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SENATE
S.B. No. 1522

RECEIVED BY: pu

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 13, recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building. It is imperative for the State to assist them in the formation of all aspects of human development because today's youth are the most important resource of our country for the future.

However, this declared policy is hampered by the increase of unwanted pregnancy among teenagers. Teenage pregnancy, mostly unwanted and untimely, has now become a significant and far-reaching social problem, which affects not only the quality of life for the teenagers, but also their families and the community as a whole.

For both sexes, teenage pregnancy has a very negative effect on education, occupational and economic satisfaction, and success for teenagers. Furthermore, teenage pregnancy produces higher risks to the life of both the young mother and her child. Studies show that infants born to teenagers are likely to be more underweight and premature. Likewise, compared with 20-24-year old mothers, those with ages 15-19 are more prone to anemia, abnormal bleeding, difficult labor, and other complications.

This bill seeks to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy by requiring the evaluation of private and public programs of the government.


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

SECTION 4. *Evaluation of Effective Programs for Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy.* — The Secretary shall arrange for the evaluation of a wide variety of existing programs designed, in whole or in part, to prevent pregnancy in adolescents, including programs that do not receive funds from the government for the operation of the programs.

The purpose of the evaluation shall be the determination of the following:

- (1) The effectiveness of such programs in reducing adolescent pregnancy;
- (2) The factors contributing to the effectiveness of the programs; and
- (3) The feasibility of replicating the programs in other locations.

SECTION 5. *Participation of Government and Private Organizations.* — In carrying out the evaluation under the preceding section, the Secretary shall as appropriate:

- (1) Provide for the participation of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Science and Technology, and the Population Commission; and
- (2) Provide for the participation of organizations with demonstrated expertise in conducting evaluations of adolescent pregnancy prevention programs.

SECTION 6. *Design of Evaluation.* — Subject to Section 7, the Secretary shall select a design for the evaluation under Section 4 from among proposals that:

- (1) Provide for the evaluation of programs in various geographic regions;
- (2) With respect to the populations served by the programs, provide for determining factors that are specific to various socioeconomic, age groups and factors that are specific to gender.
- (3) Meet such other criteria as the Secretary may establish.

SECTION 7. *Measures of Effectiveness.* — The Secretary shall define the measures of effectiveness used in evaluating the programs designed to reduce the rate of adolescent pregnancy, and shall include a variety of measures of effectiveness in the definition.

SECTION 8. *Submission of Report.* — Not later than one (1) year after the effectivity of this Act, the evaluation under Section 4 shall be completed and a report shall be submitted to the Congress that describes the findings made in the evaluation and provides recommendations for future programs designed to reduce the rate of adolescent pregnancy.

SECTION 9. *Dissemination of Information.* — After the submission of the report under Section 8, the Secretary shall disseminate the findings and recommendations presented in the report. The categories of individuals to whom the information is disseminated shall include administrators of prevention programs, public and private entities providing financial support to such programs, professional medical associations, entities providing public health services, entities providing social work services, and school administrators.

SECTION 10. *Rule of Construction.* — The provisions of this Act apply with respect to prevention programs without regard to which of the various programmatic approaches for the prevention of pregnancy in adolescents is the focus of the program.

SECTION 11. *Appropriation.* — To carry out the provisions of this Act, such amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the establishment of programs designed to reduce the rate of adolescent pregnancy shall be included in the annual appropriation of the Department of Health.

SECTION 12. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision, or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 13. *Repealing Clause.* — Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SECTION 14. *Effectivity Clause.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.

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