commitment to advocate for the rights of Filipino nurses for a just and decent work conditions in the context of improving the quality of life of the Filipino people including the nurses themselves. We are in a very critical situation where the health needs of the Filipinos are put into a disadvantaged position because of the escalating number of health workers, especially Filipino nurses, leaving the country. Majority of them are pushed to work in other countries due to starving wages and inadequate benefits depriving them to live a decent life.

In the last seven years, the Filipino nurses have been patiently awaiting for the implementation of the approved Nursing Law of 2002 (Republic Act 9173) which mandates an entry level salary of a Nurse 1 position to receive Salary Grade 15 (P16,093). Worst, thousands of nurses were also denied of the full implementation of the benefits under the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers (Republic Act 7305). How can one nurse possibly live a decent life and survive the day-to-day hand-to-mouth existence in the midst of worsening economic crisis? How can a nurse perform the expectations from him/her to take care of an ill and dying patient when he/she is also suffering from hunger himself/herself?

The Joint Resolution 36 being pushed by the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress is pushing for the approval of the Total Compensation Framework where the entry level salary of a Nurse 1 position in the government will become Salary Grade 11 (P18,589) claiming that this is an increase from the current salary being implemented (Salary Grade 10 or P12,026). What our lawmakers and the Department of Budget and Management fail to consider is the provision of RA 9173 Philippine Nursing Law Section 32 which states that the salary grade of nurse 1 should not be lower than Salary Grade 15. The proposed total compensation framework in Joint Resolution 36 fail to consider that an injustice has been perpetuated for seven years now since the enactment of RA 9173 in 2002. The injustice should not be made to continue. Base the salary increase on the mandated provision of RA 9173 which is salary grade 15. Not to do this is a willful act of the government of discriminating against its own people, the Filipino nurses, who have already been ignored their just compensation for seven years now.


The funds needed to implement the salary grade 15 as the base for the salary increase will not require a big amount. Since DBM is prepared now to give us salary grade 11 (P18,549), the salary difference between salary grade 11 and salary grade 15 (P24,887) is only P6,336. Considering that there are only about 20 thousand government nurses, the needed amount to implement the increase in salary grade is only 1.5B pesos annually. In fact, the amount is lesser in the first year of implementation since only 25% of P6,336 will be given in the initial implementation and the rest will be given in four years.

The Philippine Nurses Association is aware that the only available budget allotted in the Appropriation Act of 2009 for the initial implementation of this proposed Salary Standardization Law 3 is only P18B according to DBM. However, the decision to increase the salaries of government employees must not indiscriminately ignore the rights already granted us in the Nursing Law (RA 9173), the valuable contribution of Filipino nurses in the economic development of the country, as well as in safeguarding the lives of many Filipinos.

We join the rest of the government workers and our fellow health workers in the public sector in their demand for a more realistic decent salary increase based on living wage and humane work conditions.

IMPLEMENT MAGNA CARTA OF PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS!

BASE THE INCREASE OF SALARY IN SSL 3 ON SALARY GRADE 15 AS STATED IN THE NURSING LAW (RA 9173)!



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