

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



'16 JAN 28 P3:46

SENATE  
S. No. 3169

RECEIVED BY: *J.*

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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AN ACT  
IMPROVING THE MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES IN  
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

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.

This bill seeks to authorize the Chair of the Commission on Higher Education to award competitive grants to eligible entities to improve mental and behavioral health services and outreach in college and university campuses.

It further aims to increase access to, and reduce the stigma associated with, mental health services so as to ensure that college students have the support necessary to successfully complete their studies.

The bill also directs the Secretary of Health to establish a College Campus Task Force, under the National Center for Mental Health, to discuss mental and behavioral health concerns in college and university campuses.<sup>1</sup>

*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
*at*

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<sup>1</sup> This bill was originally filed during the Fourteenth Congress, Third Regular Session.

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Office of the Secretary

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AN ACT  
IMPROVING THE MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES IN  
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

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

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Mental Health on  
2 Campus Improvement Act.”

3 SECTION 2. *Grants to Improve Mental and Behavioral Health in College*  
4 *Campuses.* –

5 (A) *Purpose.* – The purposes of this Act, with respect to college and university  
6 settings, are to:

7 (1) Increase access to mental and behavioral health services;

8 (2) Foster and improve the prevention of mental and behavioral health  
9 disorders, and the promotion of mental health;

10 (3) Improve the identification and treatment for students at risk;

11 (4) Improve collaboration and the development of appropriate levels of  
12 mental and behavioral health care;

13 (5) Reduce the stigma for students with mental health disorders and  
14 enhance their access to mental health services; and

15 (6) Improve the efficacy of outreach efforts.

1           **(B) Grants.** – The Chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall  
2 award competitive grants to eligible entities to improve mental and behavioral health  
3 services and outreach in college and university campuses.

4           **(C) Eligibility.** – To be eligible to receive a grant, an entity shall:

5                   (1) Be an institution of higher education; and

6                   (2) Submit to the Chair an application at such time, in such manner, and  
7 containing such information as the Chair may require, including the information  
8 required under paragraph (D).

9           **(D) Application.** – An application for a grant under this Act shall include:

10                   (1) A description of the population to be targeted by the program carried  
11 out under the grant, the particular mental and behavioral health needs of the  
12 students involved, and the private and public institutional resources available for  
13 meeting the needs of such students at the time the application is submitted;

14                   (2) An outline of the objectives of the program carried out under the grant;

15                   (3) A description of activities, services, and training to be provided under  
16 the program, including planned outreach strategies to reach students not currently  
17 seeking services;

18                   (4) A plan to seek input from community mental health providers, when  
19 available, community groups, and other public and private entities in carrying out  
20 the program;

21                   (5) A plan, when applicable, to meet the specific mental and behavioral  
22 health needs of veterans attending institutions of higher education;

23                   (6) A description of the methods to be used to evaluate the outcomes and  
24 effectiveness of the program; and

1           (7) An assurance that grant funds will be used to supplement, and not  
2           supplant, any other government funds available to carry out activities of the type  
3           carried out under the grant.

4           (E) *Special Considerations.* – In awarding grants under this Act, the Chair shall  
5           give special consideration to applications that describe programs to be carried out under  
6           the grant that:

7                   (1) Demonstrate the greatest need for new or additional mental and  
8                   behavioral health services, in part by providing information on current ratios of  
9                   students to mental and behavioral health professionals;

10                   (2) Propose effective approaches for initiating or expanding campus  
11                   services and supports using evidence-based practices;

12                   (3) Target traditionally underserved populations and populations most at  
13                   risk;

14                   (4) Where possible, demonstrate an awareness of, and a willingness to,  
15                   coordinate with a community mental health center or other mental health resource  
16                   in the community, to support screening and referral of students requiring intensive  
17                   services;

18                   (5) Identify how the college or university will address psychiatric  
19                   emergencies, including how information will be communicated with families or  
20                   other appropriate parties; and

21                   (6) Demonstrate the greatest potential for replication and dissemination.

22           (F) *Use of Funds.* – Amounts received under a grant may be used to:

23                   (1) Provide mental and behavioral health services to students, including  
24                   prevention, promotion of mental health, screening, early intervention, assessment,  
25                   treatment, management, and education services relating to the mental and  
26                   behavioral health of students;

1           (2) Provide outreach services to notify students about the existence of  
2 mental and behavioral health services;

3           (3) Educate families, peers, faculty, staff, and communities to increase  
4 awareness of mental health issues;

5           (4) Support student groups on campus that engage in activities to educate  
6 students, reduce stigma surrounding mental and behavioral disorders, and promote  
7 mental health wellness;

8           (5) Employ appropriately trained staff;

9           (6) Expand mental health training through internship, post-doctorate, and  
10 residency programs;

11          (7) Develop and support evidence-based and emerging best practices,  
12 including a focus on culturally- and linguistically-appropriate best practices; and

13          (8) Evaluate and disseminate best practices to other colleges and  
14 universities.

15          (G) *Duration of Grants.* – A grant shall be awarded for a period not to exceed  
16 three years.

17          (H) *Evaluation and Reporting.* –

18           (1) *Evaluation.* – Not later than 18 months after the date on which a grant  
19 is received, the eligible entity involved shall submit to the Chair the results of the  
20 evaluation conducted by the entity concerning the effectiveness of the activities  
21 carried out under the grant and plans for the sustainability of such efforts.

22           (2) *Report.* – Not later than two years after the date of the effectivity of  
23 this Act, the Chair shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report  
24 concerning the results of:

25           (i) The evaluations conducted under paragraph (1); and

1 (ii) An evaluation conducted by the Chair to analyze the  
2 effectiveness and efficacy of the activities conducted with grants under this  
3 Act.

