

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



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE  
S. No. 1434

RECEIVED BY: *ji*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 13, Section 11 provides:

The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers.

Autism is a brain development disorder that is characterized by impaired social interaction and communication, and restricted and repetitive behavior, all starting before a child is three years old. Autism has a strong genetic basis, although the genetics of autism are complex and it is unclear whether ASD is explained more by multigene interactions or by rare mutations. In rare cases, autism is strongly associated with agents that cause birth defects. Other proposed causes, such as childhood vaccines, are controversial; the vaccine hypotheses lack convincing scientific evidence. Most recent reviews estimate a prevalence of one to two cases per 1,000 people for autism, and about six per 1,000 for ASD, with ASD averaging a 4.3:1 male-to-female ratio. The number of people known to have autism has increased dramatically since the 1980s, at least partly as a result of changes in diagnostic practice; the question of whether actual prevalence has increased is unresolved.

The causes of autism and other disorders that becomes manifest during childhood must be identified so that preventive measures will be institutionalized. The knowledge that we will gain through a comprehensive approach to this problem will benefit not only our country, but also the worldwide scientific community.\*

*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
*aw*

\* This bill was originally filed in the Fourteenth Congress, Second Regular Session.



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SENATE  
S. No. 1434

RECEIVED BY: *ja*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

1 AN ACT  
2 ESTABLISHING AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF  
3 HEALTH TO STUDY ISSUES RELATED TO AUTISM, AND INFANT AND TODDLER  
4 IMMUNE SYSTEM DISORDERS

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

5 SECTION 1. *Advisory Panel on Autism and Immune Deficiency Disorders in Infants and*  
6 *Toddlers.* – The Secretary of Health shall create an advisory panel within the Department of  
7 Health to:

8 A. Review medical and scientific data regarding any relationship between infant and  
9 toddler immune system development and adverse reactions to childhood immunizations;

10 B. Facilitate the development and use of an autism registry to help study the causes  
11 of autism;

12 C. Review scientific data regarding the genetic and environmental components of  
13 autism and immune system disorders and how that information may lead to preventive measures;

14 D. Create a public awareness campaign, based on the findings of the advisory panel,  
15 to educate parents and health care providers about the causes and risk factors for autism and  
16 infant and toddler immune system disorders; and

17 E. Report to Congress about its findings.

18 SECTION 2. *Composition.* –

19 A. The advisory panel shall consist of the following members:

20 (i) The Secretary of Health;

21 (ii) Two physicians with specialization in pediatrics or genetics, appointed by  
22 the Philippine Medical Association;

1           (iii) A geneticist appointed by the National Academy of Science and  
2           Technology.

3           B.     Members of the advisory panel shall not be compensated for their service on the  
4 panel, except for reasonable honoraria for meetings held.

5           C.     The Department of Health shall provide staff support to the advisory panel.

6           SECTION 3. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared to be  
7 unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby  
8 shall continue to be in full force and effect.

9           SECTION 4. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations or  
10 parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or  
11 modified accordingly.

12          SECTION 5. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days  
13 following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,