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SENATE S.B. NO. <u>1263</u>

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The National Statistics Office reported that more and more young women, particularly teenagers, are giving birth and becoming mothers at an early age. In 2010, a total of two hundred seven thousand eight hundred ninety eight (207,898) mothers aged twenty and below gave birth, compared to one hundred twenty six thousand twenty five (126,025) in 2000¹.

To ease the burden of young child-bearing women, the proposed law seeks to establish refuge and medical assistance centers all over the country. The center will serve as a temporary shelter to pregnant women, who by reason of their youth, need protection and assistance of the State. The proposed bill likewise aims to provide young women medical assistance and guidance in child-care and self-enhancement, as well as livelihood generation.

The provision of the proposed law is consistent with the policy of the State recognized in Section 3, Article XV of the Philippine Constitution which provides that: "the State shall... defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development. It is likewise a recognition of women's fundamental role in nation-building as declared in Article II, Section 14 of the Philippine Constitution.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly recommended.

MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY

Senator

¹ http://www.unfpa.org.ph/index.php/news/323-philippines-highlights-rising-teen-pregnancy-on-1st-international-day-of-girl-child

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES First Regular Session

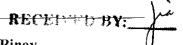
Senate Of the Secretary

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SENATE S.B. NO. 1263

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Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

AN ACT ESTABLISHING REFUGE AND ASSISTANCE TO YOUNG PREGNANT WOMEN IN EVERY PROVINCE AND CITY OF THE PHILIPPINES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as the "Young Women's Refuge and Assistance Act."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to value the dignity of young women and recognize their fundamental role in nation-building. Towards this end, the State shall protect and promote the physical, moral, and social well-being of young women by providing them with facilities and opportunities that will enhance their welfare and assist them in their endeavors with a goal to help them realize their full potential in the service of the nation.

SECTION 3. Establishment of Refuge and Assistance Centers. In order to carry out the above-declared policy, there shall be established in every province and city all over the country Refuge and Assistance Centers for Young Pregnant Women (hereinafter referred to as the "Centers").

SECTION 4. Beneficiaries. The beneficiaries of this law shall include all young women who are twenty one years (21) of age and below who are pregnant, or who suffered a miscarriage or abortion, and their children.

SECTION 5. Refuge and Assistance Center. The Centers shall be under the management and supervision of the Department of Social Welfare and Development ("DSWD") with the coordination and assistance of the Department of Health ("DOH"). The Centers shall be headed by a Director who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The Directors of the Centers shall hold a masters or doctorate degree in Social Work or Community Development or similar courses and shall have a minimum experience of five (5) years in counseling, social and psychological services and other related field or experience.

Each Center shall have the following personnel: (a) at least one doctor or midwife; and (b) such other personnel necessary to provide assistance to the beneficiaries of this Act.

SECTION 6. Functions of the Centers. The Centers shall have the following functions:

to provide temporary shelter and refuge to beneficiaries of this Act; a) 1 2 to provide free medical assistance, including monthly pre-natal checkup, or such other 3 b) care for young women to prevent potential risks from child-bearing, and all other 4 medical services for childbirth and delivery, and provide them free pre-natal vitamin 5 and other medication; 6 7 to undertake programs geared towards the development of maternal and child health 8 care, self-enhancement and the development of skills for livelihood generation, social 9 communication, and other related skills which will help women and children to become 10 productive members of society; and 11 12 to perform such other function as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this d) 13 Act. 14 15 SECTION 7. Rehabilitation and Development Program. The DSWD in coordination with 16 DOH shall, within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, formulate a program for 17 the rehabilitation, development and protection of young women and children. 18 19 SECTION 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The DSWD in coordination with DOH 20 shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations within six (6) months from the 21 approval of this Act. 22 23 SECTION 9. Funding and Appropriations., The amount necessary for the effective - 24 implementation of this Act shall be charged to the appropriations for the DSWD under the 25 current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the 26 continued operation and maintenance of the Centers shall be included in the regular 27 appropriations for the DSWD in the annual General Appropriations Act. 28 29 SECTION 10. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations 30 that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified 31 accordingly. 32 33 SECTION 11. Separability Clause. If for any reason, any section or part of this Act is held 34 unconstitutional or invalid, such parts not affected thereby shall remain in full force and 35 effect. 36 37 SECTION 11. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in

the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

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Approved,