

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*First Regular Session* )

'22 NOV 21 P1:14

RECEIVED BY: 

**SENATE**  
**S. No. 1524**

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Introduced by Senator MARK A. VILLAR

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING A POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS AND**  
**EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Not all scars can be seen by the naked eye. Some are ingrained in the heart and rooted in the soul like an invisible wound.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that is usually triggered by terrifying event—this event was experienced or witnessed by a person suffering from the condition.<sup>1</sup> In most cases, people who faced a traumatic event will naturally react on it which may include shock, anger, nervousness, fear and even guilt.<sup>2</sup> These reactions may go away over time. However, for a person suffering from PTSD, these feelings will continue and even increase.<sup>3</sup>

Based on the report of Department of Health (DOH), PTSD can develop at any age. Children below six years old tend to reenact the traumatic event they experienced while the older children fantasize having revenge. On the other hand, hyperarousal can happen on elderly population. Other medical events and procedures associated with life

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<sup>1</sup> Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (2018) Mayo Clinic. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. Available at: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355967> (Accessed: October 25, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD): Symptoms, diagnosis, treatment (no date) WebMD. WebMD. Available at: <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/post-traumatic-stress-disorder> (Accessed: October 25, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Id.

threats are associated with high rates of PTSD. It was recorded that in some instances, having a heart attack is associated with up to 15% of PTSD episodes. Open abdominal aortic aneurysm repair is associated with approximately 20% of PTSD episodes.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers of Filipinos suffering from mental health condition increased. The Department of Health estimates that at least 3.6 million Filipinos are facing mental health issues.<sup>5</sup> Some of those suffered from PTSD.

Given the numbers of Filipinos suffering from PTSD, it is necessary for the government to create programs to raise awareness on the PTSD and to give support to those who are suffering from the condition. Thus, this bill seeks to look for ways to help them cope with the detrimental effects of PTSD. This is to urge the DOH to craft programs to improve the identification of patients with PTSD, increase awareness of such disorders with the public, and train educators (such as teachers, nurses, social workers, coaches, counselors, and school administrators) on effective PTSD assistance methods. This bill likewise urges the local government units to provide policies in promoting PTSD awareness programs and ensure the implementation of those.

In light of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



**MARK A. VILLAR**

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<sup>4</sup> Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. (2022, November 7). Healthy Pilipinas: Health Information for All Filipinos. Retrieved November 7, 2022, from <https://www.healthypilipinas.ph/health-a-z/post-traumatic-stress-disorder>

<sup>5</sup> Mental Health on the Move in the Philippines – Meet the Lusog-Isip App - URC. (2021, December 22). URC. Retrieved November 7, 2022, from <https://www.urc-chs.com/news/mental-health-on-the-move-in-the-philippines-meet-the-lusog-isip-app/>

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

1       Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Post Traumatic Stress*  
2       *Disorder Awareness and Education Act*"

3       Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to protect and  
4       promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

5       It is also the policy of the State to promote and protect the physical, moral,  
6       spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being of the youth recognizing their vital role in  
7       nation-building.

8       Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the term Post Traumatic  
9       Stress Disorder or PTSD shall refer to an emotional illness that is classified as an  
10      anxiety disorder and that usually develops as a result of a terribly frightening, life-  
11      threatening, or otherwise highly unsafe experience.

12      Sec. 4. *Innovative Assistance for the Identification of, Training on, and*  
13      *Educational Awareness of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.* The Department of Health  
14      (DOH) shall craft programs to improve the identification of patients with PTSD,  
15      increase awareness of such disorders with the public, and train educators (such as  
16      teachers, nurses, social workers, coaches, counselors, and school administrators) on  
17      effective PTSD assistance methods.

1           Sec. 5. *Public Service Announcements.* – The Department of Education and the  
2 Commission on Higher Education, in consultation with the DOH, shall carry out a  
3 program to develop, distribute, and promote the broadcasting of public service  
4 announcements to improve public awareness, and to promote the identification and  
5 prevention of PTSD.

6           Sec. 6. *PTSD Research and Report.* – Not later than 18 months after the date  
7 of the enactment of this Act, the DOH shall conduct a study on the impact PTSD has  
8 on educational advancement and achievement. The study shall:

9           (a) determine the prevalence of PTSD among the population and the morbidity  
10           and mortality rates associated with PTSD;

11           (b) report on current national and local programs to educate the public about  
12           the dangers of PTSD, as well as evaluate the value of such programs; and

13           (c) make recommendations on measures that could be undertaken by the  
14           Congress, the Secretary of Education, and the Secretary of Health, to  
15           strengthen PTSD awareness programs.

16           Sec. 7. *Intervention of LGUs* – Local Government Unit (LGUs) shall likewise  
17 provide policies in promoting the PTSD awareness programs and ensure the  
18 implementation of those.

19           Sec. 8. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision, or part hereof, is held invalid or  
20 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall  
21 remain valid and subsisting.

22           Sec. 9. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive  
23 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or  
24 inconsistent with, the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended  
25 accordingly.

26           Sec. 10. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following  
27 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*