

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

'04 JUL 29 P4:51

SENATE
S.B. No. 1566

RECEIVED BY: _____ *a*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2 provides:

Section 13. The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

Section 17. The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.

Quality education is necessary not only for the future of our children and our families, but for the future of our country. A better educated citizenry and workforce are essential to compete in the global economy and to maintain a strong democracy.

A safe school environment is a prerequisite towards achieving that goal. If the government is to effectively provide quality education, it must provide students an environment conducive to learning.

The continued presence in schools of violent students, who are a threat to both teachers and other students, is incompatible with a safe learning environment. Unsafe school environments discourage students to go to school and place those who are already at risk of school failure for other reasons in further jeopardy.

Greater cooperation between schools, parents, law enforcement, the courts, and the community is essential to making our schools safe from drugs and violence. The purpose of this bill is to establish innovative programs to provide safe school environments.


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE SAFE SCHOOL
ENVIRONMENTS

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Safe Schools Act."

SECTION 2. *Purpose.* - It is the purpose of this Act to urge the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and other educational agencies -

- (1) to provide comprehensive services to victims and witnesses of school violence;
- (2) to remove violent and drug selling student offenders from school premises;
- (3) to report violent crimes and drug dealing on school grounds to appropriate law enforcement authorities;
- (4) to involve parents, former armed forces personnel, and community volunteers in efforts to improve school safety; and
- (5) to develop innovative programs to improve the safety of our Nation's schools and to better serve at-risk students.

SECTION 3. *Authorization of Appropriations.* - There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

SECTION 4. *Program Authorized.* -

- (1) IN GENERAL - The Secretary of Education shall develop, establish, or conduct as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

(2) NATURE – The Secretary shall, for school implementation, focus on programs that—

(a) provide parent and teacher notification of crimes or drug activity occurring at school;

(b) provide for the suspension, delay, or restriction of driving privileges of students who have a conviction, an adjudication in a juvenile proceeding, or a finding in a school disciplinary proceeding, involving illegal drugs;

(c) link educational institutions with community-based mentoring programs in order to link individual at-risk youth with responsible, individual adults who serve as mentors for the purpose of –

(i) discouraging at-risk youth from –

(aa) using illegal drugs;

(bb) violence;

(cc) using dangerous weapons;

(dd) criminal activity; and

(ee) involvement in gangs;

(ii) increasing youth participation in, and enhancing the ability of such youth to benefit from, elementary and secondary education;

(iii) promoting personal and social responsibility;

(iv) encouraging at-risk youth participation in community service and community activities; and

(v) providing general guidance to at-risk youth;

(d) include cooperative efforts between the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of National Defense to share the training and salary costs of former members of the Armed Forces, who shall be hired as teachers and assigned to teach in public elementary schools and secondary schools;

(e) enhance school security measures that may include –

(i) equipping schools with metal detectors, fences, closed circuit cameras, and other physical security measures;

(ii) providing increased police patrols in and around elementary schools and secondary schools;

(iii) mailing to parents at the beginning of the school year stating that the possession of a gun or other weapon, or the sale of drugs in schools, will not be tolerated by school authorities; and

(iv) gun hotlines.

(f) provide protections for victims and witnesses to school crime, including protection for attendance at school disciplinary proceedings;

(g) expel students who, on school grounds, sell drugs, or who commit a violent offense that causes serious bodily injury of another student or teacher; and

(h) require referral to law enforcement authorities or juvenile authorities of any student who on school grounds—

(i) commits a violent offense resulting in serious bodily injury; or

(ii) sells drugs.

SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part thereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law of the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 6. *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 7. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.