

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



Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
S. No. 1446

RECEIVED BY: *ja*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 15, Section 3, paragraph 2 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."

There is a dearth of information on the number of babies abandoned across the country. Experts also lack information on the characteristics and motivations of parents who abandon their babies. While individual cases involving newborn babies abandoned by their mothers in public places receive press attention, no one knows how frequently such events occur.

This bill seeks to establish a task force within the Department of Social Welfare and Development to gather information, study, and report to Congress regarding incidents of abandonment of infant children.*

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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* This bill was originally filed in the Thirteenth Congress, Third Regular Session.



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SENATE
S. No. 1446

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

1 AN ACT
2 ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
3 WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT TO GATHER INFORMATION,
4 STUDY, AND REPORT TO CONGRESS REGARDING INCIDENTS OF
5 ABANDONMENT OF INFANT CHILDREN

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

6 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Baby Abandonment
7 Prevention Act."

8 SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act, the term—

9 (A) "Baby abandonment" refers to discarding or leaving alone, for an extended period
10 of time, a child younger than twelve (12) months of age in a public or private setting with the
11 intent to dispose of the child;

12 (B) "Department" refers to the Department of Social Welfare and Development; and

13 (C) "Infant child" refers to a child not more than twelve (12) months of age.

14 SECTION 3. *Establishment of Task Force on Baby Abandonment.* -

15 (A) In General - The Department shall establish a Task Force on Baby Abandonment
16 to carry out the following:

17 (1) Collect information from local law enforcement agencies and child welfare
18 agencies regarding incidents of abandonment of an infant child by a parent
19 of that child;

20 (2) Maintain that information in a comprehensive database;

1 (3) Study that information and make findings, conclusions, and
2 recommendations regarding that information; and

3 (4) Submit reports in accordance with this section.

4 (B) Information included - The information referred to in subsection (A) shall include
5 information with respect to the following:

6 (1) The prevalence of such incidents;

7 (2) The demographics of the children and their parents;

8 (3) The factors that influence the decision of the parents to abandon their
9 children;

10 (4) The circumstances surrounding such abandonments, including the time,
11 place, and manner of such abandonments;

12 (5) The outcomes for the children and the parents after such abandonments; and

13 (6) Trends and variations in the matters set forth in paragraphs (1) through (5).

14 (C) Reports - Not later than one (1) year after the date of the effectivity of this Act,
15 and annually thereafter, the Task Force on Baby Abandonment shall submit a report to the
16 Congress detailing its methodology, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

17 SECTION 4. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
18 unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
19 valid and subsisting.

20 SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
21 order, letter of instruction, administrative rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the
22 provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,