

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



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

'13 AUG -8 P3:00

SENATE  
S.B. NO. 1263

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Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

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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 2000<sup>1</sup>.

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

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

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1 AN ACT ESTABLISHING REFUGE AND ASSISTANCE TO YOUNG PREGNANT  
2 WOMEN IN EVERY PROVINCE AND CITY OF THE PHILIPPINES, APPROPRIATING  
3 FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES  
4

5 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress*  
6 *assembled:*  
7

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

10  
11 **SECTION 2.** *Declaration of Policy.* It is hereby declared the policy of the State to value the  
12 dignity of young women and recognize their fundamental role in nation-building. Towards  
13 this end, the State shall protect and promote the physical, moral, and social well-being of  
14 young women by providing them with facilities and opportunities that will enhance their  
15 welfare and assist them in their endeavors with a goal to help them realize their full potential  
16 in the service of the nation.

17  
18 **SECTION 3.** *Establishment of Refuge and Assistance Centers.* In order to carry out the  
19 above-declared policy, there shall be established in every province and city all over the  
20 country Refuge and Assistance Centers for Young Pregnant Women (hereinafter referred to  
21 as the "Centers").  
22

23 **SECTION 4.** *Beneficiaries.* The beneficiaries of this law shall include all young women who  
24 are twenty one years (21) of age and below who are pregnant, or who suffered a miscarriage  
25 or abortion, and their children.  
26

27 **SECTION 5.** *Refuge and Assistance Center.* The Centers shall be under the management and  
28 supervision of the Department of Social Welfare and Development ("DSWD") with the  
29 coordination and assistance of the Department of Health ("DOH"). The Centers shall be  
30 headed by a Director who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines. The  
31 Directors of the Centers shall hold a masters or doctorate degree in Social Work or  
32 Community Development or similar courses and shall have a minimum experience of five (5)  
33 years in counseling, social and psychological services and other related field or experience.  
34

35 Each Center shall have the following personnel: (a) at least one doctor or midwife; and (b)  
36 such other personnel necessary to provide assistance to the beneficiaries of this Act.  
37

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

- 1 a) to provide temporary shelter and refuge to beneficiaries of this Act;  
2  
3 b) to provide free medical assistance, including monthly pre-natal checkup, or such other  
4 care for young women to prevent potential risks from child-bearing, and all other  
5 medical services for childbirth and delivery, and provide them free pre-natal vitamin  
6 and other medication;  
7  
8 c) to undertake programs geared towards the development of maternal and child health  
9 care, self-enhancement and the development of skills for livelihood generation, social  
10 communication, and other related skills which will help women and children to become  
11 productive members of society; and  
12  
13 d) to perform such other function as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of this  
14 Act.

15  
16 **SECTION 7. *Rehabilitation and Development Program.*** The DSWD in coordination with  
17 DOH shall, within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, formulate a program for  
18 the rehabilitation, development and protection of young women and children.

19  
20 **SECTION 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** The DSWD in coordination with DOH  
21 shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations within six (6) months from the  
22 approval of this Act.

23  
24 **SECTION 9. *Funding and Appropriations.*** The amount necessary for the effective  
25 implementation of this Act shall be charged to the appropriations for the DSWD under the  
26 current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary for the  
27 continued operation and maintenance of the Centers shall be included in the regular  
28 appropriations for the DSWD in the annual General Appropriations Act.

29  
30 **SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.*** All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations  
31 that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified  
32 accordingly.

33  
34 **SECTION 11. *Separability Clause.*** If for any reason, any section or part of this Act is held  
35 unconstitutional or invalid, such parts not affected thereby shall remain in full force and  
36 effect.

37  
38 **SECTION 11. *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in  
39 the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

40  
41 Approved,