

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session



Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE

Senate Bill No. 1679

RECEIVED BY: *ji*

INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Filipino youth today faces a myriad of issues that need to be addressed at the grass root level. Poverty, lack of education, drug or substance abuse, vice, crime and unemployment are among the many problems that continue to batter them. Likewise, recent issues on the rising number of street children in urban centers, child abuse, forced labor and pedophilia are quite alarming, aggravating the plight of the youth,

As an immediate step towards a long-range action plan for them, there is a need to establish an integrated youth center in the fifteen (15) regions of the country. These youth centers are envisions as halfway houses and/or transient shelters, or lodging facilities, with skills and training centers, to cater the youth in difficult circumstances who are in need of immediate attention.

These centers shall also serve as one-stop youth activity centers, in terms of lodging and recreation facilities, venue for livelihood and skills training, community service and voluntary work; and extension offices and/or regional offices of the government's lead youth agency - the National Youth Commission.

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


JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA
Senator

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A YOUTH CENTER IN THE FIFTEEN (15) REGIONS OF THE
PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

*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 "**Youth Center
Act of the Philippines**".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the declared policy of the State to promote and protect the youth's physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being. For this purpose, the State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach towards youth development inculcating in them patriotism, nationalism and encouraging their involvement in national and community affairs, among others.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. -As used in this Act:

- (a) Youth - refers to those persons whose age range from fifteen (15) to thirty (30) years of age; and,
- (b) Center - refers to the place established by this Act with recreational, educational, health, and social programs hosted or lodging-type facilities designed for full access and benefit of the youth in a particular region.

SEC. 4. Establishment of Centers. - There is hereby established a Youth Center, hereinafter referred to as the Center, in fifteen (15) regions of the Philippines, under the direct supervision of the National Youth Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare and Development and its attached agencies, and the Department of Education, the local government unit concerned and the private sector which includes non-government youth organizations.

SEC. 5. Management of Centers. - All the centers shall be governed by an Advisory Board, hereinafter referred to as the National Board, as the national policy-making body.

SEC. 6. Composition of the National Board. - The National Board shall have the following as members, namely: the Chairman of the Commission, as President; the appointive official from the private sector who participated in the build-operate-transfer (BOT) agreement or franchising agreement with the Commission, as Vice-president for Operation; two (2) Commissioners from the National Youth Commission and one (1) President of a nationwide non-government youth organization, as members.

SEC. 7. Functions of the National Board. - The National Board shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

- (a) Adopt through resolutions, policy guidelines, and implementing rules and regulations for all youth centers nationwide;
- (b) Promote inter-regional activities in line with the government's national youth program;
- (c) Enter into a joint venture agreements, build-operate-transfer, and other feasible economic undertaking with the private sector and other non-governmental youth organizations through standard bidding procedures; and,
- (d) Provide relevant infrastructure support such as communications link up among the fifteen (15) youth centers.

SEC. 8. Administration of Regional Center. - The Center at the Regional level shall be operated by a Chief Administrator, hereinafter referred to as the Chief, appointed by the Vice-president for Operations. The Chief shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- (a) Implement the policies and decisions adopted by the National Board;
- (b) Administer the day-to-day operations of the Center which include reservation, schedule of activities and maintenance, among others;
- (c) Encourage active participation among the youth organizations in the region as center workers/volunteers;
- (d) Promote youth exchanges and tourism in the national level as well as international level; and,
- (e) To exercise such other duties and responsibilities in the promotions of youth development.

SEC. 9. Functions of the Center. - The Centers, with the pre-determined space by the National Board, shall serve as extensions of the fifteen (15) regional offices of the Commission. They shall carry out the following functions:

- (a) Identify the needs, training and opportunities of the regions;

- (b) Initiate, develop and implement productive activities and workschemes for the youth in order to provide employment, community and social involvement and skills training, among others;
- (c) Promote and maintain linkages with regional government units and other instrumentalities of government and the provincial, city and municipal councils for the youth and Sangguniang Kabataan, at all levels, and other non-government organizations for youth programs and projects, facilities, professional advice services, volunteer training and community self-help projects;
- (d) Provide a half-way house, transient shelter, or lodging facilities for youth in difficult circumstances such as parental abuse, pedophilia, forced labor and similar circumstances; and,
- (e) To exercise such other functions which are necessary to carry out the purpose for which the centers are established.

SEC. 10. Site. - The National Board shall determine the location of the center in the region, taking into account the following factors, namely:

- (a) accessibility to regional government offices;
- (b) transport infrastructure and services within a twenty-kilometer radius from potential tourist attraction; and,
- (c) economic feasibility.

SEC. 11. Center Workers / Volunteers. - The Chairman of the Commission or its regional representative may designate social workers and volunteers from the Commission as the workers of the extension office; Provided, however, That the Chairman may appoint other personnel who possess the necessary professional qualifications to work efficiently with the youth of the community.

The Chairman or its regional representative may also call upon private volunteers who are responsible members of the community to provide technical, educational and other services and facilities for the youth.

SEC. 12. Qualifications / Disqualification for Chief Administrator. - No person who is related with the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity to any appointive or elective official shall be appointed as Chief Administrator.

SEC. 13. Exemptions from Duties and Taxes. - The Center shall be exempted from the payment of customs, duties, taxes and tariffs in the importation of equipment and supplies used actually, directly and exclusively by the Center pursuant to this Act, including those donated to the Center.

SEC. 14. Rules and Regulations. - Within sixty (60) days from the approval of this Act, the Commission, in coordination with other government

agencies concerned, shall issue the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act. Any violation of this Section shall render the concerned officials liable under Republic Act No. 6713, otherwise known as the "Code of Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees" and other administrative and/or criminal laws.

SEC. 15. *Coordination of Government Agencies.* - The Commission, in coordination with the Department of Education and the Department of Social Welfare and Development and other government agencies and local government units, shall assist in the effective implementation of this Act and provide the necessary support services.

SEC. 16. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and every year thereafter. The sum necessary for the continuous operations of the centers shall be subsidized in part by the Commission and in part by the private sector.

SEC. 17. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby amended or repealed accordingly.

SEC. 18. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of national circulation.

Approved,