

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

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SENATE
S. No. 318

Introduced by Senator S. R. Osmeña III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The rights of women and children and their respective roles in national development are amply recognized in the 1987 Constitution. These have been re-enforced by the 1994 Philippine Country Report on the Role of Filipino Women, the 1995 Platform of Action for Women, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Notwithstanding the numerous policy statements in support of women and children, there continues an alarming incidence of violence, abuse and exploitation of women and children, with news of wife battering, child abuse, and exploitation of children making the banner stories of newspapers, and getting featured in documentaries and TV talk shows.

This measure proposes the establishment of the Resource Development and Crisis Assistance Centers for Women and Children in every region of the country to provide assistance to women and children undergoing such crises. The Centers will serve as temporary shelters or temporary refuge to women and children who are victims of abuse, cruelty and exploitation. The Centers shall also undertake programs and projects in capability-building and self-enhancement designed for the rehabilitation and development of such women and children.

It is important that the centers are made accessible to women and children in the countryside, where women and children are the most marginalized and disadvantaged.

In view of the foregoing, early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.

S. Osmeña III
SERGIO OSMEÑA III
Senator

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND CRISIS ASSISTANCE
CENTERS FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN EVERY REGION OF THE
PHILIPPINE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

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

1 SECTION 1. *Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “**Women’s and**
2 **Children’s Resource Development and Crisis Assistance Act of 2004**”.

3 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policies.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the
4 State to value the dignity of women and defend the rights of children and to
5 recognize their role in nation-building. Towards this end, the State shall ensure
6 the protection of their fundamental rights and to provide them with facilities and
7 opportunities that will enhance their welfare and enable them to realize their full
8 potentials in the service of the nation.

9 The State shall also endeavor to provide women and children with utmost
10 support and assistance which shall include among others: legal services,
11 livelihood and skills development, psychological counseling and all other
12 assistance necessary to protect them against all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty,
13 exploitation and other acts prejudicial to their welfare and development.

14 SEC. 3. *Establishment of Resource Development and Crisis Assistance*
15 *Centers.* – In order to carry out the above-declared policy, there shall be
16 established in every region of the country Resource Development and Crisis

1 Assistance Centers for Women and Children, hereinafter referred to as the
2 Centers. These Centers shall be under the management and supervision of the
3 Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and shall be headed by
4 a Director who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The
5 Director shall hold a masters or doctorate degree in Social Work or Community
6 Development or similar courses and shall have a minimum experience of five (5)
7 years in counseling, social and psychological services and other related field of
8 experience.

9 SEC. 4. *Criteria for the Selection of the Sites for the Centers.* – An Inter-
10 Agency Council shall be convened to set the criteria for the selection of the sites
11 of the centers all over the country. The Council shall be composed of authorized
12 representatives from the Department of Social Welfare and Development
13 (DSWD), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of
14 Health (DOH), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Education
15 (DepEd), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Justice
16 (DOJ), National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), National Commission
17 on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), National Youth Commission (NYC),
18 National Manpower and Youth Council (NMYC) and non-government and
19 people's organizations duly accredited by national government agencies.

20 SEC. 5. *Functions.* – The Centers shall have the following functions:

21 a) to serve as the venue for consciousness-raising, capability-building
22 and functions literacy enhancement programs, among others that will enhance
23 public awareness of issues and promote community participation;

24 b) to undertake programs geared towards the development of maternal
25 and child health care, self-enhancement and the development of skills for
26 livelihood generation, social communication, and other related skills which will
27 help women and children to become productive members of society.

1 c) to provide free legal services and undertake activities related to moral
2 recovery and gender sensitive value formation, counseling and psychosocial
3 programs;

4 d) to provide temporary shelter or emergency refuge to women and
5 children;

6 e) to strengthen and facilitate linkages of women's and children's groups
7 and organizations with relevant government agencies and local government units
8 to maximize the delivery of basic and support services for women and children
9 and advocate for the protection and advancement of their rights; and

10 f) perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the
11 objectives of this Act.

12 SEC. 6. *Beneficiaries.* – All women and children under the following
13 circumstances shall be entitled to protection and assistance by the Center:

14 a) victims of involuntary or forced prostitution;

15 b) victims of sexual abuse, harassment or molestation;

16 c) victims of physical abuse;

17 d) victims of illegal recruitment and/or labor exploitation;

18 e) victims of armed conflict, natural or environment disasters who are
19 suffering from trauma due to the tragic death or displacement of family members,
20 dislocation or loss of livelihood;

21 f) detained, abandoned and run-away women and children;

22 g) victims suffering from mental, emotional, psychological and physical
23 impairment needing special support and assistance; and

24 h) other circumstances as may be determined by the DSWD.

25 SEC. 7. *Rehabilitation and Development Program.* – The DSWD, in
26 consultation with the Inter-Agency Council convened under Section 4 hereof
27 shall, within six (6) months from the approval of this Act, formulate a program for
28 the rehabilitation, development and protection of women and children mentioned
29 in Section 5 hereof. The Council shall also oversee the effective implementation

1 of the programs of the Center and monitor the accomplishments of participating
2 agencies. It shall also act as an advisory board.

3 The DSWD may call on national agencies and local government units,
4 academic institutions, and international organizations to assist in the
5 implementation of this Act by way of program collaboration and funding
6 augmentation, among others.

7 SEC. 8. *Authority to Accept Donations.* – The DSWD, through the
8 President of the Philippines, may accept donations and grants, both domestic
9 and foreign, for purposes relevant to the functions of the Centers. The donations
10 and grants shall be allotted to the various centers in such amount as may be
11 deemed best by the DSWD or for the purposes specified by the donor. Such
12 donations and grants shall be subject to pertinent accounting and auditing rules
13 and regulations.

14 SEC. 9. *Funding and Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the
15 effective implementation of this Act shall be charged to the appropriations for the
16 Department of Social Welfare and Development under the current General
17 Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the
18 continued operation and maintenance of the Centers shall be included in the
19 annual General Appropriations Act.

20 The funding for the Centers shall be augmented by transfer of funds from
21 the Countrywide Development Funds, upon the recommendation of the
22 Representative of the district where the Center is located.

23 SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.* – If for any reason any provision of this
24 Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, such parts or portions not affected
25 thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

26 SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules
27 and regulations, or parts hereof inconsistent with the provision of this Act are
28 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

1 SEC. 12. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
2 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
3 circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,