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SENATE
P.S. Res. 257

RECEIVED BY: *ji*

Introduced by Senator Poe

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY TO CONDUCT A STUDY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INCREASING INCIDENCE AND RELATIVELY HIGH RATES OF SUICIDE AND DEPRESSION CASES IN THE COUNTRY WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF FORMULATING A FOCUSED SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM, ADOPTING RENAISSANCE APPROACHES ON NEW WAYS OUT OF DEPRESSION, AND ESTABLISHING MORE HELP UNITS FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO "OPT OUT OF LIFE"

Whereas, Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides, "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them";

Whereas, in the Philippines, many people still think that depression is not an illness and is something that one eventually "snaps out of" and that's the reason why so many people who are depressed feel embarrassed to seek help*;

Whereas, there is an increasing trend of suicide especially among the youth, particularly in the age group 5 to 14 and 15 to 24;

Whereas, the following data are relevant in the consideration of the issue at hand*:

- The suicide rate among Filipinos has gone up in the last 21 years with the majority of cases involving young people aged 24 years old and below, according to studies.
- Based on records from the National Statistics Office, the suicide rate from 1984 to 2005 went up from 0.46 to seven out of every 200,000 men. On the other hand, it jumped from 0.24 to two for every 200,000 women.
- Suicide mortality is higher in males because they are likely to adopt the more violent means, like using firearms, while females usually resort to the "softer" means like drug overdose.
- Studies show that the "leading methods" chosen by individuals who decided to end their lives were hanging, strangulation and suffocation. For those who tried to kill themselves but ended up just sustaining injuries, the preferred means ranged from self-poisoning (mainly ingestion of silver cleaner) to exposure to other unspecified chemicals and noxious substances.
- A rising number of cases has also been observed among married women compared to single women.
- In the Western Pacific Region, which consists of 37 countries and areas, including the Philippines, suicide is the leading cause of death in the age group of 15 to 39.
- Suicide prevention is given a low priority in many Western Pacific countries due to competing health problems, stigma and poor understanding of its incidence and aetiology.
- Little is known about the epidemiology of suicide and suicidal behaviour in the

Philippines and although its incidence is reported to be low, there is likely to be under-reporting because of its non-acceptance by the Catholic Church and the associated stigma to the family.

- Suicide is taboo in a predominantly Catholic Church country like the Philippines, and those who may have committed such will likely be reported by their loved ones to have died of other causes. Moreover, suicides are associated with the stigma that families don't want to inherit from their dead.
- Depression has been the number one cause of suicide, accounting for about 90 percent of the total cases. Other causes may include alcoholism, substance abuse and untreated mental illnesses including bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and others. It is important to remember that not all depressions are triggered by a problem or stressor. Clinical depression is genetic or hereditary and can occur without any trigger or stressor in vulnerable individuals.
- Among the negative life experiences that may cause depression leading to suicide are: death of loved one. Separation or breaking up from a relationship, losing custody of children, or feeling that a child custody decision is not fair, serious loss such as job or house or money or business, serious illness like terminal illnesses, serious accident, chronic physical pain, loss of hope, being victimized (domestic violence, rape, assault, etc), physical or verbal abuse, serious legal problems, etc.

Whereas, the importance of a focused suicide prevention program as well as adopting the so-called renaissance in researches on new ways out of depression should be feasibly studied and assessed by the government to help people with suicidal tendencies and are suffering from depression;

Whereas, improving data quality and better reporting of suicide deaths are likewise imperative to inform and evaluate prevention strategies;

Whereas, non-government organizations running help centers for people with suicidal tendencies should be supported by the government: Now Therefore be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES, To Urge the Senate Committee on Health and Demography to conduct a study, in aid of legislation, on the increasing incidence and relatively high rates of suicide and depression cases in the country with the objectives of formulating a focused suicide prevention program, adopting renaissance approaches on new ways out of depression, and establishing more help units for people who want to "opt out of life".

Adopted,


GRACE POE

Sources:

- Cosmopolitan Philippines, September 2013
- PCHRD-DOST (<http://www.pchrd.dost.gov.ph/index.php/2012-05-23-07-46-36/2012-05-24-00-03-06/5031-suicides-on-the-rise-how-to-put-breaks-on-them>)
- Biomedcentral <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/11/536>
- Inquirer.Net: <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/229227/suicides-up-in-last-20-years-in-ph-mostly-among-young-nso#ixzz2f2Plg3Ji>