

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 423

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN  
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED NEED TO  
PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS  
IN ADOLESCENTS IN THE COUNTRY

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 states, "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, in its 1 December 2013 issue, reported that according to the Department of Health, almost 500 new cases of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which could lead to the fatal acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), were reported in October of this year;

WHEREAS, contracting HIV leads to a condition characterized by the weakening or breakdown of the body's immune system;

WHEREAS, data from the Philippine HIV and AIDS Registry reportedly showed that 491 new HIV cases were reported in October—the highest number reported in one month since 1984;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the latest figure is a 66-percent increase over the 295 cases reported in the same period last year; the 491 new cases reportedly bring to 4,072 the number of those afflicted with the disease since January this year and to 15,774 the total recorded since 1984;

WHEREAS, according to the report, most of the new cases were reported in the National Capital Region, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Central Visayas and Davao; 94 percent of those who contracted AIDS were male, of whom 60 percent were in the 20-29 age group; of the 491 new cases, 445 were contracted through unprotected sex, with men having sex with other men; 45 were reportedly infected through needle sharing among injecting drug users, while one was a case of a mother-to-child transmission;

WHEREAS, the DOH claimed that 92 percent of the cases were asymptomatic at the time of reporting;

WHEREAS, the report claims that a total of 148 deaths were reported from January to October this year, and of this number, 141 were male; the report also claimed that the highest number of deaths occurred in the 25-29 age group, followed by the 30-34 and the 35-39 age groups;

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reportedly issued new guidelines aimed at increasing testing, counseling, treatment and care for adolescents, both for those living with HIV as well as those who are at risk of infection;

WHEREAS, in a statement, the WHO claimed that more than two million adolescents between the ages of 10 and 19 are living with HIV, and many do not receive the care and support they need to stay in good health and prevent transmission; in addition, millions more of adolescents are at risk of infection;

WHEREAS, the WHO also reportedly said that the failure to support effective and acceptable HIV services for adolescents has resulted in a 50-percent increase in reported AIDS-related deaths in this group compared to the 30-percent decline seen in the general population from 2005 to 2012;

WHEREAS, according to Dr. Gottfried Hirnschall, director of the WHO HIV/AIDS Department, adolescents need health services and support tailored to their needs [since] they are less likely than adults to be tested for HIV and often need more support than adults to help them maintain care and to stick to treatment;

WHEREAS, it is therefore imperative for the State to review its laws to make it easier for adolescents to obtain HIV testing without needing the consent of their parents;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported need to prevent the spread of the human immunodeficiency virus in adolescents in the country.

Adopted,

*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
*MS*

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