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SENATE  
S. No. **3433**

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 provides:

The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which was once called shell shock or battle fatigue syndrome, is a serious condition that can develop after a person has experienced or seen a traumatic or terrifying event in which serious physical harm occurred or was threatened. PTSD is a lasting consequence of traumatic ordeals that cause intense fear, helplessness, or horror, such as a sexual or physical assault, the unexpected death of a loved one, an accident, war, or natural disaster.

Most people who experience a traumatic event will have reactions that may include shock, anger, nervousness, fear, and even guilt. These reactions are common; and for most people, they go away over time. However, for a person with PTSD, these feelings continue and even increase, becoming so strong that they keep the person from living a normal life. People with PTSD have symptoms for longer than one month and cannot function as well as before the event occurred. Victims of trauma related to physical and sexual assault face the greatest risk for PTSD. This bill seeks to identify the people who are most vulnerable to PTSD and to provide them with adequate treatment.

*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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1 AN ACT  
2 TO AID IN THE TREATMENT OF POST-TRAUMATIC  
3 STRESS DISORDER IN HIGH RISK INDIVIDUALS

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

4 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Post Traumatic Stress  
5 Disorder Act of 2009.”

6 SECTION 2. *Definition of terms.* – As used in this Act, the term–

7 (A) “Post Traumatic Stress Disorder” refers to a condition that can develop after a person  
8 has experienced or witnessed a traumatic or terrifying event in which serious physical  
9 harm occurred or was threatened;

10 (B) “Department” means the Department of Health;

11 SECTION 3. *Treatment of Patients with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.* – The following  
12 persons shall undergo a mandatory screening for post traumatic stress disorder and shall be given  
13 a free treatment if the test is found to be positive:

14 (A) Military personnel after their tour of duty;

15 (B) Victims of sexual assault and/or child abuse;

16 (C) Spouses/children who are victims of domestic violence.

17 SECTION 4. *Duty of the Department of Health.* – The Department shall provide an  
18 appropriate and cost-effective method of testing and treating post traumatic stress disorder. It

1 shall issue the implementing rules and regulations for this Act within six (6) months from its  
2 effectivity.

3 SECTION 5. *Standards for evaluation and treatment.* – The Department shall be guided  
4 by the following guidelines in the implementation of this Act:

5 (A) If symptoms of PTSD are present, the doctor shall perform an evaluation by  
6 performing a complete medical history and physical exam;

7 (B) If no physical illness is found, the patient shall be referred to a psychologist who shall  
8 interview and assess the condition of the patient;

9 (C) The psychologist shall then prescribe the appropriate psychotherapy for the condition  
10 of the patient. Therapy also aims to teach the person and his or her family about the  
11 disorder, and help the person work through the fears associated with the traumatic  
12 event.

13 SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision, or part hereof is held invalid or  
14 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain  
15 valid and subsisting.

16 SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive  
17 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent  
18 with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

19 SECTION 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
20 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,