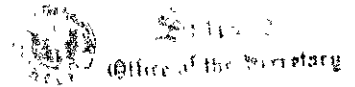


SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )



15 JAN -5 P3:50

SENATE  
S. No. 2543

RECEIVED BY: *J*

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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AN ACT  
INSTITUTING THE YOUTH LEGISLATORS PROGRAM

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 13 provides:

The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

It is a hallmark of democracy that every citizen, even the youth, can participate in the decision- and policy-making process of the country. Youth participation contributes to the development of the country primarily because the youth comprise one-fifth of the population. To prevent the youth from participating in the democratic process is to deny a substantial number of the population of an opportunity to decide on matters affecting not only their interests but those of future generations as well.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) enumerates why the legislature should involve the youth.<sup>1</sup> First, youth participation improves the legislature's representative function. Legislators are mandated to serve and reflect the will of their constituents. Adequate and effective representation entails involvement of all sectors of society, the youth included. Second, youth participation improves legislative outcomes. The youth can offer unique perspectives which may aid in improving our laws. Third, youth participation offers a long-term perspective. The youth do not only consider their

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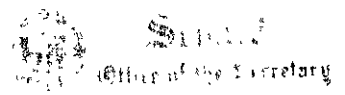
<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, Handbook on Child Participation in Parliament, Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 18 -2011.

interests but also discern those of generations after them. Fourth, youth participation promotes civic engagement and civic education. An active youth means a more socially responsible as well as a more competent citizenry.

In line with these four reasons, this bill seeks to engage the youth in the legislative process by giving them an opportunity to influence our legislators on what laws to prioritize. It also aims to familiarize them with the legislative process as well as train them as our future leaders.

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
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*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1 AN ACT  
2 INSTITUTING THE YOUTH LEGISLATORS PROGRAM

3 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as “Youth Legislators  
4 Program Act.”

5 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to promote youth  
6 participation in the legislative process by giving them an opportunity to express their  
7 views on issues affecting them and on what laws may be enacted to address these.

8 SECTION 3. *Youth Legislators Program.* – Immediately following the assumption  
9 of office of senators and district representatives, there shall be a body comprised of the  
10 youth who shall convene regularly for a period to propose bills and resolutions to the  
11 House of Representatives and the Senate. This body shall be called the Youth  
12 Legislature.

13 The Youth Legislature shall approve proposals for bills and resolutions in the  
14 same manner the House of Representatives and the Senate adopt bills and resolutions.  
15 The approved proposals shall be submitted to the House of Representatives and the  
16 Senate who may adopt the same.

1           SECTION 4. *Youth Legislators.* – There shall be one youth legislator for every  
2 legislative district who shall report to the House of Representatives, and 24 youth  
3 legislators who shall report to the Senate. They shall be selected from a pool of applicants  
4 through written and/or oral examinations to be conducted by the National Youth  
5 Commission (NYC).

6           (A) Qualifications – A youth legislator must:

- 7                   a. be at least 15 but not more than 24 years old;
- 8                   b. be a resident of the legislative district he/she is representing, if  
9                   reporting to the House of Representatives;
- 10                  c. be a resident of the Philippines, if reporting to the Senate;
- 11                  d. not have previously been a youth legislator;
- 12                  e. not be a relative within the fourth civil degree of an incumbent  
13                  elected official; and
- 14                  f. have other qualifications set by the NYC.

15           (B) Period – The Youth Legislature shall be given two weeks to convene and  
16 approve proposals for bills and resolutions.

17           (C) Obligations – A youth legislator shall:

- 18                   a. propose bills and resolutions to be presented to the Youth  
19                   Legislature for approval, and participate in the deliberations of the  
20                   body on the proposals;
- 21                   b. observe sessions, public hearings, and other meetings of the House  
22                   of Representatives or the Senate, as the case may be; and
- 23                   c. attend trainings, seminars, or forums organized by the NYC for  
24                   purposes of implementing this Act.

1           SECTION 5. *Honorarium.* – A youth legislator is entitled to receive a daily  
2 honorarium for a period of two weeks equivalent to 75% of the minimum wage in Metro  
3 Manila.

4           SECTION 6. *Implementing Agency.* – The NYC shall be the primary  
5 implementing and supervising agency for the implementation of this Act. It shall  
6 formulate the necessary implementing rules and regulations immediately upon the  
7 approval of this Act.

8           SECTION 7. *Appropriations.* – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such  
9 amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the  
10 National Treasury. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation of this  
11 program shall be included in the annual appropriation of the NYC.

12           SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid  
13 or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall  
14 remain valid and subsisting.

15           SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance,  
16 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to,  
17 or inconsistent with, the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended  
18 accordingly.

1 SECTION 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect 15 days after its  
2 publication in at least two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

/tmdp22Dec2014