

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

SENATE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

9 SEP 14 P5:22

SENATE BILL NO. **3439**

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Introduced by Senator M. A. Madrigal

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Gender violence, specifically violence against women, has been a pervasive world-wide problem. To address this issue, the United Nations approved several international instruments and urged governments to pursue policies and programs that will empower women to advance their rights and welfare, and prevent gender violence.

Thus, in 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was convened to mobilize State Parties to take appropriate actions against violence against women. This paved the way for the passage by the UN General Assembly of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in December 1979 and the Beijing Platform in 1995.

In the Philippines, the Constitution itself recognizes the role of women in nation building. Furthermore, several laws were legislated recognizing and emphasizing women's role in society. Most recently, Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women, was enacted as our country's response to its obligations under the CEDAW.

Specific measures against violence against women were also enacted, including, Republic Act No. 7877, or Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995; Republic Act No. 8353, or Anti Rape Law; Republic Act No. 8505, or Rape Victims Assistance and Protection Act of 1998; Republic Act No. 9208, or Anti Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003; and Republic Act No. 9262, or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act.

While these efforts have contributed to greater awareness against the commission of violence against women, the fact remains that physical, sexual, psychological, and state violence are still being perpetrated against women. Based on the studies conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the increase in the number of women victims of violence is never less than 20% a year.

The culture of violence against women must be stopped. A massive education and reorientation on gender roles in society and the important contributions specifically of women in society must be incessantly and systematically carried out. Legislative measure is one of the instruments that can promote positive values towards women, uphold the dignity and human rights of every person in society, and appreciate the vital contributions of women and men in national development.


Towards this end, the United Nations General Assembly, on 17 December 1999, adopted Resolution 54/134 designating November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Said Resolution invites members of the United Nations to organize activities designed to raise public awareness of the problem of violence against women.

It must be remembered that November 25 is significant to many women's organizations and movements worldwide for this was the day when the three Mirabal sisters from the Dominican Republic, who were involved in activities against the Trujillo dictatorship, were persecuted and, later on, assassinated in an accident on November 25, 1960. The sisters, referred to as the "*Inolvidables Mariposas*" ("Unforgettable Butterflies"), have become symbols of victimization of women, and symbols against prejudice and stereotype.

Since 1999, women organizations have been commemorating November 25 as the International Day Against Violence Against Women. Consciousness raising activities, protest actions, seminars, and theater presentations are mounted yearly to highlight the issue of violence against women. However, due to lack of governmental support, the impact of these efforts has been minimal.

Thus, to have an enabling mechanism for this UN General Assembly resolution at the national level, this bill proposes that November 25 of every year be observed in the Philippines as a National Consciousness Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and that appropriate mechanisms be made available to realize this effort.

Toward this end, the support of this bill is earnestly sought.


M.A. MADRIGAL

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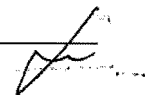
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S. B. NO. **3439**

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AN ACT
DECLARING NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIVE OF EVERY YEAR AS THE
NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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

SECTION 1. In recognition of the need to establish a comprehensive and structured campaign for national consciousness on against -violence against women, November 25 of every year is hereby declared as the "National Consciousness Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women."

SECTION 2. The following activities shall be undertaken in observance of this occasion:

(a) Heads of government agencies and instrumentalities, government-owned and -controlled corporations, local government units, and employers in the private sector shall, together with their employees, organize, engage, or participate in activities designed to raise public awareness on the problem of violence against women and the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

(b) The Philippine Information Agency (PIA) shall be mandated to allocate a minimum of one (1) hour airtime for programs exclusively raising public awareness on the problem of violence against women and the elimination of all forms of violence against women. Relative thereto, all Kapisanan ng mga Broadkaster ng Pilipinas-affiliated television and radio networks nationwide are encouraged to allocate airtime for said programs.

(c) Publishers of local newspapers and magazines are encouraged to highlight the problem of violence against women and the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

(d) The Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in coordination with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), women non-governmental organizations, and other non-governmental organizations advocating for women's human rights, shall lead public and private school communities at all levels in organizing consciousness raising activities on the problem of violence against women and the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

SECTION 3. The National Statistics Office (NSO), Philippine National Police (PNP), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and all Philippine embassies and consulates shall, in coordination with the PCW, undertake data gathering and systematization of its database on all forms of violence against women, including Filipino women working or residing abroad. These agencies shall consolidate their findings and make a report to the public on the statistics and status of violence against women every November 25 of each year.

SECTION 4. A compliance and monitoring team headed by a duly designated representative of the PCW shall be created to coordinate and monitor the implementation of this Act. Said team shall be composed of one (1) representative from each of the following agencies:

- (a) PCW;
- (b) DSWD;
- (c) DepEd;
- (d) CHED;
- (e) Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- (f) DFA;
- (g) Department of Justice (DOJ);
- (h) Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA);
- (i) Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA);
- (j) Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB); and

(k) Three (3) representatives of non-governmental organizations from the sectors of women, children, and overseas Filipino workers.

The team shall be headed by the duly designated representative of the PCW. Members of the team shall receive emoluments as may be determined by the team in accordance with existing budget and accounting rules and regulations.

SECTION 5. Funds for the implementation of the afore-stated activities, programs, and projects shall be taken out of the five percent (5%) Gender and Development budget allotted to all government agencies and local government units.

SECTION 6. If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act is held to be unconstitutional or invalid, the validity of other sections herein shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,