4 (I) *Technical Assistance.* – The Chair may provide technical assistance to  
5 grantees in carrying out this Section.

6 SECTION 3. *Mental and Behavioral Health Outreach and Education in College*  
7 *Campuses.* –

8 (A) *Purpose.* – It is the purpose of this Section to increase access to, and reduce  
9 the stigma associated with, mental health services so as to ensure that college students  
10 have the support necessary to successfully complete their studies.

11 (B) *National Public Education Campaign.* – The Chair shall convene an  
12 interagency, public-private sector working group to plan, establish, and begin  
13 coordinating and evaluating a targeted public education campaign that is designed to  
14 focus on mental and behavioral health in college campuses. Such campaign shall be  
15 designed to:

16 (1) Improve the general understanding of mental health and mental health  
17 disorders;

18 (2) Encourage help-seeking behaviors relating to the promotion of mental  
19 health, prevention of mental health disorders, and treatment of such disorders;

20 (3) Make the connection between mental and behavioral health and  
21 academic success; and

22 (4) Assist the general public in identifying the early warning signs and  
23 reducing the stigma of mental illness.

24 (C) *Composition.* – The working group under paragraph (B) shall include:

25 (1) Mental health consumers, including students and family members;

1 (2) Representatives of colleges and universities;

2 (3) Representatives of national mental and behavioral health and college  
3 associations;

4 (4) Representatives of college health promotion and prevention  
5 organizations;

6 (5) Representatives of mental health providers, including community  
7 mental health centers; and

8 (6) Representatives of private- and public-sector groups with experience in  
9 the development of effective public health education campaigns.

10 (D) *Plan.* – The working group under paragraph (B) shall develop a plan that  
11 shall:

12 (1) Target promotional and educational efforts to the college age  
13 population and individuals who are employed in college and university settings,  
14 including the use of roundtables;

15 (2) Develop and propose the implementation of research-based public  
16 health messages and activities;

17 (3) Provide support for local efforts to reduce stigma by using the National  
18 Center for Mental Health as a primary point of contact for information,  
19 publications, and service program referrals; and

20 (4) Develop and propose the implementation of a social marketing  
21 campaign that is targeted at the college population and individuals who are  
22 employed in college and university settings.

1           **SECTION 4. *Interagency Working Group on College Mental Health.* –**

2           **(A) *Establishment.* – The Secretary of Health shall establish a College Campus**  
3 **Task Force, under the National Center for Mental Health, to discuss mental and**  
4 **behavioral health concerns in college and university campuses.**

5           **(B) *Membership.* – The Task Force shall be composed of a representative from**  
6 **each department that has jurisdiction over, or is affected by, mental health and education**  
7 **policies and projects, including the Commission on Higher Education and the Department**  
8 **of Health.**

9           **(C) *Duties.* – The Task Force shall:**

10                   **(1) Serve as a centralized mechanism to coordinate a national effort to:**

11                           **(i) Discuss and evaluate evidence and knowledge on mental and**  
12 **behavioral health services available to, and the prevalence of mental health**  
13 **illness among, the college age population of the Philippines;**

14                           **(ii) Determine the range of effective, feasible, and comprehensive**  
15 **actions to improve mental and behavioral health in college and university**  
16 **campuses;**

17                           **(iii) Examine and better address the needs of the college age**  
18 **population dealing with mental illness;**

19                           **(iv) Survey government agencies to determine which policies are**  
20 **effective in encouraging, and how best to facilitate outreach without**  
21 **duplicating, efforts relating to mental and behavioral health promotion;**

22                           **(v) To establish specific goals within and across Federal agencies**  
23 **for mental health promotion, including determinations of accountability for**  
24 **reaching those goals;**



1 (vi) To develop a strategy for allocating responsibilities and ensuring  
2 participation in mental and behavioral health promotions, particularly in the  
3 case of competing agency priorities;

4 (vii) To coordinate plans to communicate research results relating to  
5 mental and behavioral health amongst the college age population to enable  
6 reporting and outreach activities to produce more useful and timely  
7 information;

8 (viii) To provide a description of evidence-based best practices,  
9 model programs, effective guidelines, and other strategies for promoting  
10 mental and behavioral health in college and university campuses;

11 (ix) To make recommendations to improve government efforts  
12 relating to mental and behavioral health promotion in college campuses and  
13 to ensure government efforts are consistent with available standards and  
14 evidence and other programs in existence as of the date of effectivity of this  
15 Act; and

16 (x) To monitor progress in meeting specific mental and behavioral  
17 health promotion goals as they relate to college and university settings;

18 (2) Consult with national organizations with expertise in mental and  
19 behavioral health, especially those organizations working with the college age  
20 population; and

21 (3) Consult with and seek input from mental health professionals working  
22 in college and university campuses as appropriate.

23 (D) *Meetings.* –

24 (1) *In general.* – The Task Force shall meet at least three times each year.

25 (2) *Annual Conference.* – The Chair shall sponsor an annual conference on  
26 mental and behavioral health in college and university settings to enhance

1 coordination, build partnerships, and share best practices in mental and behavioral  
2 health promotion, data collection, analysis, and services.

3 SECTION 5. *Appropriations.* – The funds needed for the initial implementation of  
4 this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the Commission on Higher  
5 Education. Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for its full implementation shall  
6 be included in the annual General Appropriations Act as a distinct and separate item.

7 SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or  
8 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other  
9 provisions hereof.

10 SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or  
11 portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby  
12 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

13 SECTION 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after  
14 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

/lml4Dec2015